

S P I R I T U A L I S M

IN

A M E R I C A.

BY

BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

WITH

Fac-similes of Spirit Drawings and Writing.

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The open book contains 200 words from the 14th Chap.^r of the Gospel of St. John "Let not your heart be troubled, &c." down to the second line of the 10th verse, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, &c."

The words are apparently written with a lead pencil.



Excited by the Spirits in 11 Seconds,
through the Mediumship of M^{rs} E.J. French,
New York, April, 25th 1861.

in the presence of
Benj^m Coleman, J. Gurney,
and several others.

P R E F A C E.

THE Conductors of the *Spiritual Magazine* having determined to republish the papers on American Spiritualism, contributed by me to that journal, in an independent form, I desire to offer to the reader a few words of explanation as to my prominent connexion with the subject.

It will be seen by a perusal of this volume, how and under what circumstances I became a convert to a belief in spirit-intercourse, which belief I understand to be, *that the spirits of departed men and women have an existence in another sphere, and under certain conditions, that they can and do manifest themselves, and communicate with spirits in the flesh.* This being the cardinal point in my view of the subject, I see no reason why all denominations of religionists should not, when satisfied of the fact, become Spiritualists; for certainly the belief does not destroy the great truths inculcated in biblical history, but, on the contrary, it throws a new light on the sacred volume, and enables us to realize and comprehend many passages which are dark without it. But, as I am no theologian, I prefer to leave the religious bearing of the subject to be dealt with by other heads, believing that it is especially the duty of the ministers of religion to investigate Spiritualism, and give it, if possible, a right direction. Neither have I any scientific knowledge, though I do not think that to be a necessary qualification for the investigation of the facts of Spiritualism. I am a man accustomed to commercial pursuits, of strong nerve, and without fanatical bias of any kind. My mind is of that practical character that I am, I think, even a better witness to attest a physical fact that runs counter to generally received opinions, than the man of science, who has been educated, so to speak, in a groove, and who has first to unlearn and to throw aside the dogmas by which he is enthralled, before he can receive a new light which overturns his past philosophy. Having once become satisfied that the phenomena were real, I sought for an

explanation from men more learned than myself; but finding as I advanced in my enquiry, that the facts I witnessed completely set aside the theories which science had placed in my path, I was reduced to the necessity of either ignoring the evidence of my senses, or of admitting the spiritual origin of the phenomena. For instance—Professor Faraday's theory, that a table moved by the involuntary muscular action of the hands of those who sat around it, was entirely annihilated when I had seen, as I have frequently done, a table and other heavy bodies move about, *without* physical contact of any kind. It was of no use to tell me that it was Od force played the air I asked for, on an accordion, held by me in one hand, apart from any person present. It was equally futile and insulting to one's common sense to say that electricity had played on the accordion, and had answered questions, and had given me information on subjects of which I had no previous knowledge, without at least admitting that an intelligent agent guided and directed it; and, in a word, having become satisfied that it was no ordinary power that effected these marvels, I accepted the only rational solution, and became a Spiritualist.

As I was one of a few who recognised the truth at the earliest period of its introduction into this country, the only merit which belongs to me is, that I have steadily and boldly—despite the ridicule which the unthinking portion of society has cast upon the belief in Spiritualism—proclaimed the facts whenever they have been challenged; and now that thousands around me are seriously enquiring into the truth of this important subject, I have in my humble way become an authority.

As I am unaccustomed to write for the public, I am aware that the chief interest which may attach to the perusal of the following papers, will arise from the entire reliability that may be placed on the facts recorded in them, and not on their literary merit.

BENJ. COLEMAN.

London, Dec. 1861.

SPIRITUALISM

IN AMERICA.

DURING my recent visit to New York and Boston, in April, 1861, I made the personal acquaintance of some of the leading Spiritualists and best known Mediums of those cities; and at the request of several of the most prominent supporters of and contributors to the *Spiritual Magazine*, to whom I have read my notes since my return to London, I have great pleasure in placing them before its readers. I trust that my narrative may not only prove interesting, but that it will be instructive, inasmuch as it will convey additional proof of the reality of spirit-intercourse, confirmed by my own experiences in America, where, as it will be seen, I witnessed some of the most remarkable phenomena in Spiritualism to be found on record.

In my family and immediate circle of friends, for whom alone I kept a journal of my travels, I know that every statement I make is implicitly believed; but I am afraid that even among Spiritualists, it may be supposed in one or two cases to which I shall refer, that I may *somehow* have been deceived, and of course among the masses, who are still ignorant of the spiritual facts which are transpiring in their midst, my statements will be considered to be the ravings of a disordered imagination, or a gross attempt to impose on their credulity, senseless and profitless as such a proceeding would be; and therefore, it may not be out of place to remind these sceptics of an old story, which I hope those who are familiar with will forgive me for repeating. It is this:—

A Dutch ambassador assured the King of Siam that in Holland the water at times became so hard that a troop of elephants might walk on it in safety. The King is said to have replied: "Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me because I looked upon you as a sober fair-minded man, but now I am sure you lie."

The multitude, who from want of opportunity or inclination, have never seen the marvellous phenomena which are now attested by thousands in this country, and by tens of thousands in America, are exactly in the position of the benighted King of Siam. The facts simply transcend their philosophy, and with an arrogance which their sober reasoning cannot justify, they coolly ignore human testimony and declare them to be "impossible" and untrue.

It is not my intention, however, to discuss the general subject, for which I would refer the reader to the *Spiritual Magazine*, but only to warn the over-confident sceptic that before he endeavours to influence the minds of serious honest men by sneering at statements which to him may appear too extravagant for belief, he should first put himself on the same plane with me and others by investigating the subject with the sole object of eliciting the truth; and then, assuredly, the *reality of the phenomena* will no longer be denied by him, whatever differences of opinion the study of them may conscientiously lead us to.

My own belief in spiritual appearances, and that apparitions of departed persons are occasionally seen, has been long settled, and it is strengthened by the idea expressed in four lines of Byron:—

I merely mean to say what Johnson said,
That in the course of some six thousand years,
All nations have believed that from the dead
A visitant at intervals appears.

On my passage to America I took an early opportunity of introducing the subject among the passengers, and in a day or two it was evident that my advocacy of the truth of Spiritualism had become generally known, as I was sought for and constantly surrounded by groups representing every type of scepticism. Dr. Mack, a highly respected and well-known physician, residing at St. Catherine's, Upper Canada, placed himself in the van, and contested my arguments very warmly. It was, however, but a repetition of the old worn-out story: my facts were not facts to him—he must see them first—he must examine all the surrounding conditions—there must be something wrong in my powers of observation, &c., &c. To most persons, I find the facts, at first, are sad stumbling-blocks; which drive them to a setting up of their own judgment as superior to that of those who have become believers after due investigation. Judging from a variety of small civilities which were tendered to me on board, I had reason to think my unpopular views had nevertheless met with many sympathisers, and, among them, the very last person to whom I should have thought of speaking of Spiritualism from my previous knowledge of the man,—the captain of the ship. He however, I

found, had had his own experiences, as explained by the following colloquy which was overheard and reported to me:—

One of the passengers, a friend of the captain's, smoking with him on deck at night, said: "Have you heard all this d—d nonsense they are talking about spirits?"—"Yes," said the captain, in his solemn deep-toned voice, "I have; and let me tell you, Joe, there is more in it than people have any idea of." "Why, you don't mean to say that you believe the things of which Mr. Coleman is talking?"—"Well, Joe, I can only tell you that I had the clearest intimation of poor D——'s death, and in this way"—and the captain proceeded to tell his friend a veritable ghost story, which I have reason to believe made a serious impression on "Joe," inasmuch as he too exhibited to me afterwards many special civilities, showing a change of feeling in my favour. Among the officers of the ship who took the most interest in the subject were the doctor and the purser, who frequently invited me to their private cabins, and were serious and anxious in their enquiries. One evening, the purser said, "Doctor, do you believe in spiritual appearances?" "Yes," he replied, "I am inclined to do so—I never heard before on personal testimony of such facts as Mr. Coleman relates, but I believe them." "Well," said the purser, "so do I; and I will tell you why"—and he told the following story:—

