

THE WESTERN STAR.

A Magazine

DEVOTED TO A RECORD OF THE FACTS, PHILOSOPHY, AND HISTORY OF THE COMMUNION BETWEEN

SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH.

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THE WESTERN STAR.

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PROSPECTUS.

THE principal features aimed at in this undertaking are:—

First. To present the matter contained in each number in such form and also that any or all the articles can be preserved and bound in ordinary Library volumes.

Secondly. To establish a record of the deeply momentous events connected with modern Spiritualism, and to gather up and preserve such material as cannot be included in the columns of the weekly journals devoted to Spiritualism.

Thirdly. To open up opportunities for a free and fraternal interchange of facts and opinions with the Spiritualists of foreign countries.

Fourthly. To treat all topics of current interest from a purely Spiritualistic stand-point.

SECOND AND THIRD VOLUMES OF "MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM." The projectors of this magazine call especial attention to their design of securing from Mrs. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN, the exclusive right to publish, in successive numbers, the voluminous and deeply interesting material she has prepared for the completion of two additional volumes of "MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM."

In this wonderful assemblage of facts, records of special phenomena, and biographical sketches, Mrs. Britten is possessed of MSS. and other unpublished matter, as well as literature now out of print, which renders the treasures she has been collecting during many past years priceless, and fully equivalent to the worth of the yearly subscription.

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- 1st. Leading Article.
- 2d. Biographical Sketches of the Mediums, Speakers, and Writers connected with Modern Spiritualism.
- 3d. Sketches of Sibyls, Prophets, and Ecstasies of the Ancient and Middle Ages.
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- 5th. Foreign Spiritualism, Transatlantic Correspondence, etc.
- 6th. Communications from Spirits.
- 7th. Summary of Passing Events.
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NINTH EDITION

REVISED AND ENLARGED

THE HISTORY
OF
MODERN AMERICAN
SPIRITUALISM

A TWENTY YEARS' RECORD

Attesting and Unprecedented Close Correspondence between Earth and the World of Spirits

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE EDITOR AND GUARDIAN OF THE SPIRITS

THE HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT OF

PRICE \$1.00

POSTAGE 40 CENTS

A NEW REVISED EDITION

WILLIAM WILLY & COMPANY

THE WESTERN STAR.

VOL. I.—AUGUST, 1872.—NO. 2.



“IS THERE ANY HOPE?”

WITH greater or less emphasis this question surges through every grade of the community, and, silently or openly, meets us at every change we make. Experience has taught us not to ask it about nature, for we *know* that, as by magic, the Master-Hand touches some secret spring, and lo! almost simultaneously in the same sections, there is bud, leaf, and blossom, a marvel of beauty! It may be cloudy, perchance “a dark day,” but we are *sure* that the sun will rise, flood the world with light, then retire amid a blaze of glory transcending Oriental tales, to be again followed by the stately march of moon and stars as they take their places in the vaulted dome.

Very early the child begins this refrain over his allotted task or hard lesson, and it keeps pace with him through every round of the ladder to literary or social distinction. How many pillows are wet, through this spray, and what prayers are wrung from our misgivings! How it rolls up in the mother's breast, as she detects embryotic seed in her little ones, which, unless diverted, will yield a baleful crop! How it deepens, as she realizes that habits are becoming fixed, which ever bring ruin in their train, and that the temptations she so dreaded have at last triumphed, and are bearing fruit!

Who shall tell its force to the wife, as through the gate of intemperance, she sees every manly quality diminish, and the lover, husband, and father become a loathing and terror? She left the fond and trusted, and ventured all for him. Behold poverty, abuse, entire overthrow, save her own womanhood, which now shields her darlings, and with bleeding fingers keeps the wolf from the door! See its impersonation in the bowed head of that venerable man. His son is a defaulter! And again, in the bleached hair of yon tottering widow. Her son is being tried for murder!

Alas, alas! how the plot thickens! What wails here for lost honor, and there over wrecked purity! Who is sufficient for these things? We are interested in the strivings of all students, of whatever name and grade; those of every hue, who are seeking a niche of usefulness or fame. We take the dip of their wave, and rise or descend with them. We are not unmindful of those who are oppressed in mind, body, or estate; but since they as individuals are not degraded, but unfortunate, we look to a more robust public sentiment to extricate them from the meshes which entangle, and the cords which bind. How we pity such as make night hideous by their convulsive laughter, whose steps are leading to certain blight! As yet remorse has not come to them; they are full of insolence and bravado — they have not touched the solid base of reality — they have not come to themselves. But how we are impressed, when like Magdalens they kneel before us, and in tones of anguish ask, "Is there any hope?" Then advances nearer the trial of our faith. Can He be God and Father, who is not equal to all things? He provides for blades of grass and ground-worms, and will He fail humanity? He bears our dear ones to a place of safety, and we say it is well. What will He do with the erring and sinful, who so need his healing? Will He cast

out the prodigal? Will He cry, Unclean, unclean! Depart from me, I never knew you? Will He stifle with smoke; will He burn with fire; will He annihilate as not worth saving? He might, if He were finite like us, but He is Infinite. He does not trip. His vision is clear. He sees to the end. Did He create on purpose to destroy? Could absolute love do that? How then will He extricate us? Will He compel us to better methods? Will He lure us into pleasant fields through sweet odors? Will He pamper, coax, and remove us in golden chariots? Will He strew our path with roses, and entrance our senses? *Not at all.* He gives outside assistance: He paves the road, unseals the eye, softens the heart; but He leaves the subject for contemplation, — to say, "I will arise, and go for succor." Aspiration must be quickened from the very depths of humility. Salvation is secured by thorough penitence. We are not to be lionized and fêted, but to walk through the valley towards our ascension. There is no cure unless we reform, and that determination once formed, we must submit to its great cost, — do any honest work for the imperative crust. *We can conquer*, and so answer the query, "Is there any hope?" Yes, friends, always. There is an outlet for every wanderer whatever false trail may have entrapped his feet. There is a remedy for all defects in society, and each of its members; but there is scathing retribution too. There is no sex in right and wrong. The curtains, whether satin or tatters, in palace, club, or hut, must be torn down. Each must stand at the bar; and who shall measure the power and meaning of those words, "Am I my brother's keeper?" to those who, under the garb of religion, philanthropy, and moral teachers, have lured, won, and ruined countless victims of their care? The word of the Lord to all is, Turn from the falsity of your ways, and walk no more in them. Replace the old with the new. Our hearts aright, we shall sense

the meaning of the invitation, "Come up higher." We shall love the best for its own sake, and so scorn any compromise with truth. We shall be in harmony with the Divine, and ready to verify the injunction, "Bear one another's burdens. And so, THERE IS HOPE FOR ALL!"

THE ANCHOR OF HOPE.

BY ELIZABETH L. WATSON.

HOLD fast to the anchor of Hope, faint heart,
While the waves of sorrow roll high,
For the storm-king shall hear Faith's voice and depart,
Leaving once more a cloudless sky.
And thy ship shall sail on the billows free,
That beat on the sunset shore,
Where many loved ones are waiting for thee,
And "farewell" is heard nevermore.

E'en now pale iris-tints shine on the clouds,
And the tossing waves blossom out white,
As daisy-blooms smile from the bosom of shrouds,
Or star-blooms embroider the night!
For love-thoughts lost on the echoless air,
And prayers that seem uttered in vain,
Are caught in the clasp of our Father's care,
And answered again and again:

Answered with love that is boundless and true,
With a wisdom far higher than ours;
A patience that soon will create us anew,
And deck all life's deserts with flowers.
Then hold to the anchor of Hope, faint heart,
Whatever thy sorrows may be,
For the day is at hand when the storms shall depart,
And love's sunlight laugh over the sea!



MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM;

OR,

A HISTORY OF TWENTY YEARS OF OPEN COMMUNION
BETWEEN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

BY

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

VOL. II. — CHAPTER II.



II.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE ROCHESTER KNOCKINGS.

CHAPTER II.

Early Spiritual Manifestations in America, continued from Chapter I.—Revelations of Spiritual Existence.—Trance Speaking.—Miss Rachel Baker.—The Little Preacher of Saybrook.—Manifestations in the Families of Messrs. Dods and Barron.

“How pure in heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thoughts would hold
An hour's communion with the dead !

TENNYSON.

THE following narrative, from the pen of Dr. Joseph Warren, D. D., formerly an eminent preacher of the Episcopal faith in Tennessee, is not only vouched for on the authority of its respected and venerable author, but has been carefully investigated and testified to by several living witnesses, one of whom (Squire Fisher) was actually present at the séances described in the narrative. Dr. Warren, now a resident at Rome, in Italy, favors the author with permission to publish his narrative in full, reserving only the real name of the family chiefly interested, for reasons which will appear sufficiently obvious to every intelligent reader.

We shall endeavor to preserve, as far as possible, the phraseology of our esteemed correspondent ; but as the narrative occupies far more space than would conform to the limits of our record, we must content ourselves by

giving such quotations as will be found of the most interesting character.

It was in the year 1830 that Dr. Warren was solicited to fill the pulpit of a dear old friend, and former college companion of his, who had been suddenly struck with paralysis. The doctor had secluded himself from his ministerial duties for several past months on account of ill health, and an ardent desire to devote his time to literary pursuits; but deeming that the change from his city residence in N., to the quiet of his friend's country parsonage might prove congenial to his present condition, he determined to comply with the invitation in question. Besides these merely personal inducements, there were others of a deeply sympathetic kind, which influenced his decision.

The Rev. Mr. W——, the friend whom he designed to oblige, had been the father of a son, whose wild and dissolute career had recently been terminated by self-destruction. Rumor alleged that if the unhappy young man had not put an end to his life by a deed of violence, the law was prepared to avenge upon him more than one act of murder, perpetrated, as it was currently reported, on the victims of his lawless passions. It was the shame and anguish of mind occasioned by the iniquitous career of this wretched son, that had reduced Mr. W—— to that condition of helplessness in which the aid of his kind and sympathizing friend, Dr. Warren, had been solicited.

On arriving at the scene of his intended labors, Dr. Warren found that the mansion and grounds formerly occupied by Mr. W——'s family had been abandoned since the tragic death of his son; in fact, the parent and child had long been estranged from each other, and the latter had pursued his course of riot and dissipation in the once stately family mansion, whilst his justly offended father had removed to a small cottage, situated as far as possible from the home thus desecrated.

Here Dr. Warren took up his abode, and here for some months he continued to minister to his suffering friend, and rural parishioners, with ever increasing acceptance. Dr. Warren goes on to say:—

After a few weeks' residence in the parish which I had taken under my care, I began to be aware that strange rumors were prevalent concerning the house formerly occupied by my old friend, and of late abandoned to the occupancy of his profligate son. I was informed that the most unaccountable sounds and ghostly sights had been recently manifested there. All the usual fictions current concerning haunted houses were revived in this case, with circumstances of added terror and evil report. The house was a large, handsome Southern residence, closely embosomed in thick pine woods, and removed about two miles from any other habitation.

Despite its utterly secluded situation, and the evil reputation which attached to it, the lovely woods and shady forest paths that surrounded it had become a favorite resort of the children in the neighborhood; and it was from the fearful disturbances that they encountered in their sports near the mansion, that the first tidings of hauntings had been derived.

In a little while the rustics, who had occasion to pass through the woods, and now and then the sportsmen pursuing their game in its well stocked preserves, encountered, as they alleged, ghostly forms and fearful apparitions, whilst shrieks, groans, and concussive sounds of tremendous power, echoed and reëchoed from the park-like avenues that surrounded the building, "making night hideous," and compelling a strict but fruitless search to discover the source of these disturbances. On more than one occasion I was informed, by wholly reliable witnesses, that the mansion had been seen through the woods at night brilliantly illuminated; figures had been discerned passing before the windows, and flitting along the terraces and through the courts; but when a determined body of the villagers sallied forth to ascertain who had thus invaded the solitude of the place, the lights vanished, the forms disappeared, and the most profound stillness succeeded to a loud hum of voices, and a chorus of sobs. "The next morning, when I and four of my most skeptical acquaintances visited the house," added one of my informants (Deacon Harvey), "I pledge my honor that there was not a footprint to be found in the dust that covered the rooms, passages, and stairways, and that too in the very chambers and galleries which I had with my own eyes seen blazing with lights, and crowded with forms of men and women passing and repassing."

As time rolled on, the reports of the hauntings became more frequent and circumstantial. Numbers of persons, in whose good sense and

veracity I had entire confidence, visited the place, and gave me direct and first-hand accounts of their alarming experiences. The affair at length began to assume an authentic and serious aspect, and this was confirmed by a cautiously written account which appeared in the *G— Citizen*, in which the editor detailed his experiences in visiting the possessed mansion, in company with Renben Jacobs, Esq., a magistrate of Tennessee, and Mr. Stephen Moss, the celebrated engineer. As both these gentlemen were personally known to me, and their statements respecting the sights and sounds they had encountered were boldly affirmed over their own signatures, I began to attach a degree of importance to the case which I should never else have associated with a tale of the so-called "supernatural." My final resolve to enter upon an investigation of these mysteries for myself, was confirmed by an account given me of several days' exploration in the haunted dwelling, by my friend and parishioner, Mr. Fisher, ex-mayor of N—, and a man upon whose calm judgment and deliberate power of observation I felt fully able to rely. This gentleman assured me he had several times confronted the spirit of young W—, and the forms of two girls supposed to have been murdered by him, and that in the open light of day, and with a tangibility of appearance which admitted of no doubt or question. He affirmed that he himself, with Reuben Jacobs, and Deacon Harvey, had sat in an empty chamber, on the bare floor, and all of them had simultaneously seen two women, in garments stained with blood, rise up from the floor and flee across the apartment, pursued by the shadowy form of young W—. As the apparitions disappeared, the loud report of a musket was heard, and that not only by themselves, but also by a crowd of persons who had followed the gentlemen to the house, but feared to enter with them. They added, that as they sat on that floor, they heard over sixty distinct knocks, the number of which they counted, sounding on the very planks beneath them, and proceeding with just as much force when they stationed Squire Fisher in the empty room below, in which he and two other watchers testified that they heard the knocks but could not find any cause to account for them. . . .

Now although I heard all this, and more to the same effect, from persons whose veracity I esteemed at the same rate as my own, I determined to visit the scene of the hauntings, and investigate their nature *alone*, before I felt justified in abandoning what I deemed to be the safe ground of incredulity, on the possibility of the dead revisiting the earth, and causing their presence to be known through the strange and occult means here detailed.