"When C—— took a house, I went to live with him. One night I was disturbed by a loud knocking at the head of my bed, which destroyed my rest. I named it in the morning, and was laughed at by C—— and his sisters. This occurred a second and third time, with the addition of the bed clothes being on one occasion slowly dragged away from me. On a subsequent night, returning home late, I was groping my way in the dark to my bedroom, when at the door I was astounded by hearing a tremendous smash, as if a hundred weight of glass and china had been thrown at my feet. It was heard by all the house: C——, his sisters, and the servants rushed out of their rooms in great alarm; lights were procured, when to our surprise not anything was to be seen, and nothing was found to account for this extraordinary disturbance. The result was, that C—— gave notice of his intention to leave the house, and at length ascertained that the former occupant had packed up everything and decamped in the night; and the landlord on cleaning out the cellars found the body of a woman buried under the coals—who it was supposed had been murdered."

On my arrival at New York I made the personal acquaintance of Judge Edmonds, for whom I had long entertained the most profound admiration and respect. The undaunted manner in which from the first moment of his conviction he has proclaimed the truth of Spiritualism, and the worldly sacrifices he has been

compelled in consequence to make, entitle him to the affectionate regard of all men, without reference to those differences of religious opinion, which we too often stop to question and to quarrel with. I was surprised to find that the community who had forced Judge Edmonds from his high office, the duties of which it is admitted even by his persecutors he had discharged with fearless dignity, now pay him on all hands the most marked respect. I had an opportunity of observing this in two courts in which he was professionally engaged as counsel, and also in walking with him through the streets; and I was especially struck with the ease and masterly superiority which he exhibited over his opponent in conducting his legal arguments. He is called by his title by all around him, including the judge on the bench. I spent the evening at Judge Edmonds' house, and was introduced to his daughter, Miss Laura Edmonds, his sole companion. Both are cheerful, very genial, and interesting persons. Miss Edmonds' health is very delicate, and for that reason the exercise of her remarkable mediumship is not now encouraged. Her gifts are various: she is a writing medium; and the spirits speak through her in the trance state; she sees spirits in her normal condition; and she can sometimes at will *project her spirit*; appearing in form, and delivering messages to friends in sympathy with her, even though living at a distance—in proof of which she cited two or three instances. The power of the spirit to leave the natural body, and to present itself in visible form and identity to another, though rare, is not an attribute of Miss Edmonds' mediumship only; as I am acquainted with a lady resident in London who has the same power, and who has exercised it several times. This lady told me that on one occasion having a young friend staying on a visit with her, a gentleman who called to see them, in the course of conversation ridiculed the belief in apparitions, and said that he would give anything to see a ghost. He laughed at her assertion that her spirit could appear to him that very night if she pleased, and dared her to try it, which she agreed to do. In the course of the night, she told her friend that she had been to Mr. —'s bedside, and that finding him asleep, she awoke him by a box on his ear; and then, after repeating to him a verse from a poem of Keats's, came away. The gentleman called on the ladies early on the following morning, corroborated her statement, and acknowledged himself perforce a convert at all events to that phase of spiritual manifestations.

Miss Edmonds described to me a visit made to her by a lady who was an entire stranger to her, and who wished for a communication. Laura's hand was moved to write, but was prevented by the seizure of it by her left hand, which tried in a very decided manner to interrupt the spirit controlling the right hand. The

medium then gave utterance to a half-expressed sentence, which was in like manner checked by the second spirit; she then saw both spirits standing before her, and told her visitor that one was her husband and the other her father; and that by their interference with one another, she was made to write and talk so incongruously that she could make nothing of it; and she feared it would be very unsatisfactory. The lady, however, said the whole was most satisfactory to her as a test of the reality of the spirits' presence, as the same habits were exhibited in their lives: there had been a constant war of sentiment between her father and husband; whatever one asserted the other invariably contradicted.

I paid a visit to Mr. Colchester, who is what is called a "test medium." He obtains striking and very peculiar manifestations. Taking my seat in his private room with him alone, he placed before me slips of paper and requested me to write any number of questions I pleased. Whilst I was so engaged, he begged me to excuse him, and he went to speak to a person waiting in another room. On his return I had written out ten questions, each of which I had folded up closely and separately. He took them one by one before him and rapidly wrote out an answer to each question.

I may here explain that I have but three near relatives in the spirit-world—viz.: my father, whose name was Sylvester, my step-daughter Isabel, and my step-son Harry—these names I had written, with others, on separate pieces of paper and rolled them up in small pellets. On opening the papers I found that each answer was appropriate and exact, and proved conclusively that either by a natural clairvoyance on the part of the medium, who appeared to be in his normal condition the whole time, or by a spiritual impression, he had read every word contained in each of the folded papers. Take for instance the following questions and answers:—

Q.—"Is Harry or Isabel with me, and can they prove to me their presence?"

A.—"Yes; we are often with you. It is our greatest wish to speak to you alone," &c., &c. (Signed, "Isabella. Henry." I had written them Isabel and Harry).

Q.—"Has my visit to this country any special significance?—Will it be of service to me or to any one else?"

A.—"You are on a special mission, which will not only benefit you, but be of considerable benefit to others. You will be very successful," &c.

I then asked what spirit had given me the answer to number nine. Mr. Colchester quickly unbuttoned the sleeve of his shirt, and stripping it up, showed me the name "Isabella," plainly imprinted on his arm in red letters about an inch long, slightly

raised. I tried, at his request, to rub them off, but the friction only tended to bring out the writing in stronger relief. In like manner, the first having faded away, the name "Sylvester" was afterwards shown on his arm; and in reply to other questions, the words "Yes," and "No," appeared successively on the palm of his hand. Mr. Colchester then requested me to take the pellets containing the names I had written, and to throw them, together with my pocket handkerchief, under the table, and to select at the same time one of the names. I said "Isabel;" and in an instant, he said, "you will find the name tied in the corner of your handkerchief." I took it from the floor, where I had myself placed it a moment before, and found the pellet, with the name Isabel tied, as he said it was, in the corner of my own handkerchief.

Querulous sceptics may save themselves the trouble of speculating on whether or not I may have been deceived by a sleight-of-hand trick. There was no trick I assure them in the case; and, as it was broad daylight, no possibility of deception.

On a second visit to Mr. Colchester, I took with me a sealed envelope, enclosing a folded paper on which I had written, "Will the spirit be so good as to give me the exact words of this paper, merely to satisfy me of its power to do so?—B. C." I laid the envelope on the table. Mr. Colchester did not touch it; but, taking a pen and paper, he wrote rapidly *every word contained in it*. This was a conclusive test of that clairvoyant power which has been so frequently disputed, and which Sir Philip Crampton, M. D., challenged some years ago, when he said he had enclosed a hundred pound note in an envelope "to be given to any one who, by the operation of Mesmerism, shall describe the particulars of the note." It was never claimed, and it is therefore constantly cited as a proof that Clairvoyance is a fraud. In reference to this particular test, I find the following statement made in the 37th number of the *Zoist*, April, 1852:—"After all, it turns out that Sir Philip Crampton did not enclose a bank note, but a blank cheque; and they say he thought it good fun to substitute the one for the other." The fraud in this instance would thus appear to have been practised by the learned physician, and this is the way that men of science pretend to investigate and too frequently trifle with subjects which they know, if proved, would overturn their philosophy. If, however, there should be any *savant* in the present day who is bold enough to risk a hundred pound note on Mr. Colchester's ability, *without* the apparent aid of what is called Mesmerism, to decipher the contents of a sealed envelope, I shall be glad to be the "medium" of making the trial, and I am much mistaken, after my experience, if the sceptic is not made to pay for his temerity. The very remarkable manifestation of writing on the flesh is also obtained by Mr.

Foster, of New York, who was absent at the time of my visit from the city. I am told he is a respectable young man, and that his manifestations are quite equal to Mr. Colchester's, and much of the same character.

Dr. Gardner and Dr. Bell, of Boston, attest their having witnessed about two years ago similar manifestations through the mediumship of Miss Coggswell, of Vermont. Dr. Gardner asked mentally for some evidence that his brother in the spirit-world was present, and the letters M. G., the initials of the name, came up on the arm of the medium. Dr. Gardner then asked mentally—"How did he die?" and presently there rose up on her arm the figure of a human heart, and over it another figure of a pistol being discharged into the heart. This was a satisfactory test to Dr. Gardner, as his brother was shot through the heart by a ball from a revolver. Dr. Gardner sent for Dr. L. V. Bell, a well-known physician, who is not a Spiritualist, to witness this extraordinary phenomenon, and, in answer to a mentally-expressed desire of Dr. Bell, three crosses and a flower came up on the medium's arm. Dr. Bell, in reference to this and other phenomena which he witnessed, says he does not believe they are the work of spirits. He is equally sure they are not produced by imposture,—they come, in his opinion, "from some occult cause which I do not undertake to explain," &c. "But (he says) so far as I am qualified to appreciate or observe what occurs before my eyes, I cannot admit that there was juggling or self-deception in the matter."

Among the most valuable developments of Spiritualism in America is the number of healing mediums, many of high character and station, and whose apparently miraculous cures are attested by a host of reliable witnesses; and there is no more reason to doubt that spirit-power is exercised for the cure of disease, than in any other of the marvellous manifestations which many hundreds of persons have frequently witnessed. I met a Mr. Hussey in New York, who is a healing medium. He described to me how strangely, despite of himself, and even against his wishes, he had been forced to relinquish other pursuits, and to devote himself to the healing art. He said he had cured almost every known disease, except yellow fever. One case of typhoid he cured in half an hour; another of spinal complaint confirmed by years of suffering, which had baffled all other treatment, he had cured in nineteen days. He confessed to me that he knew nothing of pathology; that he exercised no thought, but that without volition on his part, his hands were directed to the seat of disease, and its cure was thereby effected.

In Boston, Dr. Newton has obtained great celebrity as a healing medium. I had not time to visit him, but I heard from a friend who knew him well, and who frequently visits at his house, that his

2. Dr. Newton has been cured of many diseases.

powers are acknowledged on all hands. In one case known to my informant, a man, who had lost his sight for 15 years, was restored in one hour, and I was told that a pile of crutches is to be seen at Dr. Newton's house, bearing the names of the patients to whom they belonged, who had been cured "by the laying on of hands," and who had walked away without further use for them.

At New York, I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Miss Catherine Fox, who is now well known wherever Spiritualism has been heard of, as one of the Fox family through whom the modern manifestations were first recognised in America, 13 years ago. She is still young, and a very interesting, amiable and lady-like person. Her mediumship is as strong now as it has ever been; and indeed she had, during my stay in New York, some of the most remarkable manifestations that have ever been recorded, and of which I shall give a full account in a subsequent number. The rappings in her presence are very loud and precise. When I called on her one morning, the room resounded on all sides as if a host were giving me a joyous welcome. I asked if the spirits who were present would give me their names, and the names of Harry, Isabel, and Sylvester were spelt out, no names having been mentioned by me in Miss Fox's presence, and of course I and my family relations were wholly unknown to her. These were followed by other names of friends, spelt out in full, and one, a relative of my wife's said, "Let me speak." A message followed, of a specially significant and touching character, which I am precluded from giving, as it relates to private family affairs; but I may mention that the tenor of the message is an actual apology offered for an assumed injustice done to me during her life-time, now 20 years ago.

Dr. Kirby, a well-known physician residing in New York, told me that he had investigated Spiritualism for some years, and that he was a confirmed believer. Among many facts which he named, I select the following curious proof of spirit-power:—He and his friend Dr. Wilson were at a *séance*, when a spirit gave his name William Nixon. "What?" said Dr. Wilson, "are you my old friend with whom I have played so many games at cards?" "Yes" was the reply; "I can play now as well as I ever did, and I challenge you to a game." A pack of cards was obtained and handed under the table, where a naturally-shaped though not a fleshly hand, cut them. Dr. Wilson then dealt five cards to each, and proceeded to play an American game, called *euchre*, receiving from the spirit card for card throughout the game, which was won by the spirit, who said exultingly, "You see, Doctor, I had the advantage, as I could see every card in your hand."

Mr. Hussey, of whom I have made mention, related to me an equally curious manifestation which occurred recently at a sitting

where he was present. A spirit requested that a tumbler filled with water should be placed in the centre of the table around which they were seated; they were then told to put out the light, which was done, each one of the party holding the other's hand. In a minute, the gas was re-lighted, when the tumbler was found to be entirely emptied of its contents. The spirit next requested the room to be made dark again, and on re-lighting it in an instant after, it was found that the glass had been refilled to the brim. They asked the spirit to explain the process, and were told that a hand was formed large enough to hold in its hollow the contents of the glass, by pressing it up against the lower surface of the table, which on looking was found to be wet.

These are some of the incidents which so frequently occur in the experience of those engaged in the prosecution of this subject; and which prove with irresistible force the reality of some super-mundane agency.

There is a phase of mediumship to be met with in America which has never, that I am aware of, been known in Europe, which tests in the most satisfactory manner the actual presence of spirits, and the faculty which certain media possess of seeing and recognizing them; and that is, the power of delineating on canvas or cardboard an exact likeness of the spirit.

I am indebted to Mr. Berry, of Boston, editor of the *Banner of Light* newspaper, for a photograph copy of a spirit drawing, which he had just received, enclosed in a letter, from Mr. P. Butter, of Springfield, Illinois. It is the full-length likeness of a child in ball costume, four years of age, who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Soaper, of Bloomington, Illinois. It is said that the spirit of this child presented itself to Mr. W. P. Anderson, a portrait-drawing medium, who was unknown to the family, and that he produced, in an abnormal state with his eyes closed, the original picture, life size, in 2 hours and 40 minutes, and it is pronounced to be an exact likeness. I showed the photograph to Mrs. Burbank Felton, of Boston, a very intelligent and well-known trance-speaking medium, of whom I shall have occasion to speak presently, and she told me that she had recently seen a most wonderful production obtained under somewhat similar, but still more curious circumstances, through the mediumship of a Mr. J. B. Fayette, of Oswego, who is a tailor by trade, and who is unacquainted in his natural state, with the art of painting in any way. The likeness Mrs. Felton saw was thus obtained:—A friend of hers, Mrs. Macumber, a well-known public test medium, whilst on a visit with a Mr. and Mrs. Burgess, gave them at a *séance* a message from their spirit daughter, to the effect that she would appear to Mr. Fayette on a particular day and hour to sit for her likeness, and she described very minutely