I thought then, as I now know, that any information concerning the condition of the spirit after death is vague, unsatisfactory, and founded

upon mere theoretical opinions, for which we had no foundation in proven facts. I deemed that any channels which could conduct us into some more assured knowledge of what the life hereafter might be, would prove of inestimable benefit to mankind, and do more to strengthen our faith in immortality, and determine the character of human conduct for good or evil, than all the sermons upon speculative religion that were ever preached. As a minister of religion myself—as one who had ventured to assert the fact of man's immortality, but who could only prove it from the traditions of the past or the hearsay of the fathers, I deemed it my solemn duty to avail myself of any clue which could open up to me an assurance of the doctrines I taught, and transmute faith into actual knowledge. Besides these pleadings of duty, I remembered, with some shade of awe, and not a little perplexity, certain experiences I had gone through in a visit to Europe, and as a sojourner amongst some French *savants*, much given to the practices of animal magnetism. These gentlemen, at a pleasant assemblage where occult philosophy was the theme of our conversation, had assured me I was a "fine magnetic subject," and begged me to allow myself to be put into the mesmeric sleep. As a mere matter of curiosity, I consented to their request; but the results were such as I little anticipated, and can never forget. I became lost to this earth and its surroundings, and found myself in realms of beauty, peace, joy, and harmony, the memory of which I can never recall even now without tears. On every side of me I saw multitudes of radiant people with glorious forms, shining apparel, and beautiful faces. Some of these divine-looking beings I perceived wore the identity of those I had once known on earth, but whom I had long since regarded as dead. Amongst them was the form of my blessed and much loved mother; also a lovely little sister, who, marvelous to relate, still preserved her identity, and was known to me, although she had grown up into a peerless and angelic-looking woman. There were several other well-remembered and dearly loved sojourners of earth, all of whom I should have only looked to meet again amongst the dust and ashes of the grave.

These glorious beings wore no wings, hence were not angels; and that they were images only, I could not think at the time, for they nodded, smiled, bowed, and beckoned to me, like living beings. Their presence, too, filled me with a wondrous sense of delight, and one or two of them spoke to me, though it was the misfortune of my after life that I could not remember what they said. I beheld one wonderful thing in this scene of paradise which perplexed me more than all others. At times I saw human beings of a most horrible and repulsive appearance, and of different degrees of blackness and density. These

wretched-looking objects were all surrounded by an atmosphere which seemed to correspond in color and thickness to their own bodies; and what was most astonishing, was the fact that I often saw them, and the bright beings surrounded by light and bloom, advance towards each other with inconceivable swiftness, and such a terrific momentum, that I looked to see them shivered to pieces by the shock; but instead of this, I perceived that they literally passed through each other's forms, and that without betraying the least consciousness of meeting, seeing, or even being aware of the others' presence.

In subsequent séances — for I practiced with these mesmerists for several months — I saw the solution of this singular problem. I perceived that the degrees of density of every world or atmosphere corresponded to the beings who dwelt within it, and that finer and more sublimated spheres and spirits penetrated and inhabited the grosser and denser; thus a vast number of spheres and spirit people inhered together, invisible to each other, yet related like water in a crystal, microscopic creatures in water, gases in the creatures, electricity in the gases, and the innermost invisible life principle in all. I could see world within world, spheres of sublimated refinement, brightness, and beauty, penetrating within and within and still within the grosser and denser. I could see the forms of the dwellers in these interlacing atmospheres piercing each other, invisible all to each other; but for me to look upon them in this interior unfoldment, was very wonderful and very awful.

It was on a quiet summer's evening that I found myself, after a long ramble in the pine woods, suddenly standing before a melancholy-looking, deserted mansion, the park-like approach to which, with its broad verandahs, open courts, and shattered appearance, convinced me I had chanced upon the very spot which I had so often designed to visit.

The occasion seemed propitious to my intention; and as no human being appeared to be within, or about the place, I resolved to explore it at once, and to do so in the thorough spirit of a fearless investigator.

I had no sooner made my way through the open doors and halls into a suite of apartments which had once been used as reception rooms, than I experienced a sensation of fear, dislike, and repulsion, which I had never known before. A sudden chill pervaded my whole frame, and a strongly-defined impression, almost as clear as a voice, bore these words in upon my mind: There is a gulf between the living and the dead which humanity cannot endure to fathom.

Again I thought, or something seemed to make me think: How terrible is the approach of unbodied spirit! The mortal cannot stand in the presence of the immortal and live. Such sentiments as these oppressed me with a nameless and indescribable sense of horror. I would

have given all I possessed, aye, even years of my life, to fly the place, and yet I could not move. The whole atmosphere seemed to be full of spirit, and that of a horrible and repulsive character. "How dreadful is this place!" was the thought which at length shaped itself into words, and with their shuddering utterance, I knew that I had broken some spell. Instantly I perceived that a woman, young, once fair, but hateful and antagonistic to my mortal being, had entered the hall and was gliding swiftly towards me. Had no relief interposed to save me from waking, conscious contact with this being, the horror of that moment would, I am certain, have terminated my earthly existence; but just then, as if by a providential interposition, three gentlemen of the neighborhood, one of whom was my intimate friend, Squire Fisher, entered the apartment from a long gallery which they had been traversing on the opposite side to that from which the spirit had borne down upon me. The pang of horror on the one hand, and the relief of mortal companionship on the other, served, as has since appeared, to produce a shock which threw me instantly into the mesmeric condition to which I have above alluded, and one which my French experiences had rendered familiar to me.

My friends subsequently informed me they were horror-struck to perceive me lying on the ground cold, and as they at first deemed, lifeless, but when one of the party strove to raise me, I threw him off, and standing upright, I began to speak in a decided and unfamiliar manner, bidding them have no fear, for that I was "entranced," and should converse with the spirits who inhabited that possessed mansion. By my command, some rude seats were improvised, and, lighted only by the rays of the full moon streaming in brightly through the broken panes of the shattered windows, the amazed visitors remained listening to the revelations which I poured forth under what purported to be the influence of the risen soul of the unhappy suicide, the son of my friend Mr. W—.

Speaking not as myself [Dr. Warren], but as Marcus W—, I declared that I was as much a living man as I had ever been, and moreover that I dwelt in that same house still, and should continue to do so until my spirit was freed from the bonds which chained me to it. I desired my visitors to speak to me, and when, in awe and confusion, they at first began imperfectly to question, but finally to press their queries with eagerness and intelligence, they learned from me, still speaking as the spirit of the unfortunate suicide, that there is no real death, only a change of bodies, or outward coverings to the soul; that with every one of these changes the soul enters upon an inner sphere to the place, scene, and surroundings which it formerly occupied; that its ability to change its *locale*, or place of abode, depended wholly upon the power it had ac-

quired in its previous state of existence. . . That where the moral excellence of the soul was great and exalted, its condition was correspondingly pure, beautiful, and refined ; that where the spirit was mighty in intellectual and moral worth, its powers were almost unbounded ; whilst its capacity to roam through and master the various conditions of many spheres of being were so enlarged, that such spirits appeared to men like gods, and were, in reality, tutelary spirits, or " Guardian Angels."

Being urgently questioned why the spirit of Marcus W—— continued to haunt and disturb that place, I replied, in his name, that *I was compelled to do so*. That the strongest part of my earthly magnetism had been poured out in that place ; that crime was strong passion ; strong passion ever liberated strong magnetism ; and that human magnetism formed " tractors," or magnetic points, which drew the spiritual body to themselves, and bound it as forcibly as chains forged of the magnetism of the universe. They asked of the possessing spirit if it had companions, and who were the female forms so often described by affrighted watchers ; also what produced the frightful noises that pierced the awful solitude. The possessing spirit replied, through my lips, that thousands of wretched beings like himself were attracted to his society, and that it was a part of the law of their lives that, as the remembrance of their crimes returned to them (and when was it ever absent? he said), they were surrounded by the images called up by their thoughts, and seemed madly impelled to deal blows at those images, and repeat again and again, in frenzied misery, all the scenes which crowded in upon their minds. It was at such times, he said, that their cries, groans, and acts resounded through the heavy atmosphere of their prison house into the atmosphere of earth, and became palpable alike to the sense of sight and hearing.

When asked if he was sorry for the wrongs he had committed, he replied he was sometimes, but at other times he was possessed by an uncontrollable desire to repeat it all again and again, and that that was hell, and he could not escape from it. Here he was questioned as to whether the Catholic idea, that the prayers and penances performed by others could avail him, had any foundation in fact. He answered eagerly in the affirmative, assuring his hearers that the strong sympathy of human spirits, when directed towards the earth-bound soul, gave it psychologic strength, and aided it to pray for itself, and ultimately to repent, reform, and rise out of its bonds into a condition of change analogous to death ; that when the imprisoned spirit had passed through this second death, it entered into a finer, purer inner-sphere, and he believed would have the opportunity to progress, as he had been told, eternally ; but he didn't know ; he was not ready for death for his part. He kept on repeating and repeating the scenes of earth, and he supposed, until he had

outgrown them, he could not escape from the horrid necessity of going over them. He only knew he was infinitely wretched, and longed for, but could not die, this second death.

One of the interlocutors here asked if he and the unhappy spirits around him had any teachers with them, any guardian angels to help them progress. Here a violent shuddering shook my frame, and the obsessing spirit replied, with bitter curses, that often and often they saw bright lights flashing amidst them, and they knew they were the spirits of purer and better spheres, come to try and reform them. Sometimes, he added, they heard celestial voices urging them to pray, and strive to banish the horrid desires that oppressed them.

There were some, the spirit added, who followed these lights with weeping, wailing, and penitential tears; then they laid down to sleep, and melted out of that sphere, that is, they died, and passed on higher. But others, like himself, saw the lights, and heard the voices; and though for a moment they felt remorse, and a wild aspiration to overcome their miserable propensities, they generally returned to them with added fury, and then they mocked and gibed at the angels, and bid them go hence with curses. He added, all such angels as penetrated into the sphere in which he dwelt, were called "Christs," but he believed they were only good and pure souls of men and women that had once lived on earth, and many wise, though wicked spirits he conversed with, had said that was what "Christ," "Mediator," and "Saviour" meant; also that the great love and pity which good men felt towards poor earth-bound spirits, did at last give them strength, and help them to rise: "and so," said this highly cultured and intellectual, but morally degraded spirit, "this is what is meant by a Saviour, bearing the transgressions of many, and thus it is that 'with his stripes we are healed.'"

It was far in the night when I awoke in that place of dread. My three friends were kneeling around me, praying fervently, with streaming eyes, and hearts wrung with anguish, to the throne of grace, for pity on the miserable spirits who were there bound in the prison house of their earthly crimes. As for me, I neither comprehended their pious occupation, nor my own share in the terrible revelations to which they had been listening. They led me from the house to my home, but it required several days of rest, and calm, deliberate communion with my deeply moved companions, to restore my mind, to its wonted peace, and make me apprehend the full force of what had transpired, the memoranda of which they had made from their joint recollections of the scene.

The fearful and loathsome impression produced upon me by that one night's intercourse with "the spirits in prison," never became modified, or faded out of memory. Within a few days of its occurrence, I succeeded

in procuring a substitute, and immediately upon his arrival I quitted the neighborhood of the hated dwelling. The friends who had been sharers in my painful experiences in vain urged me to renew them, and devote myself to the behoof and reform of the unhappy spirits who, they were fully convinced, dwelt in the bonds of their earthly crimes, within that awful mansion. No sense of duty, however strong, could persuade me again to renew the loathsome, and as I still deem it, unnatural and unlawful intercourse between the mortal and the spirit. I know that what I have written is true. I know that the experiences and revelations of the movement known as modern Spiritualism, can add nothing to the marked experiences and terrible revelations of that night of horror; but though I believe in the truth of spirit communion, and doubt not that the intercourse with purer spheres and higher existences may be fraught with pleasure and instruction, I can never again consent to place myself in such a position as to overstep the boundaries of the sphere in which I have been mercifully limited and harmoniously adapted by the providence of my all-wise Creator.

The narrative of Dr. Joseph Warren proves to us conclusively that there are certain grand central truths, revealed to us through spirit communion, concerning the condition of the soul hereafter, which do not change nor become modified by time, place, nor mediumistic idiosyncracies. If the above narration contains no philosophy startling from its novelty, it impresses us forcibly with the fact that prior, as subsequent to the celebrated era we designate the Rochester Knockings, well attested communications from the realm of soul life invariably teach the stupendous lesson that we carry our own doomsday book within us, and that life hereafter is not only a continuation, but an inevitable result of the good or evil deeds we have sown in the rudimental sphere of mortality.

TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP IN 1814.

The following remarkable instance of trance mediumship, closely resembling that of hundreds of persons similarly *gifted* (rather than "*afflicted*") during the modern movement of the last twenty-four years, is recorded in several publications of an authentic character.

In 1814, Charles Mais, of New York city, a stenographer, published a full account of a case, in pamphlet form, in which was given a circumstantial description of Miss Rachel Baker, together with many of her prayers, exhortations, sermons, conversations, and answers to questions touching the soul after death, God, Jesus Christ, heaven and hell, the angels, devils, etc., which were taken down by him at the time of their utterance. The title of the pamphlet runs thus : —

“The Surprising Case of Rachel Baker, who prays and preaches in her Sleep : with Specimens of her Extraordinary Performances taken down accurately in Short Hand at the Time ; and showing the Unparalleled Powers she possesses to pray, exhort, and answer Questions during her Unconscious State. The Whole authenticated by the most Respectable Testimony of Living Witnesses.”

Dr. Mitchell, her attending physician, who certifies to the girl's good character, and gives a long account of the case, calls it “*an intromittent mental disorder.*”

We have examined some of the sermons, exhortations, etc., and find them exceedingly fervent, eloquent, and coherent, although moulded in the old forms of religious superstition. Our examination has left no doubt upon our mind but that Rachel Baker was a good trance-speaking medium, and that the matter given off by her in that state was from the spirit of some devout exhorter and sermonizer, who had retired to the World of Spirits, and returned to the external, to pursue his business through this medium.

The pamphlet concludes with a “description of this young woman and her exercises, written by a gentleman at Cayuga, in March, 1814,” and published in the *New York Columbian*. We extract it for the benefit of our readers, who will, no doubt, conclude, after its perusal, that “trance mediumship in New York is at least forty years old.”

I went last evening with our friends, S——, and H——, to hear the famous female somnolquist, or sleep talker, of whom I have said something in my last. We went at an early hour, that we might have an opportunity of conversing with her while awake. She is a plump, hale country lass of nineteen, rather above the middle size, of a smooth, vacant tranquillity of visage, without mental vivacity or vigor. You would pronounce her eye to be good; but it is unsteady, wild, and capricious, with an unusual dilation of the pupil. She is taciturn and diffident, with a heavy, languid drawl of utterance.

Our conversation ran mostly on facts relating to herself: her parentage, nativity, age, education, health, accidents, religion, etc., and the amazing unconscious faculty of talking in her sleep. She followed all our questions in a regular pace; she anticipated nothing; but on the last head spoke with reluctance, and in a manner which betrayed a deep sensibility of her misfortune. It was not a reluctance called in to resist incivility. It was female delicacy, secreting a deformity.

She informed us that she had been in this way about two years, and was not sensible of any bodily disorder which should occasion it. She is of the Baptist sect, and for many years has been a zealous and fervent devotee, and when sleeping, her mind, taking the pious tendency of her waking hours, appears to be wholly occupied with subjects of religion. On this head she appears to be prepared to meet questions, which she answers with promptness.

These facts the people with whom she lived, and who had been acquainted with her from her infancy, united in confirming. The object of our visit being attained, and our curiosity being strongly excited, we went to a neighbor's house for an hour, and then returned again. She had been in bed some time, and in a few moments we heard her commence; the doors were thrown open and we all entered. It was a stormy, inclement night, and thirty or forty auditors only attended. It was not uncommon, we were informed, for three or four hundred to be present.

She opened with a prayer of half an hour, and delivered herself with great distinctness, in a clear, harmonious, unhesitating, and animated tone of voice, with much devotional fervor.

When ended, she sighed and groaned, as in bodily anguish, for ten or twelve minutes; her chest heaved, she grated her teeth, and caught her breath, as one does with a palpitation of the heart.

Her exercises consist of three parts: first, an introductory prayer; next, a sermon; then a closing supplication to the Deity. She often recites verses, and manifests an extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures, citing texts and long passages. Her words flow in a rapid stream. Her discourses have a resemblance, but the difference is such as to show that they are extemporaneous, and not words impressed on the memory.

Her pulse is full, without a flutter or intermission; the temperature of her forehead is that of healthful sleep; her features show no distortion, but her muscles have a tremulous spasm. If spoken to, she replies, but always on the subject of religion.

This young lady soon attracted public attention; and for three years she continued to astonish her visitors by the power of her sermons. During this time, there was no attempt made to build any peculiar system of religion upon the prodigy, nor was it turned to any purpose of private emolument. Miss Baker complained of no bodily infirmity, and was unconscious of mental indisposition.

The discourses were delivered in the solitude of a country house, as in a city of confusion, and nothing transpired in her conduct, or that of her friends, that could lead to the suspicion of imposture.

We copy the following notice from the *Hartford Review* of May 17, 1833, and find it, like the preceding account, instructive by way of affording a parallel to the phenomena of trance speaking, now so common amongst the spiritualists.

SOMETHING MARVELOUS.

There is a girl in Saybrook, about eleven years old, who, from the many specimens she has given, is thought to have been recently endowed with some extraordinary gift of speech. At certain irregular times, when the impulse is upon her, she breaks out into powerful, connected, and finished exhortations and discourses, generally on religious topics.

The first discourse which she is known to have uttered, and the only one on that subject, was on temperance. It is said to have been remarkable for its clearness, precision, and eloquence of thought, and the impressive manner in which it was pronounced. Since that time, she has delivered herself of nothing on temperance. The premonitory symptoms of her *impromptus*, are usually fits of stupor. As soon as she comes out of that, she rises, closes her eyes, and, perfectly abstracted from everything around her, commences by repeating the hymn, which sometimes is original, and of a high order of poetry. She then gives out a text, naming the chapter and verse, and proceeds to deliver a sermon, always conspicuous for its sound argument, logical sequences, and eloquent phraseology. What especially astonishes the hearers, is the fact that

when the inspiration has gone, she recollects not a word of what she has been saying; and if told the verse and chapter of her text, and the number of her hymn, she knows not how or where to find them. Her parents reside in New Haven, and are poor, miserably ignorant, and intemperate people, whilst her education has been so much neglected, that she reads with the greatest difficulty.

What is more marvelous still, she discovers hardly an ordinary degree of intellectual capacity, except when the spirit of improvisation possesses her. Several physicians have examined her, both when in and out of her lunacies, and as yet have found no other marks of disease or insanity.

We think this case will match the Campbells of Scotland, who, on stated occasions, are said to speak in strange and unknown tongues, and by their followers are believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The lovers of the marvelous will do well to visit this young preacher, as she is a genuine phoenix of the rarest quality.

Of the following two cases (the first occurring in 1834, the second in 1836) a vast mass of published testimony exists, variously written, and profusely attested.

The most concise and authentic accounts that we can select, are to be found in a little volume written by Mr. Henry Spicer, entitled "Sights and Sounds," and published in England, in 1853.

This work is professedly an account of "all the modern spiritual manifestations" which have occurred in America; and one of its chief points of interest is derived from the exceeding care which the author has taken to verify all he relates.

The first regularly recorded American manifestations commenced in the year 1834, at Canandaigua, New York, and recurred in 1836, in various parts of Pennsylvania.

The singular phenomena which occurred in the family of Mr. Dods, some few years since, claim special attention, as they are of a character more closely resembling the circumstances dwelt upon hereafter.

It is stated that the witnesses, now living, who have it in their power to attest the details which follow, are numerous and most respectable, besides being persons who were in the highest degree incredulous, and who repaired to the theatre of operations in order to detect, if possible, the means by which they were effected. I shall simply give the facts as briefly as possible, and without comment.

Mr. Dods was a resident in the village of Levant, Penobscot County, Maine. The first intimation that gentleman or his family received, that he or they were to be made the subject of any unusual manifestation, was conveyed in certain rappings, sometimes on the outside door of his house, sometimes within, on the walls, in the chambers, his own apartment, in fact, in every part of his dwelling. Coming from the village late one evening, he observed the school-house brilliantly lighted, and forms of men and women moving to and fro. As he drew near, the lights were suddenly extinguished. Fancying, however, that the scholars had assembled for a dance, he crept silently to the door, and, opening it suddenly, stepped within. All was darkness and silence—not a human being was to be found!

On other occasions, noises like the rolling of a heavy metal ball were heard to reverberate from one end of the house to the other; bedsteads were lifted and turned round, tables moved across the room, lights danced up and down the road before the house, or assembled in an open space, and then mingled in what suggested to the astonished watchers the idea of some fantastic dance!

The scene of these extraordinary phenomena was visited by so many persons, that the clerk of the county courts deemed it his duty to attend at the spot, with his assistant, and endeavor to detect and expose the trick.

Mr. Dods was perfectly willing to receive them, and permitted them to select their own apartment, to which, about nine o'clock in the evening, they accordingly withdrew.

They first fastened the door; secondly, secured the windows; they then searched the room, the closet, and the bed; they were confident that no human being was in the room, or could get in without their knowledge; equally certain that no machinery existed in the room. Placing the candle on the table, unextinguished, they went to bed.

Soon after they retired, they felt the bedclothes move. They immediately caught hold of the quilts, and braced themselves against the foot posts of the bedsteads. The clothes continued to move until they relaxed their hold, when the quilts and sheet hopped six feet from the bed on to the floor. The candle was burning, but no visible power could be detected. The bed was again searched, but nothing was found. They replaced the clothes, and once more got into bed.

In a very few moments the feather-bed started out from under them, and fell on the floor, notwithstanding their united exertions to retain it in its place.

The adventurers never succeeded in obtaining the slightest clue to these disturbances. The like fortune attended other inquiring friends of Mr. Dods.

At length, a company of gentlemen, from various parts of the country, assembled at the house, in the hope of witnessing the manifestations. Nor were they disappointed.

They were conversing freely on various topics, when a noise was heard; like the rumbling of distant thunder. It continued to increase in loudness; drawing nearer, and still nearer, and at last burst directly over the house, shaking the whole structure to its very foundation. This took place in winter, and the stars shone out clear and cold. Soon after this thunder peal, a noise was heard in the attic like the trundling of iron balls on a loose floor, and it continued for ten minutes, when the company were startled by a heavy weight falling apparently from the ceiling to the floor. It immediately commenced rolling about the room; would glide under the chairs without touching them, jump over the table, strike the four sides of the room, bounding, without touching the floor, and at last it hopped upon a bed which stood in one corner of the room, and moved from the head to the foot.

The clothes were distinctly seen to settle under it, as if some heavy weight was pressing them down. A gentleman in the room walked towards the bed, with the seeming intention to take hold of, or arrest its progress; but one of the company caught hold of his arm, and said, "Do not touch it *for your life*." It then dropped on the floor, and rolled out of the side of the house.

During all these phenomena nothing could be seen. That which made the noise was invisible.

It would appear that the spirit was by no means of a communicative disposition, since, after indulging in very many similar manifestations too numerous to mention, it ultimately withdrew from the house and neighborhood, leaving all parties in total ignorance as to its character and object.

Eighteen years since, in 1834, the *Newark Advertiser* published a curious narrative of a rapping case, into the truth of which its agents had previously inquired.

It appeared that on a certain night the family of a Mr. Joseph Barron, living in the township of Woodbridge, about three miles from Rahway, Newark County, were alarmed, after they had retired, by a loud thumping against the house. Mr. Barron's first impression was, that some person was attempting to break in; but further observation soon undeceived him. The thumping, however, continued at short intervals, until the family became so alarmed, that Mr. Barron called in some of his neighbors, who remained up with the family until daylight, when the thumping ceased.

The next evening, after night-fall, the noise recommenced, when it was

ascertained to be mysteriously connected with the movements of a servant girl in the family, a white girl, about fourteen years of age.

When passing a window on the stairs, for example, a sudden jar, accompanied with an explosive sound, broke a pane of glass, the girl at the same moment being seized with a violent spasm. This, of course, very much alarmed her, and a physician (Dr. Drake) was sent for, came, and bled her. The bleeding, however, produced no apparent effect. The noise still continued as before, at intervals, wherever the girl went, each sound producing more or less of a spasm; and the physician, with the family, remained up during the night. At daylight the thumping ceased again. On the third evening the same thing was repeated, commencing a little earlier than before, and so every evening.

The circumstance rapidly spread, and produced a vast excitement, the house being filled and surrounded from morning till night. All imaginable means were resorted to in order to unravel the phenomenon. At one time the girl would be removed from one apartment to another without effect. Wherever she was placed, at uncertain intervals, the sudden thumping noise would be heard in the room.

She was taken to a neighbor's house; the same result followed. When carried out of doors, however, no noise was heard.

Dr. Drake, who had been constant in his attentions during the whole period, on one occasion, in company with the agents of the paper, made a variety of experiments with the girl, who was placed in an upper room with some members of the family. The noises then resembled those which would be produced by a person violently thumping the upper door with the head of an axe five or six times in succession, jarring the house, ceasing a few minutes, and then resuming as before. The girl appeared to be in perfect health, cheerful, and free from everything like the fear and apprehension she had on former occasions exhibited. The noise, however, continued; and in order to ascertain more satisfactorily that she was not herself the author of it, she was placed on a chair upon a blanket, in the centre of the room, the chair being bandaged with cloth, the girl's feet fastened on the front round, and her hands confined together on her lap.

All these precautions produced no change, the thumping continuing as before, though the girl moved neither limb nor muscle.

She was then placed in the doorway of a closet, the door being ajar. In less than a minute it flew open, as if violently struck with a mallet, accompanied with precisely such a noise as would be produced in such a case.

Here we must bring this section of our subject to a close.

The records of this century, and the experience of numerous persons still living, could furnish many more cases of spiritual phenomena, strictly analogous to that of the modern movement, yet lacking the scientific explanation which has been so generally received since 1848, up to that period.

Spiritual beings who appeared *eighteen centuries ago* were regarded by modern civilization and Christianity as "Angels," sometimes as "God" in person; while trance speakers of the same period were spoken of as "Prophets," "Men of God," and considered to be plenary inspired by the Almighty himself.

The very same persons who make these enormous claims for ancient Spiritualism, write of spiritual appearances in the 18th and 19th centuries as necessarily being the work of human imposture, or if genuine, at the very most, "evil spirits," while the trance speakers whose utterances they can neither ignore nor account for, they stupidly and pertinaciously denounce as "diseased" or "insane."

It is to mark the vast and important change in public opinion which the advent of modern Spiritualism with all its scientific facts has wrought, and show the flood of light and knowledge which it has poured upon the subject of man's spiritual nature and life beyond the grave, that we have ventured to inflict upon the reader narratives with which the experiences of the last twenty-five years have completely familiarized us.

"The people that walked in darkness" have indeed "seen a great light;" and nothing more conclusively proves this ancient truth, so wonderfully illustrated in our own time, than these brief notices of the early Spiritualism of the 19th century.

“GHOST LAND;” OR, RESEARCHES INTO THE MYSTERIES OF SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE.

2 BY AUSTRIA.

NO. II.

“To be, or not to be; that is the question.”

HAMLET.

It is a phenomenon worthy of remark, that as the circle of our earthly existence tends towards the closing lines which unite the last days of old age with the first of extreme youth, the memory of our earliest experiences assumes a distinctness scarcely less vivid than the events of yesterday. The crowded page, overwritten by the hand of our manhood's prime, fades into a confused mass of ideality, from which nothing less than a strong cord of association can recall well-defined images; but the first and last become concrete and inséparable memories, and the events of our second childhood seem to take their place in a regular succession with those of our first, without any intervening time to obliterate them.

As I recall the singular experiences which marked my early boyhood, it seems but yesterday that I, now an aged man of threescore and ten, was the lad of twelve summers, led to my home by the hand of Professor Marx, on the memorable night when I first realized the marvel of magnetic influence and somnambulic lucidity, in the experiment detailed in the last chapter. As such experiments were constantly répeated, and spread over a period of full six years, I do not propose to recapitulate them *seriatim*, but will endeavor to occupy my readers'

time more profitably by presenting them with a summary of the revelations which those six years of occult practices disclosed to me.