how she would be dressed. They lived at some distance from Oswego, and had never heard of Mr. Fayette; but they wrote to his address, and told him that a spirit had promised them to sit to him for a likeness on a specified day and hour, without mentioning any particulars whatever, and they requested him to send them anything he might get at that time. On the day but one after this day, Mr. Fayette sent the drawing which Mrs. Felton had seen, and which proved to be an exact and artistically-finished likeness of Mr. and Mrs. Burgess's child, dressed precisely as she had said she would be. It was drawn by Mr. Fayette whilst in the trance state, *in total darkness*, which, it is said, are the only conditions under which he can produce these spirit portraits. I may here, perhaps, be permitted to digress for a moment from my narrative to consider this question of special conditions, which it is claimed are essential to the production of a certain class of spiritual phenomena, but with which the cavilling sceptic invariably quarrels. I hold that it is an unphilosophical state of mind, and one which unfits a man for calm and fair investigation, to insist as a preliminary that his prejudices shall be satisfied. In every situation, and in every act of our lives, we are more or less dependant on conditions. We can effect, under suitable and harmonious arrangements, that which we should find it impossible to accomplish under the slightest variation from them. The chemist requires his darkened room to produce certain results, and the photographer is obliged to have two extremes to bring out his picture. How unreasonable, then, is it to attempt to ignore, as many do, unmistakable palpable facts in Spiritualism, because they are not done to order. Assuredly, the man who allows his prejudices to interpose, who stands out on the pride-of-intellect plane, and refuses to imitate the humility of the great Newton in the pursuit of truth, misses a golden opportunity, by neglecting Spiritualism, of increasing his knowledge, and, as I believe, his future happiness.

At Boston, I met Miss Lord, of Portland, Maine, and as I was anxious to realise the wonders exhibited through her mediumship, of which I had previously heard, an arrangement was made for me to visit her, and accompanied by three gentlemen holding prominent commercial positions in the city, and all interested in the subject, we formed a circle, including the ladies of the house, of nine persons. Miss Lord is in very delicate health, far advanced, I fear, in consumption, and consequently incapable of any great physical exertion. We took our seats around a good sized table in a small room, the medium being seated between one of my friends and myself, and we formed a chain by holding each other's hands all round the circle, resting them lightly on the surface of the table. On another table, about two or three

feet distant from the back of the chair on which the medium sat, there had been placed various musical instruments—a guitar, a dulcimer, tambourine, harmonium, a horn (such as is used by the fish sellers of the city), and four bells of various sizes, and in a corner of the room there stood a very large bass-viol and bow, which I was informed had belonged 70 years ago to one Squire Simmons. After sitting quietly for a few minutes in a subdued light, the medium became entranced by Black Hawk, an Indian spirit, who is the presiding spirit of the band that visit this circle, and his orders spoken through the medium in broken English, are implicitly obeyed. The first request was that we should sing; which the ladies of the party did, and they continued to sing several plaintive airs lasting some minutes, until we had become, as I supposed, harmonised. We were then told to put out the lights, which was done, and seated under the conditions I have described we were left in total darkness. The first manifestation arose from the unseen agents handling the guitar, which was whisked about with great celerity over and around our heads, whilst a quick negro air was capitally played upon it the whole time the instrument was floating about us. I was touched by it on the head playfully several times, and once it rested on my shoulder, the air still continuing, with the strings so close to my ear that they struck me in their vibration. It was then announced that Squire Simmons was present, and that he would perform a solo on the bass-viol. Three sharp musician's taps were made by the spirit with the bow to call attention, and we listened in mute astonishment to hear this large instrument played upon with all the harmony and force that could be exercised by any performer in the flesh. At its conclusion I thanked the Squire for his condescension, and he responded by tapping me gently with the bow on my head. I then asked him to shake hands with me, but instead of a hand he gave me one end of the bow, shaking it, and holding the other end with quite as firm a grasp as I did. Each of the instruments was played upon by a new performer. The bells were all floating about our heads at one time, ringing harmoniously in time with the guitar. Black Hawk took the tambourine, and asking for "Hail, Columbia" to be sung, he jingled the instrument about in the wildest manner, striking us with it alternately on our heads—then on the table—the back of our chairs—and on the floor with inconceivable rapidity. He then gave us an Indian dance, and the dull heavy bumping and thumping sounds as of feet in mocassins, or Indian slippers, kept excellent time. The tambourine was then placed on my head, and he passed his hand over it, by which I could feel its full shape and size. He concluded this part of his performance by saying "Me do someting else for you," and in an instant the

medium seated in her arm chair was lifted with a startling bound on to the centre of the table, chair and all. I assisted in lifting her from her elevated position, and was surprised at her dead weight, being twice as heavy as I should imagine her to be from her fragile appearance when in her normal condition. Black Hawk blew a shrill and ringing blast on the horn, quite as loud as any human being could do it. He then played on the harmonican, and surprised me by saying through the horn, "How you do, Mr. Coleman." I asked the company if it would be agreeable to have the door opened, as the room felt close and hot, and immediately a fan, which I afterwards found had been taken from a drawer in the room, was actively wafted before my face just as if human hands were using it, and still more surprising, a goblet of water was placed to my lips to drink, and though I gently resisted, my head was pushed back and I was thus forced to take a good draught of the cooling beverage. The whole exhibition was a most marvellous and convincing proof of the presence of intelligent invisible agencies, and, apart from all other considerations, the *precision* with which heavy instruments were hurled at times about our heads in the dark, touching us lightly and playfully, was in itself proof positive, that spirit eyes guided, and that no human being of this world handled them. Every sense but that of sight being satisfied, the *séance* was quite as satisfactory to me as if the manifestations had been made in broad daylight.

Of another character, though no less curious and wonderful, were the manifestations which I witnessed on a subsequent evening at New York with Miss Kate Fox. I have spoken of the casual morning visit which I made to this interesting young lady, but I omitted to name that among other messages given to me on that occasion was the following: "When you come here on Friday evening I will manifest my presence in a light—tokens unmistakable in lights.—SYLVESTER." I had no idea of the meaning of this message, nor could Miss Fox explain it, I only knew that Friday evening had been fixed by my friend Mr. L. for us to sit with her. On that evening we accordingly met; our party being limited to Miss Fox and her mother, Mr. L., and myself. We fastened the door of the room, and put out the gas. We sat as usual round a table, taking hold of each other's hands; the ladies being separated by my friend and myself. After various short messages were given by the raps, we were desired to pull open the slides of the table, which being done, an aperture of about a foot in width was made. A request was then rapped out, through the alphabet, "Give us a pencil and paper." I first handed my pencil case through the aperture of the table, which was taken from me by what appeared by the touch to be a naturally shaped hand. I then gave a large sized

plain card, which was in like manner taken from me in a quiet gentle manner. We then heard very distinctly the pencil being used as in writing rapidly, and in a minute or two the card and pencil were handed back to me. On the identical card I found written in a legible hand, though not a fac-simile, "My dear father, may God bless you. I am with you, dear father, pass me not, for I am by your side. I am with you, and to-night I will manifest.—HENRY C. D——." Then gradually there rose up between the opening in the table a *half globular-shaped light*, about the size of the palm of my hand. It was not like a phosphorescent light, it was more like the light of a bull's-eye lantern, spreading an illuminating ray around. It rose three times to the surface of the table, and then disappeared. A hand, naturally shaped and about the ordinary size, was then placed on my head, and continued for some little time to pat and caress me in the kindest and most gentle manner; it felt very warm, almost hot. I put up my hand to touch it; having my pencil case between my fingers, the spirit-hand immediately took hold of the pencil, and held it firmly at one end, whilst with my arm extended above my head I held the other; in this position it was swayed about see-saw like, and then abandoned to me. At this moment a startling rap, much louder than anything of the kind I had ever before heard, was made on the outer surface of the table. I asked for this to be repeated three times, and accordingly three sharp sounding heavy raps were made as if done by a large-sized auctioneer's hammer. The rapping sounds then spread all about the room, and came simultaneously from the walls, floor, and ceiling, and the lights, diminished to the size of a half-crown piece, played about us, resting alternately on various parts of our bodies.