On the night of what I may call my initiation into the society associated with Professor Marx, that gentleman informed me, on our way to our lodgings, that the unconscious condition into which I had fallen after my spiritual visit to Hamburg, was occasioned by the lack of force necessary to sustain my system to the close of the séance.

He added, that as I grew stronger and more accustomed to the magnetic-control, I should be privileged to retain a recollection of what had transpired; and where this power failed, — as it might do, — my memory should be refreshed by a perusal of the memoranda which he kept of every séance, a storehouse of information which he intended to transcribe and correct in my presence.

In fulfillment of this promise, the Professor spent some hours of every week with me; and as I was permitted to propound any questions which arose in my mind, and he seemed to take a singular pleasure in explaining the philosophy connected with the facts he recorded, I soon became possessed of the opinions entertained by the society with whom I was unwittingly associated.

Professor Marx was not only a member of that society described so graphically, by Jung Stilling in vision, but he also belonged to several others, all of whom were more or less addicted to the practices of animal and mineral magnetism. The particular association to which I was first introduced, constituted the German branch of a very ancient secret order, the name and distinctive characteristics of which, neither I, nor any other human being, is privileged to mention, or even indicate more fully than I shall do in the following statements.

Many learned men, and patient students into life's profoundest mysteries, had transmitted, from generation to

generation, the result of their investigations, and the opinions deduced from their experiments. A society, whom I shall call for distinction's sake, the "Berlin Brotherhood," conserving the experiences of their predecessors, had evolved the following elements of philosophy: They believed that every fragment of matter in the universe represented a corresponding atom of spiritual existence; that this realm of spiritual being was the essence, force, and real substance of the material; but that both inevitably dissolved together, both being resolved back into their component parts, in the chemical change called death.

They acknowledged that the realm of spiritual being was ordinarily invisible to the material, and only known through its effects, being the active and controlling principle of matter; but they had discovered, by repeated experiments, that spiritual forms could become visible to the material under certain conditions, the most favorable of which were somnambulism procured through the magnetic sleep. This state, they had found, could be induced sometimes by drugs, vapors, and aromal essences; sometimes by spells, as through music, intently staring into crystals, the eyes of snakes, running water, or other glittering substances; occasionally by intoxication caused by dancing, spinning around, or distracting clamors; but the best and most efficacious method of exalting the spirit into the superior world, and putting the body to sleep, was, as they had proved, through animal magnetism. They taught that in the realms of spiritual existence, were beings who composed the fragmentary and unorganized parts of humanity, as well as beings of higher orders than humanity. Thus, as man was composed of earthly substances, vegetable tissues, mineral, atmospheric, and watery elements, so all these had realms of spiritual existences, perfectly in harmony with their

peculiar quality and functions. Hence, they alleged there were earthy spirits; spirits of the flood, the fire, the air; spirits of various animals; spirits of plant life, in all its varieties; spirits of the atmosphere; and planetary spirits, without limit or number. The spirits of the planets, and higher worlds than earth, took rank far above any of those that dwelt upon, or in its interior. These spirits were more powerful, wise, and far-seeing than the earth spirits, whilst their term of existence was also more extended in point of time; but to no spirit did the Brotherhood attribute the privilege of immortality, and least of all to the fleeting and composite essence which formed the vital principle of man. Assuming, that as man's soul was composed of all the elements which were represented in the construction of his body, so his spirit was, as a whole, far superior to the spirits of earth, water, plants, minerals, etc. To hold communion with them, however, was deemed by the Brotherhood legitimate and necessary to those who would obtain a full understanding of the special departments of Nature in which these embryotic existences were to be found. Thus they invoked their presence by magical rites, and sought to obtain control over them, for the purpose of wresting from them the complete understanding of, and power over the secrets of Nature. Whilst I found, by repeated conversations with my new associates, that every one of them emphatically denied the continued existence of the soul after death, they still believed that the soul's essence became progressed by entering into organic forms, and thus, that our essences, though not our individualities, were taken up by higher organisms than man's, and ultimately formed portions of that exalted race of beings who ruled the fate of nations, and from time to time communicated with the soul of man as planetary spirits. They taught that the elementary spirits, like the soul

essence in man, were dissipated by the action of death, but, like that soul essence, became progressed by existence in forms, and were taken up by higher organisms, and ultimately helped to make up the spirit in man. Such was a part of the philosophy into which I now became inducted; and, which soon took a deep hold upon my young and plastic mind, and indeed remained with me up to the period in which all my theories were destroyed, "at one fell swoop," by the facts of modern Spiritualism.

Strange, and even fantastic as the belief sketched above may appear to the skeptic, materialist, or Spiritualist, permit me to assure all these differential classes of thinkers, that these views have a far wider acceptance than the bare facts of history or biography would lead mankind to believe.

I have conversed with the leading minds of the German schools in many phases of thought, and have found them unable to combat the facts I had to show, and compelled them to acknowledge the plausibility of my theory, as an explanation of many of what would otherwise remain insoluble problems in nature. The society to which I was introduced by Professor Marx was not the only one which cherished these views. In Arabia, India, Asia, Armenia, Hungary, Bohemia, Italy, France, Sweden, and Great Britain, secret societies exist where these beliefs are accepted, and some of the experiences I am about to relate occurred in the great Babylon of Materialism, London, during a visit which I made with Professor Marx to England.

The Professor, after some years of practice with me as his "clairvoyant," conceived for me an attachment which I warmly reciprocated, and which led him to seek my company in many of the excursions he made in foreign countries in pursuit of knowledge.

The Professor was exceedingly generous, and distributed

his abundant means with an unstinted hand. One day, discoursing with me on the subject of his lavish expenditure, he remarked carelessly, —

"There is that *mineral* quality in my organism, Louis, which attracts to me, and easily subjects to my control, the elementary spirits who rule in the mineral kingdom. Have I not informed you how invariably I can tell the quality of mines, however distant? how often I have stumbled, as if by accident, upon buried treasures? and how constantly my investments and speculations have resulted in financial successes? Louis, I *attract money*, because I attract mineral elements, and the spirits who rule in that realm of Nature.

"I neither seek for nor covet wealth. I love precious stones for their beauty and magnetic virtues, but money, as a mere possession, I despise. Were I as mercenary in my disposition as I am powerful in the means of gaining wealth, I could be richer than Croesus, and command a longer purse than Fortunatus."

"Is it not strange, my master," I replied, "that the specialty of your physical nature—namely, the power of attracting riches as you allege—should not find a corresponding desire in your soul?"

"Not at all, my Louis: on the contrary, Nature is purely harmonious, and ever tends to equilibrium in all her strivings. Have you not remarked how often the possession of a special gift is accompanied by an indifference to its possession?"

"Good singers, great musicians, and even poets, painters, and sculptors, rarely estimate their gifts as highly as the world that enjoys them. They are ever dissatisfied with themselves, and unless the world praises, applauds, and recompenses them, they find but little or no interior reward from the mere exercise of their faculty. But this is one of Nature's noblest decisions in the courts of eternal

justice. 'You may not have the gift and its recompense also,' she says. 'If you are endowed with a delicious quality of voice, you shall seek the applause of others before its tones shall satisfy you. The verses that you make, O poet! shall never rhyme sweetly in your ears, until they find a reëcho on the tongues of the populace. And thus it is with all Nature's gifts. Abundance of strength, in the physical departments of our being, rarely accompany unusual vigor of thought, or profundity of intellect; muscle and brain seldom hold companionship: and so the magnetic attractions which draw unto my physique the metallic treasures of the earth, fail to find any response in the magnetic attractions of my spirit; whereas, were I so constituted as to lack the force which attracts the service of the spirits of the metals, my soul would feel and yearn for a supply to the deficiency, in a constant aspiration for money and treasure."

"A strange philosophy, my master."

"But a just, as it is a true one."

"Nature is bounteous, but not prodigal, and wealth in one department of her judiciary implies dearth in another. Thus it is that moral, mental, and physical equilibrium is sustained throughout the grand machinery of the universe."

And that is why (as I then believed) Professor Marx was rich, but did not care for, or value his wealth, whilst so many millions, who do not possess in their organisms that peculiar mineral quality, which, as the Brotherhood taught, was necessary to attract wealth, pine for its possession, yet spend their lives vainly in its pursuit.

It becomes necessary, for the benefit of any students of psychological mysteries who may peruse these pages, that I should here state, as briefly as possible, the specialties in my association with the "Berlin Brotherhood" which attracted them to me.

They believed (and with good reason) that the spiritual essence in man called *soul*, is susceptible of acting a part independent, to some extent, of the body. That when the body is entranced, or subsides into perfect rest beneath the action of the mesmeric sleep, that the spirit, becoming liberated from its control, acquires highly exalted functions, amongst which are the powers of traversing space, and beholding objects through the lucidity of spiritual light. Professor Marx had detected, through certain signs familiar to good mesmerists, that I was a subject for magnetic experiments.

My power as a "clairvoyant" exceeded what he had anticipated; hence my services to the Brotherhood were highly appreciated. Ever since the practices of Mesmer had become familiar to them, they had delighted in pursuing them in support of their favorite theory, which was that the soul essence of man could appear, make signs, sounds, and disturbances, in places distant from the body; that at times when these soul essences were dissipated suddenly, as in the action of violent death, that they inhaled to earthly things and places, and *for a time*, could maintain a sort of vague, shadowy existence, which at length melted away, and became dissipated in space, to be taken up from the grand reservoir of spiritual essences in other souls. Now the brothers insisted, that these soul essences, which they called the *double goer*, and more frequently the "atmospheric spirit," by its occasional appearances, both before and after the death of individuals, covered the whole ground of spectres, ghosts, apparitions, hauntings, and supernaturalism in general.

The fact that the "atmospheric spirit" often lingered round the earth after the death of the body, and could be seen, heard, and felt, did not militate against their theory that immortality was a fiction, and that the soul died with the body. "It was *merely* the atmospheric spirit;

a shadowy remnant of the soul," they said, "which had ever been seen or manifested in the realm of ghost land, and this was not a permanent intelligent existence, but merely a temporary relic of the broken organism, like the perfume which lingers about the spot where the flower has been." By repeated and patient experiments with their magnetic subjects, they found that they could send the "double" or "atmospheric spirit" abroad in the somnambular sleep, and that it could be seen, heard, and felt precisely like the spectres that were claimed to have been manifested in tales of the supernatural.

On one occasion the Berlin Society having thrown me into a profound sleep by the aid of vital magnetism, and the vapors of nitrous oxide gas, they directed my "atmospheric spirit" to proceed, in company with two other lucid subjects, to a certain castle in Bohemia, where friends of theirs resided, and then and there to make disturbances by throwing stones, moving ponderable bodies, shrieking, groaning, and tramping heavily, etc., etc. I here state emphatically, and upon the honor of one devoted only to the interest of truth, that these disturbances were made, and made by the spirits of myself and two other yet living beings, a girl and a boy who were subjects of the society; and though we, in our own individualities, remembered nothing whatever of our performance, we were shortly afterwards shown a long and startling newspaper account of the hauntings in the castle of Baron von L——, of which we were the authors.

In a work devoted to the relation of occult facts, I have myself in my library at this moment, an account of the "manifestations," as they were termed, which occurred on three several occasions, at a certain castle in Bohemia. The writer attributes these disturbances to disembodied spirits, but in the particular case in question, I insist that the atmospheric spirits of the Berlin Brotherhood were

the authors of the facts recorded. As the experiments of these grave gentlemen were neither pursued in fun or mischief, but solely with a view to evolve the *rationale* of a psychological science, I must confess that they followed out their experiments without remorse or consideration for the feelings of others; and as we were all bound by the most solemn oaths of secrecy, there was little or no chance that a solution to any of the mysteries that originated in our circle could escape from its charmed precincts. I am now writing at a period of half a century after the occurrences I allude to; there will be no impropriety, therefore, in my recalling, to any who may chance to be my contemporaries, and retain a recollection of the event, the scandal that prevailed about sixty years ago, in a town in Russia, concerning a nobleman much given to the study of occult arts, who was alleged to have put to death a young country girl, whom he had subjected for some months to his magical experiments, and that for the purpose of proving whether her atmospheric spirit, violently thrust out of the body in the vigor of vitality, could not continue hovering around the scene of death, and make manifestations palpable to the sense of sight and sound. The popular rumor concerning this barbarous sacrifice was, that the nobleman in question had seduced the unhappy peasant girl, and after having periled her immortal soul by his magical arts, that he had ruthlessly destroyed her body for fear she should betray him.

Certain it was that the gentleman in question was charged with murder, tried, and *acquitted*, just as it was supposed any other powerful noble in his place would have been. The results, however, were, that strange and horrible disturbances took place in his castle. The affrighted domestics alleged that the spirit of the victim held possession of her destroyer's dwelling, and night after night her wild shrieks and blood stained-form, flying

through gallery and corridor, "made night hideous," and startled the surrounding peasantry from slumber. Rumor added that the ghost, spectre, or "atmospheric spirit," whatever it might be, was not laid for years, and that the adept who had resorted to such terrible methods of gratifying his insatiate thirst for occult knowledge paid a tremendous penalty for what he had sought. Tortured with the horrible phantom he had evoked, his mind succumbed, and became a mere wreck. At the time when I commenced my experiences with the Brotherhood, this man, who had once been an honored member of their society, was confined as a hopeless lunatic, whilst his castle and estates were abandoned by his heir to the possession of the dread haunter, and the destructive spirit of neglect and dilapidation.

It was by the command of my associates that I one night visited, in the magnetic sleep, the cell of the lunatic; and being charged by the power of the Brothers with their combined magnetic force, I threw it on the maniac, and by this means, whilst his suffering body slumbered tranquilly, I returned to our "sanctuary" with his spirit, and from the records of that night's proceedings, I extract the following minutes of what transpired. He whose office I am not permitted by my *honor* to name, I shall call "Grand Master," and he thus questioned what was always called on these occasions the "flying soul" of the maniac:—

G. M. Did you kill the body of A. M. ? Answer truly.

F. S. I did.

G. M. For what purpose, and how ?

F. S. To ascertain if the atmospheric spirit, being full of life, could remain with me. I killed her by a sudden blow, so as to let all the life out at once, and I drew out the spirit from the dying form by mesmeric passes.

G. M. Did you see that spirit pass ?

F. S. I did.

G. M. How did it look?

F. S. Exactly like the body, only it wore an aspect of horror and appeal terrible to behold.

G. M. Did the spirit stay with you, and how long? Did it obey you, and act intelligently, or did it act a merely automatic part?

F. S. Mortals, know that *there is no death!* I did not kill A. M. I only broke up the temple in which her soul dwelt. **THAT SOUL IS IMMORTAL, AND CANNOT DIE.** I found this out the moment after it had left the body, for it looked upon me, spoke to me, and reproached me. O God of heaven, saints and angels, pity me! It spoke to me as intelligently, but far, far more potentially than ever it had done in earthly being. It was not dead. It could not die; it never will die, and so it told me at once; but ah me, miserable! when I sank down aghast, and struck with ineffable horror, as the spirit approached me, into a deep swoon, I entered the land of immortal souls. There I saw many people whom I had thought dead, but who were all still living. There, too, I saw the still living and radiantly glorious soul of my old pastor, Michael H——. Sternly, but sorrowfully, he told me I had committed a great and irreparable crime; that all crime was unpardonable, and could only be wiped out by personal, and not by vicarious atonement, as he had falsely taught whilst on earth; that my only means of atonement was suffering, and that *in kind*, or in connection with my dreadful crime: that, as the poor victim would be engaged during the term of her earthly life (broken short by my act) in working it out in an earthly sphere, so her magnetism, actually attracted, as I had deemed, to the spot where her life had been taken, would continue to haunt me, and repeat in vision the last dread act of murder until her life essence should melt away, and her spirit become free

to quit the earth, and progress, as she would do, to higher spheres. Sometimes (this stern teacher informed me) I should see the real living soul of my victim, and then it would be as a pitying angel striving to help me; but still oftener I should see only the "spectre," and this would always appear as in the death moment, an avenging form, partly conjured up from my own memory, and partly from the magnetic aura of my victim, and always taking the shape and circumstances of my dreadful crime. Mortals, there is much more to tell you of the awful realms beyond the grave, and the solemn connection between life and death, but more I dare not speak. Human beings will soon learn it for themselves; for the souls of the immortals are preparing to bridge over the gulf of death, and men and spirits will yet cross and recross it. Meantime ye are the blind leading the blind; deceiving yourselves with a vain philosophy, and deceiving all to whom ye teach it. **THERE IS NO DEATH!** I must be gone. Hark, I am called!

The minutes which follow, on this strange revelation of the maniac's "flying soul," add, —

"It would seem that the body was disturbed in its somnambulism, and the soul recalled; but we could have gained nothing by prolonging this interview, for evidently that soul had returned in its lucid intervals to the ancient and false philosophy in which it had in childhood been instructed, namely, the *mythical* belief in its immortality.

"The spirits of lunatics can be evoked, and always speak and think rationally when freed from the disordered body; but we note that they most commonly go back to the rudimental periods of their existence, and generally insist on the popular myth of immortality.

"Perhaps they are *en rapport* with the prevailing opinions of men, and are thus psychologized into repeating accepted ideas. There is nothing, however, to be gained from this experiment."

It was my intention to have conducted my readers into a genuine act of magic, and transcribe, for the edification of the curious, the formulæ and circumstances of a magical rite; but I have trespassed so long on their patience in this chapter, that I must reserve my experiences with the magicians for the next; I will close, therefore, by inviting them to consider how naturally a careful analysis of the powers and functions of the human spirit throws light upon all the psychological problems that have confused the race and perplexed the philosopher. One individual becomes rich without effort, inherits wealth, finds wealth, acquires it in a thousand ways, and that without needing or laboring for it. Another spends his life in toiling to acquire it, and yet can never succeed. No one leaves him an inheritance, he never purchases the successful number in a lottery, never succeeds in a financial speculation.

May there not be some truth in the theory of the Brotherhood, to wit, that beings potent in the realms of mineral treasure are magnetically attracted to such organisms as assimilate with their own?

I have known one of the Brothers who passed through nine battles unharmed, whilst more than fifty of his acquaintances, who had just entered the field of carnage, fell at the first or second shot.

Our philosophers alleged that spirits of the fiery elements could avert swift blows (especially such as struck fire) from those who had a preponderance of a similar element in them, whilst others, deficient in that quality of being, attracted all such blows as produced fire. They carried this theory forward into the tendency to be drowned or to avoid the action of the watery element, — to become subject to a certain class of accidents, to be in danger from cattle, serpents, falling bodies, and indeed to all the events of life, asserting that as spirits pervaded

every atom of space, and man's being was made up of all the elements, so when certain elements prevailed, corresponding spiritual influences were attracted and became favorable to him; whereas the reverse of this position obtained in organisms deficient in special elementary forces. It was to this cause that they attributed the good and bad luck of different individuals, and special successes and failures in all. I was introduced by one of the Brotherhood to two young girls, one of whom was passionately fond of flowers, and the other of birds. In the clairvoyant condition, I was subsequently shown by our ruling spirit, "the crowned angel," the attendant spirits who were attracted to these young creatures. I shall hereafter describe to my readers something of the peculiar characteristics of the elementary spirits. It is enough now to affirm that all the fairy tales and legends of supernaturalism which have been written on the subject of sylphs, undines, etc., pale and grow cold before the divine beauty, exquisite purity, and aspirational grace, which shines out through the fleeting fragrance of those spirits that correspond to flowers and birds. They are blessed, purifying, harmonious breathings of goodness, and those with whom they assimilate—partake of their natures, become the sweeteners of life, and the perfume that lift our coarse earth from dull utilitarianism to divine beauty.

More of this hereafter. I pronounce no *ex cathedra* opinion as to whether the theory of the Berlin Brotherhood is true or false; I only give it for what it is worth. But as to the statements which bear upon the exodus of the living spirit from the living body, its power to influence at a distance, to travel from that body and return to it; but above all, as to the effect which one human magnetism has upon another, and how potentially that power can be increased by the action of mesmerism,—these are items in the philosophy of modern psychology which are

growing into acceptance every day we live. It does not require the dreams of a Guyon and Fénelon, or the transcendentalisms of a Kant or Goethe, to gauge the soul's powers in our own time. If anatomy and physiology have been necessary to illustrate the exclamation that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," psychology and Spiritualism are conducting us into realms of marvelous beauty, and soul powers before which the transient glories of material existence fade into dust and ashes. But we must not anticipate.

(To be continued.)

AMONGST THE SPIRITS; OR, GLIMPSES OF SPIRITUAL
MEN, WOMEN, AND THINGS.

BY ASMODEUS.

THE brightest landscapes must be relieved by backgrounds; the fairest scenes present their points of shadow. "Extremes are ever neighbors," and the sublime and the ridiculous, the comic and the tragic, are as nearly related to each other as noontide and midnight.

Musing on the motley scenes and variegated experiences through which my own restless footprints have made their mark, it has not unfrequently occurred to me, that our Spiritualistic brethren have either been more fortunate than myself, in encountering none but "honest mediums" and "high spirits," or else that, like "Topsy," I must be "drefful wicked," and am destined, as a punishment, to be crowded out of the more exalted scenes and situations of the great spiritual drama, into the more matter of fact, and sometimes simply human tracks, that lay between the lands of the mortal and the immortal.

Be this as it may, the temptation to inflict "my tediousness" on mankind, in the shape of sketches drawn from my varied peregrinations amongst the spirits, has become the passion of my later years, and so possessed me with the idea of an imaginary duty to a posterity about which I do not really care two straws, that I finally concluded to state my case, define my position, and offer the results of my literary infatuation to the editors of THE WESTERN STAR. On tendering my contribution to the acceptance of those shining luminaries, and explaining that my MSS. consisted of actual personal experiences, and spoke of

men, women, spirits, and things, as I really found them, not as they were too commonly represented through the transcendental spectacles of spiritual exaltation, I was politely informed that personalities, especially of an acrimonious, or to say the least of it, an inharmonious character, could not be admitted within the realms of thought illumined by the rays of THE WESTERN STAR.

This was rather a "back set" to my aspirations for literary distinction in that quarter. I tendered the editors selections from over one hundred quires of foolscap, closely written. I could not re-write this voluminous pile of matter, but — and here a happy thought seemed to strike us all simultaneously, and end in effecting the compromise desired — I could cut my MSS. down from one hundred quires to one, and in so doing, leave in all the names that were associated with the pleasing portions of the narrative, and enter all the names that might by chance be connected with the *vice versa* side of the picture, in the great family of Blanks or Aliases. No sooner said than done. What I merely hinted to the "Stars" of the "who's," "what's," and "where's" with which my experiences were interwoven, satisfied them that I could tell some truths that would be instructive, if not overpoweringly entertaining to their readers, and what they told me of their reasons for lighting up at all, were sufficiently impressive to induce me to blot out all unkindness, or even the show of injustice from my pages. To work I set, therefore, under the impulse of these items of mutual good understanding, and the reader may now appropriate the benefit of the results.

It was in the year 1850, that having vainly sought for health in foreign travel, and as vainly labored to find a new sensation in new places, I returned to the home of my childhood, a lonely country village in Kentucky, where all things were changed, friends and kindred gone,

and nothing remained but memory to stimulate the morbid fancy of an used-up valetudinarian into visions of romance and unreality. The farm-house in which I found a temporary boarding-place was tenanted by a good, warm-hearted widow, who had inherited it from an ancestor of my own. My landlady, Mrs. White, — whom I shall at once acknowledge to have entered into the family of the "aliases," — was possessed of some means of her own besides the estate she enjoyed, but being childless, "a lone woman," and naturally of a remarkably genial disposition, and much given to the society of her fellow creatures, she willingly accepted me as a boarder when I called upon her to make the proposition. Besides herself and her hired girls, Mrs. White kept open house for half her acquaintances, and all her brother's family, consisting of a flock of little people of both sexes, who found "Aunt White's" pleasant *ménage* and unstinted hospitality far more to their taste than their own poor home. Being naturally fond of children, and still in search of health and sensationalism, I fancied both were to be attained in sporting through the woods and on the river's bank with these entertaining little juveniles. Hence it was that I became a close observer, as well as a participator in their merry games. It was on a certain occasion when I was rather more than usually disposed to be quiescent over my weekly paper, that I was teased into something like irritation by the pertinacious pleading of little Anna that I would come and make the doll's table stand still.

"Why, what is the matter with the doll's table?" I exclaimed, pettishly, fairly dragged from my seat by my little tormentor.

"See, Mr. Asa, only see!" cried another child, seated at a small round table in a distant part of the room, and vainly attempting to steady it whilst she laid out her

doll's tea things. "This nasty, ugly old table will not keep still; what *do* you suppose can ail it?"

"What indeed!" I muttered, as I looked above, and below, and all round a little witch of a round stand, which was jerking and shuffling, and leaning over, now on this side, and now on that, without the smallest earthly sign of any cause that could create even a vibration in its material. "What can be the matter with the table?" I reëchoed again and again, as the motions continued with more force than ever, whilst the mystery remained unexplained.

"That's what I say, Mr. Asa," chimed in the voice of the children's mother, entering the room at this moment, and advancing towards us, though with no appearance of surprise. "Mr. Asa, I'm very glad somebody sees this thing besides myself and the children. Here it is, just as usual—going on like anything—and nobody able to explain why."

"But my dear Mrs. Clark," I replied, "you don't mean to say this table has ever acted in this most un-tablelike way before?"

"Maybe not this particular one, Mr. Asa, but every other one in my house does; and I tell you honestly, I'm beginning to think it's awful, and I only wish I lived somewhere where I could call in the police, or a bishop, or some one that knows something, to explain why it is that whenever Anna, or Minnie, or for the matter of that, Charlie, or Johnnie, or Alexander, or indeed any of our children, go near a table, it begins to dance and spin, and jump about just like a possessed thing—just like—O, gracious, goodness me! look at that!"

As the good matron spoke, the table, as if it had been a thing of life, and desirous of illustrating her words, rose bodily up into the air, leant over, yet without spilling or disarranging a single toy spread out on its surface, lifted

itself up at least four feet, and subsided gently by the very side of the astonished and horrified speaker.

The children, who had become, it seems, familiar with this gymnastic tendency in their own tables, screamed with delight; but the poor mother, struck beyond endurance with the ghostly horror of such an unusual feat, fell back upon a couch nearly fainting. To say truth, I should have shared her terror had I witnessed that performance for the first time; but only two years ago, I had visited the weird scene of the far-famed Rochester Knockings, and in the presence of the Misses Fox of Hydesville, I beheld tables dance, aye, and heard them speak too, and that to a tune which had considerably shaken my skepticism on the subject of ghosts, especially such as were addicted to the "pleasures of the table." In a word, although not in the ordinary sense of the term, a "Spiritualist," I had become aware of the fact that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamed of in our philosophy.

Directing, therefore, all my efforts to reassure the affrighted mother, and check the impish merriment of the little ones, I gravely poured out to them and the good widow White—who had joined us in the *mêlée*—a detail of some of the marvels I had witnessed at Rochester, and divers suggestions, concerning their similarity with the present demonstrations. It was with terrible misgivings, fears, and tremblings, that I finally succeeded in seating the whole party around another and less fearsome table; for despite all I could allege, I could not at first persuade my friends that the mischief, or, as they suggested, "the evil one," *in propria personâ*, was not in that particular table. At length, by dint of putting that harmless piece of wood away, and substituting a grave, substantial looking dining-table in its place, I got them all seated and placed in the exact positions which I re-

membered to have seen in the Misses Fox's circles at Rochester.

We had not been seated five minutes before the whole party became scattered right and left, the widow taking refuge in one corner of the apartment, the sister-in-law in another, the frightened children perched on top of a bureau, and myself stretched prostrate on the floor, laid or lifted there out of my chair as if I had been a sack of flour, whilst the grave, and hitherto respectably conducted family dining-table waltzed, polkaed, and caprioled about the apartment, with all the agility of a trained circus horse.

That night, and for three succeeding days, every article of furniture in Mrs. Clark's house jumped, danced, walked, and ran, with an amount of spontaneity and lawlessness fearful to witness, and impossible to restrain.

Myself, Widow White, and finally every neighbor or friend within any accessible distance, were summoned to aid in praying, exorcising, holding on, and being upset, in fact, in aiding and abetting the clamor and confusion occasioned by the obsessed furniture in every conceivable way that a half demented multitude was capable of.