✓ My previous experience with Mr. Home had prepared me for all such manifestations as I witnessed with Miss Lord and Miss Fox, and although extremely curious and differing in some important points from his mediumship—they serve only to vary the character of the phenomena, but do not transcend the marvellous facts which hundreds of our neighbours have witnessed at numerous *séances* with Mr. Home, and which have been already fully recorded in the *Spiritual* and *Cornhill Magazines*. It will probably be said among other objections, that even admitting the facts, (which many I know will not do, whilst others will assert that they are *too* real, being all of the devil) when curiosity is once satisfied and the wonder ceases, there is nothing very elevating in this class of manifestations. This objection, as far as it goes, is certainly a valid one, and if the manifestations claiming to be of spiritual origin were indeed confined to the moving of chairs and tables, and of rapping

sounds accompanied by only common-place messages, they certainly would not (except for the consequences they involve) be worth any more consideration than we should give to the curious tricks performed by a Houdin or a Frikel, to which it is usual to compare them. But who but very perverse people, or those who know nothing of the subject, will say that spiritual manifestations, so called, are thus limited in their character, and confined to the phase of unintellectual physical phenomena? Who that has paid the least attention to the subject does not see a wisdom in this lifting of tables into the air, and of these despised rappings, and that thus "God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise." Who does not see that they are necessary to arrest in the first instance the confirmed sceptic, and lead him when other means have failed of doing so, to enquire into the "why" and the "wherefore" of these previously denied but now demonstrated facts, and that they are thus made stepping-stones to higher knowledges, and ultimately to that most consolatory of all convictions:—that there is indeed another state of existence after the spirit leaves the natural body, and that in that state they who have been dear to us here are not so very far removed from us, but that they can still watch over, guard and direct us during our prolonged pilgrimage on earth.

We, in England, who are only on the threshold of this enquiry, will probably find when a sufficient number of witnesses have been secured—as in America, (where it is said there are hundreds of thousands,) that we shall be indifferent to the striking manifestations which now excite our wonder, and shall no doubt settle down to study the higher philosophies, which this new light will have forced upon our previously darkened minds; and we shall then be prepared to recognise and encourage the higher developments of Spiritualism, which will rise up amongst us, as it has amongst our transatlantic brethren, where numbers of previously unlettered men and women, have become writing and trance, or inspirationally influenced, speaking mediums; and by a little patience, and by abstaining from condemning phases of the subject, which are not understood and may have much hidden wisdom in them, we shall in due time realise the true purport and intent of these modern manifestations, and the *cui bono* so impatiently demanded be made plain to us all.

One of the most interesting writing and seeing mediums with whom I became acquainted in New York, is Mrs. Staats, residing at 87, Amity-street. Her quiet earnest manner assures you at once that she is entirely reliable in all she says and does. She requested me in the first instance to write a number of names, including any of friends I had in the spirit-world. I accordingly wrote a list of about a dozen family names. Her

hand, with a pencil, immediately moved towards the paper, and quickly dashed under the names of Sylvester, Henry and Isabel, who as I have before said, are the only ones related to me who have passed away; the rest of the names I had written were of those still living. She then wrote the name of Harry, and asked me if I recognised it, saying "He is here standing by your side. He tells me that you have lingering doubts about his treatment during his illness. You thought the medical men treated him wrong. He is your son." I said "No, he was not my son." "Well, he was your wife's, and he knows no difference in you. He is very like you. He passed away about four months since. He was very fond of drawing." &c., &c. Whilst Mrs. Staats was making these remarks, which were literally correct, her hand at the same time was writing rapidly a message addressed "My dear father," and signed "Henry." Other short messages followed with snatches of poetry. Then the following words—"We gather, my dear father, wherever you are, and whisper sweet words of consolation and encouragement. You will return satisfied to my dear mother, and I will be with you—

" 'Tapping, gently tapping' on your cheek the while

Your heart will gladden with the smile,

Which light up eyes that welcome you,

When safe at home again.

I will not whisper, 'nevermore,'

But come as oft in days of yore,

And from our treasure to you pour

A stream of love undying.

"My style as you know."

This was certainly remarkable, as my step-son had a great admiration for the poems of Edgar Poe, and used to imitate his style occasionally.

Mrs. Staats then took another sheet of paper, and said that a very beautiful influence from a charming spirit possessed her, and wrote—"Isabel is here." Be it remembered I had not mentioned any names. The medium continued to write, whilst at the same time she was talking to me, and in a few minutes the following message was completed and handed to me:—"I have long been watching this opportunity to write a few words of tenderness and love. Dear ones stand waiting to open the door to hearts who have long looked through the dim and shadowy outlines of the past—to gather, if possible, one bright ray of hope—to assure of blessed re-union and communion of soul. Dear mother—your treasures are safe here, and not so far removed but that they can tell their love, and be to you guiding stars, cheering you on and up to this more durable home where angels become teachers. We help in all those hours of darkness,

and disclose those new beauties which are in store for the faithful. Let Faith be to you light in darkness! Hope will lure you onward! Charity will deck you in robes of undying beauty, and your children be the crown of your declining years, and wait to welcome you here, where peace flows on for ever sweet as the love of—ISABEL."

Mrs. Staats has many visitors who come frequently to obtain communications from the spirit-world, and I was told of some very extraordinary information obtained by one gentleman whom I met there. He got an entire list of names of persons to a document required to establish the birthright of a lady, whose case was recently brought to a successful issue in the English courts of law. Mrs. Staats' hand wrote out directions where this document of ancient date would be found, and gave the fac-similes of the signatures attached to it. I also made the acquaintance, at Mrs. Staats', of another gentleman, a Mr. J—, whose knowledge of Spiritualism was brought about under the following interesting circumstances, which I will endeavour to relate as nearly as I can in his own words,—“I married,” he said, “the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in this city, who disapproved of our union, and refused to see his daughter afterwards. It was a marriage of the purest affection on both sides. She was a woman of unusual accomplishments, of great strength of mind, and capable of giving sound advice on all subjects. There was, indeed, something like inspiration in all she said and did. A proposal was made to me to go to the new settlement of Pikes Peak, in the Rocky Mountains, some two thousand miles away, which is now my settled home. I hesitated, on account of the long separation it would necessarily entail, though the advantages to be derived were great. I discussed the matter with my wife, and she strongly advised me to accept the proposal, which I at length did, though reluctantly, for among other difficulties, she was expecting to become a mother, and I feared the world would think it an unfeeling thing to leave her alone and unprotected at that time. My arrangements being made, I started on my journey, accompanied by my wife as far as Washington. Before parting, my wife said, ‘Now, love, if we should never meet again on earth, let us try to communicate with each other, and let the one who may be removed from this sphere guide and protect the other.’ This remark surprised me; we had never spoken on such a subject before, and we neither of us knew anything of Spiritualism. In due time, I arrived at my destination, and found I had taken the step just in time to anticipate others, and to secure the object I had in view. On my way, I lost off my finger a plain ring which my wife had given me at our parting. It was found by

the conductor of a train by which I had travelled, and restored to me some weeks after; but it was, as you see (showing me the ring), broken. By the next periodical mail, I received this letter from my wife, which I should like you to read." I did so, and it fully corroborated his previous description of her affectionate disposition and her superior acquirements. "Taking up," he continued, "the *New York Herald* of two days subsequent date, I was struck down on seeing the announcement of her death. She had, as I afterwards learned, died suddenly on the very day on which this letter was written. I returned as quickly as I could to New York, where I have remained since, and received my wife's papers and trinkets and this ring (showing it to me), which I gave her at our parting, and which I found, as you see it, *broken exactly as mine had been*. Recollecting the promise we had mutually made, I became anxious to test her ability to manifest to me, and meeting a friend who knew something of Spiritualism, he recommended me to visit Mrs. Staats, and here is the first evidence I ever had of spirit intercourse; see how remarkably this message agrees with her last letter to me. You will not wonder, I am sure, that I should become a firm believer in this faith, and that I should now never take any serious step without seeking her advice, which for six months she has continued to give me from time to time. It is always exceedingly pertinent, clear and reliable." This story which, from memory, I have but imperfectly quoted, will, I trust, prove as interesting to the reader as it was to me.

At the St. Nicholas Hotel, where I staid, I also became acquainted with a gentleman, who told me he was an old convert to a belief in Spiritualism, a Mr. John McKinney, of Lawton, Michigan, where he holds a State appointment. He said, "Spiritualism is recognised by the great majority of those who are residents of the Western States. We all know something of it. Family circles and mediums are everywhere amongst us. It is not a religion with us, but all sects admit the facts, and we meet frequently at each other's houses, not for the purpose of obtaining wonderful manifestations which we have all witnessed in past times and no longer need, but to obtain information and instruction from our departed friends and relatives. I myself was a writing medium for several years; but latterly the power has left me. I have had some very remarkable predictions made in writing through my own hand, and among other things, the deaths of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster were most accurately foretold, and so far back as 1855 I was informed that this present crisis in our political history would occur. I have the papers at home, and will look them up and send them to you. I was told that a separation of the States would take place about this period

—that a collision would ~~come~~, though not leading to very serious consequences—and that our difficulties would culminate about the year 1864, when a new confederation would be made, and the slave question voluntarily settled by the Southerners themselves arranging the terms on which they would consent to its ultimate and final extinction."

In reply to my question, Mr. McKinney said he had reason to place the fullest confidence in all predictions made by the spirits through his own hand.

I visited at Boston another test-writing Medium, Mr. J. V. Mansfield, who has obtained great celebrity from the character of the communications made through him. I was to him, as to all others in America, an entire stranger. I took my seat in a small ante-room alone: he placed before me a long strip of paper and a pencil, and requested me to address any question I pleased to any one with whom I desired to communicate in the spirit-world; whilst he retired to another room. I did as requested, and having folded the paper containing the writing, and placed my hand upon it, Mr. Mansfield entered the room, and took his seat by my side, and putting his left hand lightly on mine, he traced, as he said, the affinity between me and the spirit by a principle of magnetism, and declared at once that it was the spirit of my son who was about to communicate with me. "I do not guess," he said, "I know it for a certainty." His hand then wrote out rapidly a long message, beginning "My dear father"—and signed "Harry." The message itself was not worthy of the source from whence it purported to come, but, nevertheless, it contained two very curious and striking allusions. Such as—"This was known to you before you left your home in Sussex-place, Regent's Park," where I once resided, and "You can tell your friend Howitt, &c.," and at my request the address, adding my Christian name, was appended, none of which particulars could the medium by any likelihood have known.

Trance mediums and inspirational speakers are now very numerous in America, and this form of the spiritual development has, as I have previously said, taken the place of the earlier manifestations, and it seems a most valuable, practical, and highly satisfactory result.

I found crowded audiences assembled to hear discourses delivered by young women, who without previous education have risen up from the middle and lower ranks of society to become teachers; and whose lectures on Theology, Politics, Morals, and Science, are delivered with a force and eloquence which would compare favorably with the most popular lay and clerical speakers of the present day.

I heard Mrs. Cora Hatch for instance, who is a young woman of about three or four and twenty, deliver an address which

purported to be spoken through her by the spirit of the American statesman, Jefferson. I do not stop to inquire or to satisfy myself whether the speaker was really influenced by the particular spirit who claimed to be present, I only know that I listened to a marvellous piece of oratory delivered extempore in well-chosen language without falter or hesitation, occupying an hour and a quarter, by a young uneducated woman; and I am left to say whether I can reasonably regard it as the result of a natural genius and ordinary training, (which I am assured by herself and those who know her that it is not) or of some abnormal influence, which I am told it is, and I confess that I am forced to receive the latter as the true solution of such a phenomenon.

Miss Emma Harding, whom I had also the pleasure of hearing, is one of the most popular lecturers in America, and I think deservedly so, but in her case it, perhaps, cannot be said that she was without training or education, and her discourses, I believe, so far differ from Mrs. Hatch, that she may be said to be an eloquent advocate for the truths of Spiritualism, rather than an inspirational speaker. Miss Harding is now devoting herself to the establishment of a home in Boston for the fallen of her sex, and I was happy to hear that ladies and gentlemen of all denominations were assisting her to complete her benevolent task.

Mrs. Burbank Felton, of whom I have spoken, is, as I have mentioned, a speaking medium, differing in character from either of the two ladies to whom I have just alluded, inasmuch as she, I believe, always speaks in the trance state. I am told that this lady obtains at times some very remarkable manifestations. The spirits of friends and relatives take possession of and entrance her, and she carries conviction by the accuracy of her delineation of voice and manner. I was introduced to Mrs. Felton by Mr. C., a gentleman who holds an official position connected with the port of Boston, but as she was indisposed I had not the opportunity of testing her mediumship. Mr. C., however, has had many proofs of it, and he related to me a very remarkable story which, though somewhat lengthy, I venture to think will prove interesting to my readers, as it answers a question frequently put—Why don't these spirits tell us something useful?

On one of his casual visits to Mrs. Felton, a spirit speaking through her, introduced himself to Mr. C., and gave his name Ezekiel Webster, a well-known American lawyer, and brother to the celebrated statesman, Daniel Webster. After some general conversation, Ezekiel took leave of Mr. C., saying in a courteous way that he was happy to have made his acquaintance, and added "If you are ever in want of my assistance and advice come to me, and I will give it to you." Some time after this interview it so happened that Mr. C. became involved in a law suit, arising

out of the following circumstances.—The firm of J. B. and Co., of Boston, discovered a guano island in the Carribean Sea, and sent several vessels there to load. The Venezuelan Government hearing of this, sent an armed ship to take possession, and drove them away. Soon after this event a company was formed, who leased all the Islands in the Carribean Sea from the Government, and J. B. and Co. were invited to take a lease from the company of the island they had already worked, which they agreed to do, and gave a surety bond for the due fulfilment of the conditions of their lease, and to this bond Mr. C. became a party. One of the conditions was that J. B. and Co. should carry away, within a given time, 10,000 tons of guano, and pay five dollars per ton royalty. When J. B. and Co. had obtained about 4,000 tons, the island was exhausted, and they called upon the company either to give them another island to work upon or to cancel their lease, which the company refused to do, and insisted on payment for the stipulated number of 10,000 tons. The defence was that the company had by implication guaranteed that J. B. and Co. could obtain 10,000 tons, and in equity they could not be called upon to pay royalty on a greater quantity than they had actually carried away. Mr. C. being sued on his bond bethought himself of Ezekiel Webster's promise, and determined to seek another interview with him, which he obtained by visiting Mrs. Felton. She soon passed into the trance state, and assumed the official manner and importance of the lawyer. Mr. C. stated the case as I have given it, upon which the following conversation took place:—WEBSTER,—“Was the Island uninhabited when J. B. and Co. first took possession of it?”—“Yes!”—“How far is it from the Continent?”—“30 miles!”—“My brother Daniel is better acquainted with international law than I am, allow me to ask his opinion on one point, and then I will give you mine.”