All would not do. Persistent rappings, whistlings, shrieks, dancing of feet, sawing of boards, and tumbings up, and down and about, and around, kept up a chorus night and day to the clatter of falling crockery, hurling stones, and breaking window-panes. Terror, distraction, noise, and clamor, human and superhuman, invaded the whole district, and converted a remote country solitude into a pandemonium, which nothing short of the pen of a Milton could describe.

As many of my readers must have witnessed, and nearly all have heard of similar scenes, especially in the advent of the Spiritual movement, when the manifestations were of a more boisterous character than at present, I shall

not reiterate details which must be over-familiar already, but proceed to narrate two of the scenes which resulted from the introduction of spirits in Whitesville. Mrs. White was a very piously disposed, as well as a loving-hearted and genial person. Her religious and affectional tendencies were both appealed to in the communion with "the beloved ones gone before," and when, after several weeks of persistent and orderly circle holding, I succeeded in changing the demonstrations from the work of imps to the communication of well recognized spirit friends, the good widow, her sister-in-law, brother, and all her friends, became as earnest and zealous devotees to the spirit circle as ever received the light of Spiritualism. Like most new converts, however, Widow White and her enthusiastic associates bent their whole souls to the task of compelling the communications to conform to their peculiar proclivities, rather than waiting to see what the spirits had to say to them.

The widow being, as above hinted, of a pious turn, solicited the society of the prophets, patriarchs, and apostles, not caring much to associate with any spirit who did not claim to hail from the "Holy Land," and to have been in the spirit world at least eighteen centuries or thereabouts.

Now, Mr. Clark, the happy father of the mediumistic little Clarks, was great on politics; and having proved to his entire satisfaction that spirits communicated, consigned his grandparents and other family spirits to the shades below, and insisted on receiving nothing that was not endorsed by one of America's ex-presidents, defunct statesmen, or independence fathers. To complete the circle of "very high spirits" whom the peculiar tastes of the Clark and White families drew around them, Alexander Copernicus Jenkins Clark, the eldest son, being at that time taking lessons in Latin of the village schoolmaster (the

gentleman who kept shoes in repair and taught the young idea how to shoot), determined to hold intercourse with none but classical characters; hence, whilst the widow was receiving a tipped out message from the spirit of "Saul, the son of Kish," and the father Clark was eagerly watching the hand of little Minnie scratching out a communication from George Washington, the son Clark, or "Aleck Cus," as the younger children called him for short, was crying, "O bother!" to the king of Israel, and "Get out now, will ye!" to the father of his country, whilst a vehement exclamation of "Come on, Cicero! I want to have a talk with you or Brutus, I don't care which," signified that this young gentleman was particularly addicted to the classics and classical spirits.

To do them justice, the grave and reverend personages thus invoked always *seemed ready enough to respond*, and not only professed to come, but rapped, or pointed out alphabetically, through their youthful media, communications with which their devotees expressed themselves "lifted up almost to the seventh heaven." As the family were for some months incessant in their invocations to the world of spirits, they of course received, as they themselves alleged, quires and quires of foolscap closely written, from their several tutelary spirits, all of which they took delight in reading to every one whom they could induce to listen to them.

As a specimen of the modes by which some of the Spiritualists in the early days of the movement communed with the "very high spirits" who particularly favored their circles, I give the following excerpts from the Clark and White memoranda:—

August 29th. Present at our circle, Aunt White, father, mother, etc. The spirit of Uncle Job Kennison reported himself. Father said, "How d'ye do?" and then asked him to please give way to Randolph of Roanoke, Patrick Henry, and Andrew Jackson, who had promised to come

that morning and communicate on the affairs of the nation. Uncle Job kicked over the table, and left. Presently Randolph of Roanoke, Patrick Henry, and Andrew Jackson, began to manifest. They first danced the table to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," and then kept time by rapping, whilst Minnie sang "Hail Columbia," which was very convincing. Then Patrick Henry tipped out, "Give me liberty, or give me death," and signed his name. Father said this was wonderful. A. Jackson then came and spelled out through the rappings, —

"By the Eternal, if things don't go as I want 'em to go, I'll be down upon 'em like a thousand of bricks. ANDREW JACKSON."

Father said "This was just him," and then he asked for Randolph; but just then Saint Paul put in, and says he, —

"Aunty White, you are right; dark as night, shineth bright, in the light of Aunty White. PAUL OF TARSUS."

Aunt was much gratified, of course.

"Now," says I, "whose turn is next?"

"Here you are!" was immediately tipped out; and when I asked "Who are you?" was wrote, "Tub, — lantern, — Diogenes."

"I'm very glad to see you, Diogenes," says I, "but please just call Plutarch, will you? I've a special question to ask of him."

Diogenes said Plutarch was busy, but if we'd a mind to give Plato a turn, he was there, and would communicate.

Then aunty up and said she didn't like Plato; he was a *free lover*, as she'd heard, and she didn't want none of that sort.

I said Plato wasn't nothing of the sort. He had a kind of a sort of love different to other folks, but it wasn't free, and unless she knew the classics it wasn't of no use to tell her what it was. By this time, however, Nancy Angelina had got entranced, and getting up, says she, —

"O ye mortal humans! what for do I hear ye a-riling each other, and friends and kindred, what ought to be bounded in bonds of brotherly love and Christian unity, a-giving each other fits, for what? a name! a mere human, earthly, mortal name. O, children of light! shame on ye! shame! Don't go for to do it. In the seventh sphere, without all fear, I do appear, and quickly hear. Again I'll come to you. EZEKIEL THE PROPHET."

Here Nancy Angelina having given the name, as the custom of our spirits was, Ezekiel he left, and Daniel Webster coming, aunty said she was sorry, for she'd long wanted to speak to Ezekiel about them dry bones vision that he'd wrote about, and she wanted to know if it didn't mean Deacon Stone's prayer-meetings, for Lord knew they were dry bones enough. But Daniel Webster putting in with, "Silence, woman! let the counsel for the defendant proceed!" he went on with such a

speech as made our ears tingle; and as to the table, why, it danced and cheered round until it got three legs off, and the other broken.

Ben Franklin then coming in said, says he, "That was the applause, and a wonderful strong manifestation of spirit power, for which your souls should be uplifted in gratitude."

If my reader has never been present at any such circles as the above, I can only say I have, and at many such. I wish I could add that the above was only a solitary specimen of a solitary case; but the thick volume from which I extract this veritable account of the Clark and White circles, contains records of at least a hundred more such scenes, and those witnessed by at least a hundred more investigators like myself.

In vain had I besought the sincere but simple-minded enthusiasts of Whitesville to "try the spirits," and in the early part of their experiences to test the communications, accepting nothing as genuine until they had actually proved it to be so. The infatuation for great names completely led their judgments captive. They didn't want tests, they said, only "high spirits;" and when I suggested that they had no means of knowing whether these "high spirits" were really the parties they purported to be, and that half their communications might be from deceiving spirits, they were greatly offended, called me "skeptical," complained that I brought "a bad influence," and declared that the mediums were all truth, and as incapable of error as the *mighty minds* that were attracted to their circles.

Finding I gained nothing but ill will by my attempts to stem the tide of their fanaticism, I had to leave the result to time. Still I was convinced there was a marvelous truth in the phenomena, and a significance, which in wise hands and with keen analytical minds, might become a revelation of astonishing power. At times I almost despaired of ever making anything of Spiritualism amidst all

the absurdities which my poor friends brought to bear upon the subject; but again, I was snatched from the mazes of doubt and skepticism by such tokens as the following. Seeing little Minnie alone one day, amusing herself with her doll, and knowing her to be the most simple-minded, artless, yet powerful of the mediumistic family band, I asked her to oblige me by giving me a little sitting all alone to ourselves. The child, flattered by my request, cheerfully complied; but she had scarcely seated herself by my side at the table, when the peculiar lustre and fixidity of her large blue eyes apprised me that an invisible magnetizer was at hand. Pushing pencil and paper towards her, in obedience to her signals, Minnie rapidly sketched out a graveyard, with a large and unfamiliar-looking tree overshadowing a green mound, surrounded by blooming roses, and covered with turf, but bearing no inscription. At the head of this mound, however, the entranced artist depicted a fair, white marble urn, from which hung a delicately-carved scroll with the single word "Juanita."

Underneath this drawing the medium wrote, "Another form lies mouldering there. Have you forgotten her? She is nameless and unknown on earth, but she has not forgotten you, nor are you unknown to her. The angels call her Evangeline."

Ten years before, I had laid away in a quiet graveyard in Madrid, a sweet young Spanish wife, who had blessed my arms but a few short months, and who had left me a lonely, misanthropic man, passing from my longing eyes and breaking heart with her infant girl, a little bud which had bloomed, withered, and died, in one single hour of life. I laid them away together beneath the mound my own hands had turfed and planted with flowers.

The graveyard, the scene, all were true to life, and graphically drawn by the childish artist. No living crea-

ture on American soil ever knew that I had had a Spanish wife, or even been married at all. They called me "a crusty old bachelor." Alas! I mourned my lost Juanita in a silence too sacred for complaint or utterance. I had resolved with my beloved one before the birth of our babe, that if it should prove to be a girl we would call her Evangeline.

I have called her so ever since the day on which I found her again, a heavenly risen spirit.

(To be continued.)

SIBYLLINE LEAVES IN ANTIQUITY.

THE CUMÆAN SIBYL, AND THE PYTHIA OF DELPHI.

BY VESPER.

It is but a quarter of a century since any writer who deemed it worth his while to devote a whole chapter to a dissertation on Sibylline subjects, could have only saved his reputation from the charge of gross superstition or idle credulity, by taking shelter under a classical mantle, and assuming that the beliefs of antique sages and philosophers were myths; and, whilst their literature and opinions were held up as the world's highest standard of scholasticism, their religious opinions should be treated as blind folly, or pitiable ignorance.

It is but a quarter of a century since this was the status of popular opinion on the subject of which we treat, but that one quarter of a century has wrought a greater change in this respect than all the progress of the last five hundred years has been able to effect. To analyze the testimony which the records of history afford us concerning the Sibyls, is no longer to dispute their powers or question their existence, but to examine how far the experiences of these celebrated personages correspond with the peculiar idiosyncrasies of the individuals whom, in our own time, we denominate "spirit mediums." As in our last article we reviewed briefly the characteristics which distinguished the media through whose instrumentality, in the first instance, the advent of modern Spiritualism was inaugurated, so we deem it a fitting

corollary to that theme, to gather up the fragments which classical literature has bequeathed to us concerning their great prototypes, the Sibyls of Greece and Rome.

Some classical authors have limited the number of Sibyls to four, but the generality of ancient writers give a list of ten, to whom they assign names according to the countries of their birth. Varro thus enumerates them:—

The Delphian,—elder and younger; the Cimerian, and two Sibyls, both named Erythræn; the Samian, the Cumæan; the Hellespontian, the Phrygian, and the Tiburtine. Of all these, the Cumæan and the Delphian have been the most renowned. It is to the Cumæan Sibyl that is attributed the authorship of the famous Sibylline books, the sale of which to King Tarquinius, by an unknown old woman (supposed to have been the Sibyl herself) all classical historians have frequently mentioned. These books were nine in number when first tendered for sale to the king. When he refused to purchase them, the old woman threw three of them into the fire, and returning to the king, demanded the same price as before for the remaining six. The offer being still refused, the unknown destroyed three more of her singular wares, and again returning, demanded the same price for the three, which she had asked in the first instance for the whole nine. Struck with the oddity of this proceeding, Tarquinius paid the price demanded, but no sooner became possessed of the books, than the old woman who had sold them disappeared.

On examination, the contents of the volumes proved to be the vaticinations of the renowned Sibyls, and so great was the value set upon these writings, that Tarquinius appointed two officials, especially charged with the duty of guarding them, and only permitting them to be inspected and consulted by duly constituted authorities, in

seasons of great national emergency. Notwithstanding the high respect with which the Sibylline writings were regarded, the original volumes purchased by Tarquinius were destroyed by fire. Other monarchs caused fresh collections to be made, and the most careful researches were instituted to gather up and preserve all the Sibylline writings extant. Notwithstanding this, several succeeding collections shared the fate of their predecessor; so it is fair to conclude that the voluminous mass of books attributed to the Sibyls, and quoted by the early Christian, as well as heathen authors, in support of their favorite dogmas, contained as many interpolations as genuine writings; indeed, it is questionable whether any of the original Sibylline vaticinations survived the wreck of fire and revolution, which consumed the most valuable records of those stormy times. On the question of the number of those whom history has designated the Sibyls, there can be no doubt but that many prophetic women, who succeeded each other in the temple services of different districts, were called by the same name, so that, in fact, the classification of Varro, given above, applies rather to the places with which they were associated, than to the actual limitation of their numbers. There seems to have been some points of difference between the Priestesses, the Pythia of Delphi, wandering Prophetesses, and the personages mentioned as Sibyls. The fact that so many women of antiquity manifested prophetic powers, and were so frequently endowed with the faculty of rendering oracular responses under the afflatus of what was deemed "Divine inspiration," renders it a task of some difficulty to discriminate amongst the variety of powers from which they derived celebrity. We shall avail ourselves, therefore, of the many fine descriptions rendered by classical writers of the Cumæan Sibyl, and the Pythia of Delphi, deeming that we shall find in

these remarkable characters the best representations of their whole class.

Virgil, in describing the Cumæan Sibyl, says she was born in the district of Troy, but went to Italy, where for a time she dwelt in a cavern in the vicinity of the Avernian lake.

She sometimes wrote her oracles upon palm leaves, which she laid at the entrance of her cave, suffering the winds to scatter them, and bear them whither the gods directed. At other times, she gave responses orally to those who came to consult her, and many chapters could be written on the marvelous accuracy of her prophecies, and the remarkable lucidity with which she delivered her descriptions of distant persons and things. In writing of this "Sacred Maid," as he styles her, Virgil gives the following well-known delineation of her "Corybantic" modes of prophesying.

"Aloud she cries,
 'This is the time! inquire your destinies!
 He comes! Behold the god!' Thus, while she said,
 And shiv'ring at the sacred entry staid,
 Her color changed, her face was not the same,
 And hollow groans from her deep spirit came;
 Her hair stood up, convulsive rage possessed
 Her trembling limbs, and heaved her laboring breast.
 Greater than human kind she seemed to look,
 And with an accent more than mortal spoke.
 Her staring eyes with sparkling fury roll,
 And all the god came rushing on her soul.
 Struggling in vain, impatient of her load,
 And laboring underneath the ponderous god,
 The more she strove to shake him from her breast,
 With more and far superior force he pressed,
 Commands his entrance, and without contest
 Usurps her organs, and inspires her soul."

Dryden's Translation of Æneis, Book VI.

This Cumæan Sibyl declares of herself, —

"I am entirely on the stretch, and my body is so stupefied, that I do

not know what I say, but the god commands me to speak: Why must I publish my song to every one? and when my spirit rests, after the divine hymn, the god commands me to vaticinate (prophecy) again. I know the number of the grains of sand, and the measure of the sun. I know the height of the earth, and the number of men, stars, trees, and beasts."

The Cumæan Sibyl, amongst other very important prophecies, foretold that terrific eruption of Vesuvius, in which Pliny, the naturalist, is said to have perished, and so many cities were destroyed. She wrote, besides, many books which were held in the highest veneration by the Romans, and is supposed to have been the original of the fine statue which was placed in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, representing her holding one of her famous Sibylline books in her hand.

Passing over the vivid descriptions rendered by Plutarch, Varro, Heraclides, and others, of the various Sibyls of other names, we must now draw a slight sketch of the famous Pythia of Delphi, who, whether one or many, has been more widely renowned for demonstrating the fact of prophetic power than any other name in history, the Cumæan Sibyl alone excepted.

The small town of Delphi, in Phocis, would never have attained any celebrity from ~~its~~ situation or commercial importance, had it not been the site of one of the most renowned of all the Grecian oracles — that of the Apollo of Delphi.

The site of the once magnificent temple, so famed for its Pythian oracle, is at the northwestern extremity of the town, built on the slope of the beautiful mountain called Parnassus.

Shutting in the crescent-like inclosure which comprises the ancient site of Delphi, is a vast mountain, split asunder, apparently by volcanic action, and presenting two high peaks or cliffs, which the Greeks called "The Brothers." It is from this circumstance that the town is

supposed to have derived the name of Delphi or Adelpus. From the cleft which divides these two gigantic peaks, flows out the far-famed Castalian Spring; and here tradition asserts that Apollo and the nine Muses, to whom the spring was dedicated, endowed those who drank of, or bathed in its cool, translucent waters, with the gifts of prophecy, musical and poetical inspiration.

On the spot which subsequently became the centre of the gorgeous temple of Apollo, formerly yawned a deep cavern, from which issued those strange mephitic vapors which were supposed to exercise so powerful an influence in preparing the Pythia for the possession of the oracular god. All authors of the time declare that the cavern was charged with vapors of that peculiar quality which excited a species of frenzy in animals, and delirious ecstasy in the human beings who inhaled it.

The discovery of these remarkable properties in the cavern was due, it is alleged, to a goat-herd, who, noticing how wild and frantically his flock leaped about after straying into the entrance, made his way into its recesses, and was afterwards found in the frenzied condition common to all who ventured within its charmed precincts. After the spot had attracted general attention, and become in that superstitious age venerated for its mysterious power of evoking the spirit of "vaticination" or prophecy, it was set apart as a hallowed place. The priests of Apollo declared it was the choice dwelling-place of the god, and that the utterance of those who resorted thither, and came under the influence of "the divine fury," were henceforth to be regarded as prophetic, and their ravings received as oracular.

It must be remembered that it was the universal belief of the time, that the ravings of lunacy were prophetic, and denoted the possession of some god; hence it is not surprising that a place capable of producing upon

all comers the afflatus so highly revered should be regarded as holy, and become the scene of those superstitious rites common to the time and country. As it was found that little else than wild confusion and unintelligible ravings resulted from permitting the cavern to become a place of universal resort, the Phocian authorities commanded that a maiden of pure life and unspotted character should be selected, who was brought to the sacred spot, immersed in the waters of the Castalian Spring, arrayed in pure white, crowned with laurels, and required to perform divers other ceremonies of purification and preparation. When this was done, the priests of Apollo held the "Pythia," as she was termed, over the entrance of the cavern, and, provided she could endure the inhalation of the exhalations without permanent loss of reason, or, as it more than once happened, without yielding up life itself in the frantic convulsions which sometimes ensued, the novitiate was deemed the elect of the god, and duly installed as his priestess, by taking her seat on a tripod or basin, with three ears of gold, placed at the entrance to the cavern.

Plutarch alleges that the first and most celebrated Pythia who served the Delphic oracle was a beautiful young country girl named Sibylla, from the district of Libya. It is probable that from this ancient prophetess was derived the name of Sibyl, afterwards conferred on all her class. In later years it was found necessary to select women of mature, and sometimes of advanced age, to serve the oracle, the sacred character of their profession having been found insufficient to protect the Pythia from the licentiousness of the age. Plutarch, writing of this inspired woman, says: —

We derive immense advantages from the favor the gods have conceded to her. She and the priestess of Dodona confer on mankind the greatest benefits, both public and private.

It would be impossible to enumerate all the instances in which the Pythia proved her power of foretelling events, and the facts themselves are so well and generally known, that it would be useless to bring forth new evidences. She is second to no one in purity of morals and chastity of conduct. Brought up by her poor parents in the country, she brings with her neither art nor experience, nor any talent whatever, when she arrives at Delphi, to be the interpreter of the god. She is consulted on all accounts: marriage, travels, harvest, diseases, etc., etc. Her answers, though submitted to the severest scrutiny, have never proved false or incorrect. On the contrary, the verification of them has filled the temple with gifts from all parts of Greece and foreign countries.

A Greek gentleman, who still resides at the spot once so venerated as the seat of divine inspiration, furnishes us with some interesting descriptions of the place, together with notices of the wild region which was the scene of the Cumæan Sibyl's vaticinations. This writer says: —

The Lake of Avernus was once the extinct crater of a mighty volcano, and the whole region, though now fertilized by its waters, bears the marks of being fire-scarred, and presents a most gloomy and repulsive appearance. The clefts in the savage rocks abound with caverns exhaling mephitic vapors and bituminous odors. It was in one of the wildest, grandest, yet most awe-inspiring gorges of these mountains, that the cavern existed which tradition affirms to have been the dwelling of the Cumæan Sibyl. The scattered inhabitants of the surrounding district believed that this gloomy grotto was the entrance to the nether world; that the hammers of the Titans, working in the mighty laboratories of the Plutonic realms, might be heard, ever and anon, reverberating through the thick and sullen air. The dark waters of the gloomy lake were supposed to communicate directly with the silent flow of the river of death, the Lethean stream, made dreadful by the apparitions of unblest spirits who floated from the Avernian shores to the realms of eternal night and torture. Here dwelt the famous Cumæan Sibyl, and from the exhalations of those poisonous regions, fatal to the birds that attempted to wing their way through its burdened airs, or the living creatures that strayed amidst its savage wilds, this weird woman derived that fierce ecstasy in which she wrote and raved of the destiny of nations, the fate of armies, the downfall of kingdoms, and the decay of dynasties.

Monarchs and statesmen shaped their acts by her sublime counsels.

The secrets of the unwritten future were mapped out to her far-seeing eyes, as on an open page.

The purposes of the gods were made known to her as if she had been their counselor, and the inexorable fates revealed, through her lips, the decrees in which thrones and empires crumbled into dust, as though she had been the mouthpiece of the Eternal One.

The mournful regions of the Avernian Lake were in strange contrast to the equally celebrated, but far more attractive scenes consecrated to the oracle of the sun god, in the delightful country of the Delphian Pythia.

All travellers agree that the neighborhood of Mount Parnassus and the beautiful Castalian Spring is of a much more genial character, sparkling, as it is, with the sunlight, and fragrant with bloom, yet there is, to my mind, an evident connection between the influences of the exhalations derived from the Avernian and Delphic caverns. The chasm, so famed as the scene of the Pythia's utterances, is now no longer to be seen. The superb temple of Apollo was so built as to inclose, and secure it from the approach of the vulgar, and at this day no sign of such a chasm is visible; but there are many clefts in the rocks, and one in especial, which forms a deep cavern, into which I have myself penetrated as far as I dared; but as I descended, clinging to its rugged sides, with the intention of exploring it, I noticed the exhalations which arose from it, and soon found that they were beginning to produce upon me the same effect as the inhalation of the nitrous oxide (laughing) gas. The following day I visited that and two other caverns piercing the mountains in the same direction, and by applying chemical tests to the vapors exhaling from within, I found my suspicions confirmed, and am convinced there are chemicals in these regions which continually generate nitrous oxide gas.

The ancient Pythia were held by the priests of the temple sufficiently long over the cavernous opening to inhale the mephitic vapors, which intoxicated them.

They wore their long hair loose, and dripping with the waters of the Castalian fountain, in which they bathed before assuming the tripod. They were then arrayed in pure white, and crowned with the laurels which grew wild in profuse luxuriance around the place. The temple was magnificent beyond description. Colossal statuary, exquisite carvings, the fairest marbles, the richest paintings, gildings, and bas-reliefs, adorned every inch of space dedicated to the "God of the beautiful and the wise." The perfume of the rose and myrtle, and the entrancing odor of thousands of laurel leaves, strewed around on every side, for the benefit of those who sought oracular responses, through the temple sleep, must have subdued the will, and intoxicated the senses into

precisely that condition most favorable for the production of deep somnambulism.

The Pythia were most commonly unsophisticated country women, selected for their aspirational tendencies, and devout, impressible natures.

Sometimes, as in the case of the Samian Sibyl, they were natural prophetesses, and had already acquired a reputation for prophetic gifts, before they were subjected to the entrancing influences of Delphi. But once there, bathed in the deliciously cool and invigorating waters of Castalia, intoxicated with the perfumes of the laurel, and maddened with the mystic vapors of the celestial grotto, it is no marvel that the soul of the mortal should sink into diim unconsciousness, and the spirits of immortals should enter in and possess the entranced tenement. . . .

I am now well convinced, and that notwithstanding all the changes wrought by the fire-king from his laboratory in the earth's centre, that the Avernian region abounds with vapors of a similar character to those exhaled at Delphi. It is a question which I think well worthy the consideration of the scientist, whether the "divine fury," conjured up in the persons of the Sibyls during their raticinations, did not originate in the influence of mephitic odors, and whether very impressible persons, brought into contact with similar essences, might not still manifest similar powers.

Our correspondent's remark is doubtless correct, for it has been repeatedly demonstrated in the practices of Eastern magic, that drugs, vapors, violent motions, distracting noise, soothing music, staring into crystals, water, bright surfaces, etc., are all means of procuring that artificial somnambulism which has been called fascination, enchantment, spells, etc., etc. In the mean time, modern Spiritualism disposes of these, like many other subtle psychological problems, by proving that the healthful influence of kind, loving spirit friends, is more potent to produce the magnetic sleep, and cause even chairs, tables, and other inanimate objects to prophesy, than all the spells of the Egyptian magician, or the mephitic vapors of Delphi or Avernus.

The stately forms of the Sibyls have vanished from the earth. The white-robed priest and the vestal virgin no longer float through multitudes of adoring votaries, as

mediums between a race of gods and men. The altar fires of the temples are quenched, the colossal forms of marble deities overthrown, the oracles are dumb, and the books of the Sibyls all consumed in the whelming flames of time and change.

The bowers of Grecian myrtle and rose are choked up with trailing weeds, and the voluptuous shade of the laurel groves are deepened into an unbroken night of rank vegetation. Faded beauty, and living ugliness, death, ruin, and decay, occupy the stately seats of ancient devotion, and the sunlight of inspiration seems to have gilded the purple and gold peaks of Parnassus for the last time; but the cup of inspiration, run dry in classic Greece, is flowing full and abundantly in newer, happier lands.

The links which bind the mortal and immortal, torn asunder by the catastrophies of war and desolation, in ancient lands, have stretched out into telegraphic lines between the worlds of spirit and humanity; and though the modern medium can never fill the place which the Sibyl of antiquity occupied in sublimity of inspiration, in romantic lore, and heathen splendor, she is sufficient for the age she lives in; sufficient to bring to a cold and materialistic world the undoubted proofs of the soul's immortality, and the fatherhood of the one universal God who is A SPIRIT.



THE GARLAND.

SUMMARY OF A FEW WEEKS' EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNION BETWEEN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

SINCE it is "human to err," much error and many mistakes may creep into this work. These, when respectfully pointed out, will be as respectfully acknowledged and repaired. — *Western Star, No. 1, Page 6.*

[To the above remark we here beg to add, mistakes and errors will be summarily corrected, whether respectfully pointed out or not; as an illustration of which, we commence our summary by stating that, whereas, we were informed by a Spiritualist of Hartford, Connecticut, that Mrs. N. T. Brigham was engaged to lecture in that city for one year, we are now advised that our information was erroneous, and the statement incorrect. Again; a typographical error has occurred, in attributing the authorship of the "Spiritual Pilgrim," to its subject, J. M. Peebles, rather than to that talented gentleman's equally talented biographer, J. O. Barrett. Still another error calls for correction, occurring in the date of Emma Hardinge Britten's letter on the subject of Dr. Collins's celebrated opium eating cure. For "1868" read "1870," and for "five years" read "a few months."

Having made the *amende honorable* to those who deem 'one blunder of more importance than a thousand good words, we proceed to fulfill our task of weaving a garland of the Spiritual blossoms gathered since last we communed with our readers.]

European Spiritualists have been, with some show of justice, accused of being slow to receive the glorious tidings of an open communion between the spiritual and natural worlds, but if they have rendered themselves amenable to this charge, they may, with equal consistency, claim the credit of being as persevering as skeptical, and as faithful to their convictions as cautious in yielding up to them.