In a few minutes he returned and continued, “My brother says I am right; the defence you make is a fair one, and ought to prevail, unless there is some clause in the lease which cuts it off, and that I cannot pronounce upon without seeing and carefully examining the contents. It is hardly necessary, however, to do this, as the lease itself is a nullity, and therefore the lessors can neither recover under it for what you did take away, nor, of course, for what you did not. They had no title, and could not give one. They were, in fact, only undertaking to lease to you your own property, from which you had been driven by violence. By a law of the United States, any of her citizens who may discover guano on an island not occupied, and lying without the maritime jurisdiction of any other nation, has a right to take possession thereof, and to hold possession against

all subsequent comers till he has exported all the existing guano upon it. Now, you discovered the island in question, and were peaceably and legally employed in carrying the deposit away until interrupted and driven away by the armed force of Venezuela. But they did not own the island, and therefore had not any right to interfere with you, nor, of course, any right, after taking possession, to lease or to sell it; nor had the guano company any right to convey because their own title was worthless. You have, therefore, taken away nothing but your own property, and the guano company, instead of having a claim on J. B. & Co., are bound to repay to J. B. & Co. whatever sum of money they have exacted under their lease."

Mr. C. then observed—"But it will be said that J. B. & Co. waived their rights by accepting the lease."

WEBSTER.—"Perhaps so. The answer, however, is, that all parties appear to have acted in ignorance of their rights, but that is no reason why the party having rights should be deprived of them for the benefit of those who had none."

Mr. C. showed this opinion to his own lawyer, who, without knowing the source from whence it was obtained, said it was excellent and sound law. Mr. C. accordingly acted upon it—put the company at defiance, and they have not troubled him further in the matter.

I am now about to relate several anecdotes which may be called "Curiosities of Spiritualism." They have been told to me by serious, intelligent, and highly respectable people, and I readily yield to them as implicit a belief as I expect to obtain from those who know me when I speak of my own personal experiences:—Mr. Daniel Farrar, who is at the head of a leading and wealthy commercial firm in Boston, gave me a history of his conversion to Spiritualism. He had, he said, given close attention to the subject for several years; a member of the orthodox Church he opposed Spiritualism for two years, and at length yielded to overwhelming evidence of its reality.

The Rev. Mr. Willis, who was educated at Harvard University, and who is now residing at Coldwater, Michigan, is a medium of remarkable power, and was a frequent visitor at Mr. Farrar's house. Invited on one occasion to stay there over night, he consented, on the condition that Mr. Farrar would sleep in the same room with him, which he did. During the night all sorts of disturbances took place, their clothes were strewed about in all directions, and in the morning they found almost every article of furniture in the room had been moved out of its place. Mr. Willis had carefully folded up a small miniature which he usually wore attached to a gold chain, and had placed it for safety in his waistcoat pocket. In the morning the chain was missing, after

a minute search it could nowhere be found, and Mr. Willis left for his home without it. Mr. Farrar assured me that on a subsequent visit some weeks after he saw this chain descend, as it were, from the ceiling of the room in which they were seated, and though no visible agent was present, he saw it placed carefully around Mr. Willis's neck.

A similar occurrence was related to me recently by Mr. C., of New Orleans, who is at present resident in London. Accompanied by his wife and a well-known medium, they were walking a little way out of the city in a quiet lane, when Mrs. C. exclaimed, "My wedding ring has just been taken from my finger." After a search they all saw it trundling along like a hoop in the road before them. Mr. C. ran after it, picked it up, and restored it to his wife. After their arrival at home, Mrs. C. again missed her ring, and they were amazed to see it suspended in the air in a distant part of a large room out of their reach. It gradually approached them, and as Mr. C. held his wife's hand, the ring was, without any visible agency, gently deposited on the back of his hand.

Mrs. Kennison, of Quincey, near Boston, told me that after the persecuting spirit with which the Rev. Mr. Willis was treated by the students of Harvard College, led on by Professors Felton and Eustis (which is a well-known episode in the history of American Spiritualism), he had a long and serious illness, during which time he was carefully nursed by several ladies who sympathised with him, as well as by the spirits; and, among other very curious manifestations, when Mrs. Lord, of Boston, and another person were sitting in his room in the third story, Mr. Willis's bed was suddenly covered with a quantity of real flowers which came through the open window, and they were gathered up by spirit hands into a bouquet, and presented to him.

Mrs. Staats, of New York, related to me an incident which occurred to her long before she became a medium and knew anything of Spiritualism. She said she went on a visit to her mother, who resides in a distant part of the country, and took with her the daguerreotype likeness of her two brothers, who had but then recently emigrated to California. On presenting them to her mother, she was greatly surprised and mortified to find that both portraits were obliterated, and on the following morning, on looking again, she was equally puzzled and delighted at seeing them restored.

This remained a mystery to her, until one day after she had become a writing medium, she got messages through her own hand from her brothers, who were drowned by the wreck of the vessel in which they sailed, explaining that their bodies were interred on the day she was showing the portraits to her mother;

and that their spirits stood in the way, and shadowed the plates so as to make them appear blank.

Mrs. Lewis, the wife of a merchant in Boston, who takes an active interest in the spread of Spiritualism, gave me the history of her first experience. One evening, Mr. Lewis, her sister Mary, herself, and some friends, none of whom knew anything of Spiritualism, were engaged in playing cards, when suddenly Mary started up from the table, walked about the room in an excited and very unusual way, and declared she was Esther—a sister residing with her husband in California. Scattering the cards, she assumed the very manner and voice of her sister Esther, and announced to them that she had just left the body and had entered the spirit-world.

The whole party were greatly disturbed by this unlooked-for exhibition, and thought that Mary must have become insane. They found, however, that she was in what they afterwards knew to be the trance state, and that the spirit of Esther was speaking through her; during which she gave exact particulars of her illness and death, which were subsequently confirmed by the receipt of letters from Esther's husband some weeks afterwards.

I am now about to introduce a story, to which I ask the reader's especial attention, as it is fraught with incidents by far the most wonderful of the kind I have ever seen or heard of, and although I am not permitted to publish the narrator's name, it will be found in the sequel that I am able to corroborate the statements made to me in the most satisfactory manner, and indeed, in a way little short of my own personal testimony.

I must, in the first instance, introduce the English reader to the name of Dr. John F. Gray. He is a gentleman enjoying a prominent position in society, a scholar, highly respected by the community in which he resides, and though he has been an unflinching and open advocate of Spiritualism for several years, he has, I am told, the largest practice of any physician in New York.

Weekly conferences are held in New York and Boston, which are attended by many of the leading Spiritualists in those cities. Questions are proposed and discussed, and all the best information pertaining to the spread of Spiritualism is imparted at these meetings. I attended one of them, held at Clinton Hall, New York, and Dr. Gray read on that occasion the following highly interesting and very extraordinary account of manifestations of a wife to her husband, through the mediumship of Miss Kate Fox, being a continuation of similar experiences witnessed on previous evenings by a gentleman, who is a personal and intimate friend of Dr. Gray's. After some remarks on the precautions taken to assure himself against the possibility of deception from any

quarter, Dr. Gray's friend proceeds thus to describe a *séance*:—"The lights being extinguished, footsteps were heard as of persons walking in their stocking-feet, accompanied by the rustling sound of a silk dress. It was then rapped out by the alphabet—'My dear, I am here in form; do not speak.' A globular light rose up from the floor behind me, and as it became brighter, a face, surmounted by a crown, was distinctly seen by the medium and myself. Next, the head appeared, as if covered with a white veil: this was withdrawn after the figure had risen some feet higher, and I recognised unmistakably the full head and face of my wife, surrounded by a semi-circle of light about 18 inches in diameter. The recognition was complete, derived alike from the features and her natural expression. The globe of light was then raised, and a female hand held before it was distinctly visible. Each of these manifestations was repeated several times, as if to leave no doubt in our minds. Now the figure, coming lower down and turning its head, displayed falling over the globe of light, *long flowing hair*, which even in its shade of colour, appeared like the natural tresses of my wife, and like hers was unusually luxuriant. This whole mass of hair was whisked in our faces many times, conveying the same sensations as if it had been *actually human natural hair*. This also was frequently repeated, and the hair shown to us in a variety of ways. The light and the rustling sound then passed round the table and approached me, and what seemed to the touch a skirt of muslin was thrown over my head, and a hand was felt as if holding it there. A whisper was now heard, and the words, 'Sing, sing,' were audibly pronounced. I hummed an air, and asked—'Do you like that?' 'Yes, yes,' was plainly spoken in a whisper, and in both cases I recognised distinctly the voice of my wife, to which I had become sensitively familiarised during her last illness, when she had become too weak to talk aloud. An arm was passed round my neck, and I asked her to kiss me. The light immediately approached me, and a form like a face touched me sensibly twice on the left side of my mouth. A head then reclined on mine, the long hair falling over my face and shoulder, and remained there until the heat became unbearable. A bright light then appeared, and disclosed a figure with the arm raised over its head. I asked for an explanation of the nature of the drapery, and it was answered by the raps:—'It is a spiritual garment naturalised. I will bring you the key.' Footsteps and the rustling indicated a movement towards the door, and the sofa which was against the key was removed, the key turned in the lock, and was then placed in my outstretched hand.