When once convinced, moreover, the European mind exhibits a commendable degree of pertinacity, in examining one subject before it floats away in the direction of another. Thus, the phase of spirit photography which has of late earnestly engaged the attention of Spiritualists in Europe, has been so thoroughly scrutinized by their best thinkers, that very little opportunity remains to perpetrate further frauds, if any such have been attempted. Within the last few weeks, the editors of this

work have received from England, through a private source, a package of what purports to be photographs of spirits, taken through the mediumship of a Mr. Hudson, of London; and a request accompanies the package, that the editors, "having had the advantage of American experiences in such pictures," would furnish their European readers with some opinions thereon. With this request we are unable to comply, seeing that our American experiences furnish us with nothing that bears the least similarity to the pictures received. Some of them are placed directly at the side of the sitters, and present an appearance equally dense, and strictly human, and except the fact that they are for the most part veiled, and bear a striking resemblance to one very uncomely model, there is nothing to distinguish them from an ordinary attempt to represent two figures on the same plate. In an exhaustive review of the subject given in the *British Journal of Photography*, dated May 24, 1872, we find the following remark:—

We confess to a feeling of surprise how any photographer could be so blinded as not to see that such productions would be certain to provoke a perfect storm of hostile criticism, for more reckless indifference to the necessity for removing those features from which photographers of ordinary intelligence were certain to deduce imposture, we have never seen.

Cordially endorsing the above sentiment, and being unacquainted with any facts which might modify such an opinion, we should here close our remarks on the subject did we not observe a tendency in the European Spiritual periodicals to associate these pictures with those of Mr. Wm. Mumler of Boston, Mass, a photographer of spiritual forms, whose mediumship has come out triumphantly through the most severe crucial tests that were ever applied to any of the alleged Spiritual phenomena.

Our space does not allow us to go into analytical details, but it is but justice to Mr. Mumler] to remind our

readers that the best proof that can be brought forward of a genuine character in spirit photography, is that which so especially distinguishes his pictures: namely, that hundreds of them (though not all) have been recognized as the portraits of deceased persons, and that by strangers visiting Mr. Mumler's studio for the first time. During Mr. Mumler's trial in New York, and all through the bitter persecution which antagonism to his remarkable gift called forth, a perfect cloud of witnesses, including many of the most respectable and veracious persons in America, came forward to bear testimony to the fact, that they had received correct, and clearly defined portraits of their departed friends, and that when the medium could not by any possibility have had any knowledge of them. The whole course of the trial in question resulted in depriving Mr. Mumler's judges of the slightest possibility of sustaining a charge of imposture against him.

Another specialty in the Boston pictures, and one which often occurs is, that some portion of the shadowy spirit form is seen behind, and another part in front of the sitter. Take, for instance, the splendidly developed picture of Beethoven as a spirit, standing behind Emma Hardinge Britten, enclosing her with shadowy arms, and placing before her a small lyre wreathed with flowers. This visionary looking lyre is actually seen, as if under the lady's watch chain. Her dress is visible too, through the shadowy arms in front of her, whilst the noble-looking form and head stands clearly erect behind her. Experts in photography may practice for a century, if they will, but though they may put wreaths, and dots, and clouds, and thick clumsy looking forms on the plate before or after a sitting, they cannot, by any contrivance, produce a figure enclosing the sitter in its arms, displaying its transparent substance both before and behind that sitter, as in the case above described.

Amongst piles of testimonials of good spirit photographs given to Mr. Mumler, a representative case is that of Moses A. Dow, the highly respected proprietor of the *Boston Waverley Magazine*, who, having made an appointment with Mr. Mumler under an assumed name, and when sitting with him for the first time, a total stranger, procured a correct and clearly defined portrait of a young lady, a highly cherished friend of Mr. Dow, exhibiting a likeness to a photograph in that gentleman's possession as impossible to mistake, as it would be to question the identity of the same figure stamped on two current coins by the same die. We need say no more. When spirit photography assumes a test significance of this high order, its subjects may submit to public trials and private persecutions with the same impunity as Mr. William Mumler did, and come out of the ordeal as he did, triumphantly and beyond all reproach or suspicion.

The last great sensation in English Spiritualism has been the brilliant course of lectures delivered by the world-renowned poet, Gerald Massey, at St. George's Hall, London. Mr. Massey's first appearance as a public advocate of Spiritualism, was as chairman to the splendid *conversazione* convened to bid farewell and present a noble testimonial to Emma Hardinge Britten, on her departure from England to America, last fall. Gerald Massey's appearance in such a scene and situation, surrounded by the noblesse of the land, and supported by a crowd of eminent scientists, literati, and leading men and women, fell like a thunderbolt upon the gaping toadies who are so eager to echo the question, "What great ones of earth believe in these Spiritualists?" But that Mr. Massey should follow up his *début* in the public ranks of Spiritualism, by haranguing delighted audiences again and again in its defense, has been almost as much of a blow to the fossilized

leaders of royal associations for the conservation of opinions and the exclusion of ideas, as to see Professors Wallace, Varley, and Crookes putting on the whole armor of Spiritual faith, and deserting the ranks of the scientists who doubt the existence of their own souls, because they cannot detect them with a microscope, pound them in a mortar, or cut them up with dissecting knives.

Mr. James Morse, a spiritually made, spiritually instructed young man, with one of the most able and interesting of gifts as a trance medium that the cause can boast of, has been industriously traversing the length and breadth of England, giving admirable discourses on the philosophy of Spiritualism, confounding the skeptic, and bringing back from every point encouraging accounts of the progress of the cause.

In France Spiritualism is but slowly reviving from the shock of war, and the pall of materialism that the ascendancy of atheistic ideas, gained during the late sanguinary struggle, spread over it. An esteemed correspondent, writing from Paris, says, —

We have been somewhat disappointed in our too eager anticipations of Spiritual revivalism from the residence of D. D. Home amongst us. We have been informed that ill health has, to some extent, absorbed his powers, and our French Spiritualists feel sorrowful that indisposition should assail an instrument once so susceptible of producing heavenly tones for the benefit of mankind. A haunted house in the neighborhood of the Rue St. Honore, and some boisterous Spiritual manifestations through the mediumship of Mlle. Reynard, a little girl only ten years of age, have stirred up, to some extent, the sluggish depths of our materialistic tendencies; but we live in hopes of better things in the good time coming. . . .

I was present at the anniversary of the death — or the “new birth,” which shall I call it? — of Mons. Allen Kardec, and I must confess I was astonished at the number and respectability of the gathering that assembled at Père la Chaise on that occasion.

I could not call these gentlemen Spiritualists; neither do I regard the different societies of which they were the delegates as Spiritual societies. That doctrine which admits, as a contingency even, that the soul of him they had met to honor might at that moment be uttering its wail of sorrow and its protest against the pains of mortal existence, as a newly born babe, in the arms of some human mother who had not the slightest knowledge of Allen Kardec, his name, country, or identity, totally destroyed, to my mind, all our exalted hopes and beliefs in the idea that we could still communicate with his spirit, and made the tears of his widow significant, from the fact that, if his doctrine is true, it is tantamount to the annihilation of identity, love, and all ties of affection; in fact, to my perhaps illogical conceptions of reincarnation, Allen Kardec is blotted out forever, and who or what his soul may now be, matters not or ever will again, to those who once knew him as Allen Kardec. . . .

The *El Criterio Espiritista*, a Spiritual paper published at Madrid, without, we are sorry to say, a very liberal meed of support, announces that a society of Spiritualists at Seville, entitled the *Espiritista Sevilliana* are about to attempt holding public meetings for the dissemination of the Spiritual philosophy.

There are many learned, and some powerful supporters, of Spiritualism in Spain: a few good physical, and some interesting speaking and writing mediums; but the bitter opposition which progressive ideas have experienced, both from political and ecclesiastical sources, and the deplorable ignorance of the lower classes on all religious ideas but such as are communicated through, or sanctioned by the priests, renders the experiment of publicly preaching Spiritualism a somewhat hazardous one.

A Turkish lady residing at Constantinople has written to a friend in America, soliciting information concerning some of her Spiritual experiences, and curiously enough inquires if her American correspondent can put her in communication with any Spiritualists or Spiritual circles in Turkey. We have an assured knowledge that Spiritual circles are held in the exclusive and *uncomatible*

recesses of the royal harem; also, that certain British residents, and one American family in, or near Constantinople, hold séances in their dwellings every week; but how far these could be rendered accessible to our correspondent, we are unable to say.

In Dr. G. L. Ditson's deeply interesting articles on foreign Spiritual journals, in the *Banner of Light*, he alludes to the claim of one Mons. Perusini, of Battaglia, near Padua, to have discovered a new method of experimenting with mirrors and a glass of water, so as to facilitate spiritual sight, and procure the faculty of seeing spirits more readily than through natural clairvoyance.

The experiences of the writer in this magazine known as "Austria," have included a great many experiments in the same direction; in fact, no one in our own age has devoted more time or study to the attempt to develop spiritual sight through artificial means, than this well skilled student into psychological mysteries.

The details of some of this gentleman's remarkable experiments will be given hereafter, but for the present we must be content with stating that his opinion tallies with that of a great many thoughtful Spiritualists, who affirm that, however useful crystals and other shining objects may be in fixing the natural eye, and helping to magnetize the seer, the real secret of spiritual sight lies hidden within the realm of special organizations, and that the individual who can see spirits with these extraneous aids, has the faculty by nature, and those who can never see them in crystals, etc., can never see them at all. To this conclusion we devoutly say amen.

In the same article, Dr. Ditson reports that the people of Lichtenberg, also in Reschnoog (Alsace), and other places, have been visited by a remarkable phenomenon. The apparition of crosses, death's heads, coffins, swords,

and pistols, have been seen by hundreds of persons at the same time. An immense excitement has been caused by these visions, increased by the fact that similar forms have been photographed on the panes of glass in over one hundred different houses.

A private letter from the Grand Duchy of Baden to one of our staff, relates that a very skeptical gentleman, who took the trouble to travel some sixty miles to inspect these mysterious window panes, returned quite convinced that the forms they exhibited could have been produced by no ordinary or known scientific process. On arriving at his own home from Steinbach, our correspondent states that a most ghastly and repulsive figure appeared several times on the window pane of his library; and though he has had the glass removed and broken up with exorcisms and solemn religious ceremonies, it has returned on fresh panes five several times. He adds: "Our prayers have been at last answered. The demon has disappeared from the glass since three days past, but the saints only know whether it may not return again, to torture us with its frightful image."

In no part of the continent does belief in spirit communion seem to take a deeper or more healthful tone, than in Holland. Mr. D. D. Home visited this country some years ago, and received from royalty the most flattering marks of esteem. Since then, some members of the royal family have been earnest investigators in their own and other countries, and the American Spiritualists visiting Europe will have abundant reason to remember the generous and enthusiastic interest which several of the *savants* and distinguished *litterati* of Holland have manifested in Spiritualism.

Within the last few years, several societies for the investigation of the phenomena have been formed in

Holland, and some interesting specimens of Spiritual literature, have been given through the press.

A new semi-private *circle*, though it seems not to be prudent to call it a *society*, has been recently formed in Vienna. The medium is a young boy, reported to exhibit marvelous powers of a physical force character, and his manifestations, like those of Mr. Home, have the advantage of being produced in the light.

A lady of distinguished position in Pesth, has recently been favored by musical influences of a high order, and a few weeks ago a M. Martien, one of her circle, writes: "On seating herself at her harp, awaiting the divine afflatus, the instrument itself was swept by *invisible* performers as if by winds, and for a space of over fifteen minutes gusts of the most delicious music, ranging from the lowest bass to the highest treble, filled the *salon*, in the presence of upwards of twenty astonished and awe-struck witnesses."

We have selected specimen jottings of foreign Spiritualism and its progress in Europe, from a vast amount of correspondence, filled with details of facts, mediumistic developments, specimens of direct and mediumistic writing, and accounts of the different journals now springing up in every country in Europe. It may be asked why we occupy space by reiterating details with which the experiences of every well informed American Spiritualist have long been crowded. We answer, when the aspect of the times in which we live abounds with signs, all pointing in one direction, we deem it a debt due to posterity, if it be a matter of but little interest to ourselves, to gather up and record the prevalence of those signs which become index fingers, all pointing to the

mighty religious reform which future generations will reap the fruits of. It is all of but little use, perhaps, to those who can only derive present amusement by observing the curiosity or novelty of the thing." Of still less interest to the politician, scientist, merchant, or trader, who cannot convert these signs into special profit in his special calling, but of infinite use are they to mankind, considered as a part of the chain of causation, the links of which are being forged, one by one, in all the various workshops of civilization, and when brought together in generations to come, forming the one unitary cable which will bind humanity to the world of spirits, God, and angels.

It was not our intention to weave any facts of our own immediate surroundings into this wreath of exotic blossoms, but the explanation we have felt called upon to give of the deep significance which the Spiritualistic signs imply to posterity, reminds us of a valuable contribution to the world of progressive thought recently issued by our brave and indefatigable fellow-laborer, Giles Stebbins, of Detroit, Michigan, entitled "The Bible of the Ages."

Mr. Stebbins has gathered together the precious relics of many eras, even as we aim, in a far more insignificant way, to assemble together on one page the gleanings of many places. He has placed, side by side, the metaphysics of ancient Hindostan and modern America: the wisdom of the Egyptians, and the no less instructive counsels of a Channing and Whittier. Here are the inspired utterances of a Plato and Pythagoras, matched by the sublime humanitarianism of a Theodore Parker and Thomas Starr King. A. J. Davis's glorious spiritual illumination pales not beside the inspiration of Mohammed, and the Talmud and Rabbinical writings gain force, rather than lose it, by approximation with their

illustrious commentator, Colenso. Confucius, Zoroaster, and Seneca, Youmans, William Denton, and Lydia Maria Child, Luther, Zschokke, and Emma Hardinge, Aristotle, Swedenborg, and Cora L. V. Tappan, do not read in objectionable contrast, or even dissimilarity of exalted intelligence, when they are massed together in a "Bible of the Ages," selected by profound research and judicious scholarship like that displayed by Giles Stebbins. The age owes this admirable thinker a mighty debt for a production of so much value, and one so well calculated to annihilate the inflated and visionary halo of reverence which mankind has thrown around the antique, and give the teachings of truth and wisdom for what they may be worth, not for the value of the age in which they were written, or the number of years since they were thought out.

It may here be due to the reader, whose attention we have called to this fine work, to say that the "Bible of the Ages" can be procured of Giles B. Stebbins, the compiler, Detroit, Michigan, or of Wm. White & Co., *Banner of Light* office. And now, reader, we take our leave, for the second time, of the unfamiliar, but none the less esteemed patrons of THE WESTERN STAR, earnestly and honestly commending its contents to the consideration of the reflecting Spiritualist, and reverently waiting for the descent of a fresh mantle of inspiration, to enable us to meet and greet our readers with the approaching month's issue.

OSIRIS.

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