"The manner of making the raps was also shown by another spirit, thus:—a luminous ball about the size of my hand, with a

blunt point attached to it, about three inches above the table, answered our questions by striking against it," &c., &c.

At another sitting a few days after, the same precautions and conditions being observed, the following phenomena were witnessed:—

"The table was lifted from the floor, the door violently shaken, the window-sash raised and shut several times, and in fact, everything moveable in the room seemed in motion.

"Questions were replied to by loud knocks on the door, on the window, ceiling, table, everywhere; all being the work of several powerful spirits, who were present, and whose presence was necessary, as it was afterwards explained, to support or induce the manifestations of a more beautiful and interesting character.

"An illuminated substance like gauze rose from the floor behind us, accompanied by a heavy rustling sound like a silk dress. The previously described electrical rattle became very loud and vigorous. The figure of a female passed round the table, and, approaching us, touched me. The gauzy substance was shaped as though covering a human head, and seemed as if drawn down tight at the neck. Upon close examination as it approached near me a second time it changed its form, and now seemed in folds over a melon-shaped oblong, concave on one side, and in this cavity there appeared an intensified brilliant light. By raps I was requested to look beyond the light. I looked as directed, and saw the appearance of a human eye. Again receding with the rattle, the light became still brighter, and then re-approaching, the gauze which had changed in form was grasped by a naturally-formed female hand, and unfolding, revealed to me, with a thrill of indescribable happiness, *the upper half of the face of my wife*, the eyes, forehead, and expression in perfection. The moment the emotion of recognition had passed into my mind it was acknowledged by a succession of quick raps. The figure disappeared and re-appeared several times, the recognition becoming each time more nearly perfect, with an expression of calm and beautiful serenity. I asked her to kiss me if she could, and, to my great astonishment and delight, an arm was placed around my neck, and a real palpable kiss was implanted on my lips, through something like fine muslin. A head was laid upon mine, the hair falling luxuriantly down my face. The kiss was frequently repeated, and was audible in every part of the room. The light then moved to a point about midway between us and the wall, which was distant about ten feet. The rattling increased in vigour, and the light, gradually illuminating that side of the room, brought out in perfection an entire female figure facing the wall, and holding the light in her outstretched hand, shaking it at intervals, as the light grew dim. My name and her name

were repeated in a loud whisper, and among other things which occurred during this remarkable sitting, the figure at the altar stood before the mirror, and saw reflected therein."

The incidents of another evening were thus described:—"The lights and electrical rattle were as strong as on the previous occasions. Hands were placed upon my forehead, a hand placed upon mine, the hair, as before, falling down my face into my hand. I grasped it, and found it positively and unmistakably human hair; it was afterwards whisked playfully at me, creating as much wind as an ordinary fan. The spiritual rattle was then dropped over my head and face, and felt as real and substantial as cotton or muslin of a very fine texture. At one time, the globe of light extended to about two feet in diameter. At last, it was shaken with another sharp rattle, and shining brightly, revealed again the full head and face of my wife, every feature in perfection, but spiritualised in shadowy beauty such as no imagination can conceive, or pen describe. In her hair, just above the left temple, was a single white rose, the hair being arranged with great care. The next appearance, after a brief interval, revealed the same face, with a pink rose instead of a white one. The whole head and face were shown to me, at least twenty times during the sitting, and each time was recognised by me, the perfection of the recognition being in proportion to the brilliancy of the light. During the whole of these manifestations, cards of a large size, provided by myself, were placed on the floor with a pencil, and long messages were found to have been written upon them." &c., &c.

Dr. Gray, in conclusion, said—"These manifestations could not have been produced by human means, and if you admit the competency of the witness, of which, from my knowledge of him, I have no doubt, they are, in my opinion, conclusive evidence of spirit identity." Several persons in the assembly rose to ask questions of Dr. Gray, respecting this very startling narrative; and one gentleman said he really could not, though a believer in Spiritualism, receive such statements without great misgivings of delusion being mixed up with them. "Now, he said, 'I put it to you, Dr. Gray—Do you believe that such things can and did occur?'" Dr. Gray replied, very calmly, "Yes, my friend; I believe as implicitly, every word of these narratives, as I do in my own existence." I then made some remarks, observing "that, wonderful as the phenomena witnessed by Dr. Gray's friend must be admitted to be, I was prepared, from my own experiences, to receive them on fair testimony. The only thing to be regretted was, that manifestations so marvellous should have been witnessed by only one person beside the medium, and that that one should withhold his name from the world." &c., &c.

I have had occasion to remark, when writing on this subject before, that no one can have any idea of the number of persons who have more or less knowledge of spiritual facts, until he shall have openly proclaimed his own belief in them, as I have done. The confidence of finding sympathy and respect for an extraordinary statement, instead of sneers and derision, brings out men and women from all ranks of society, among whom are many we should least expect to be so "weak," or so "deluded;" and who have each to tell of some mysterious occurrence, or well-attested ghost-story. To the readiness, therefore, with which I ever received testimony from serious people, I owe the advantage of having collected many curious facts, which men of more sceptical tendencies could never obtain; and it is to the few remarks I made on Dr. Gray's paper, that I have now the advantage of introducing the foregoing narrative to my readers, and more of the same character which follows, which I do with as much confidence as if I had myself witnessed the wonderful phenomena therein spoken of. At the close of the meeting, a serious and gentlemanly person, of about five-and-thirty, dressed in deep mourning, who had been seated at my side, presented his card, and said he should be glad to make my acquaintance. "I am," he said, "the friend of Dr. Gray, and it is I to whom these manifestations have occurred. You appear to understand the subject, and I shall be glad to satisfy you of the facts. I knew nothing whatever of Spiritualism eight weeks ago, and had been, up to that time, most disconsolate. Dr. Gray is an old friend. He attended my wife during her illness, and it was at his request that I called on Miss Fox. The result has been a complete and most happy change in the state of my feelings. No one could be more sceptical than I was. With the exception of my sister and Miss E., who resides with us, I do not speak to any one on the subject, knowing that none of my friends are prepared to receive such statements, and that I should be, in all probability, treated by them as I should previously have treated others, that my experiences would be set down to delusion, or aberration of intellect; and situated as I am in business, I am not disposed to risk, at present, the consequences of publishing my name to the world."

All this I could of course appreciate, although, it is certainly much to be regretted that such marvellous and deeply interesting facts should not have the advantage of being at once openly attested by the witness of them; who, in this instance, would be a most valuable one, as this gentleman is the head of a highly respectable commercial firm in the city of New York, who is well known to, and in correspondence with, the American banking-house of Messrs. Peabody and Co., of London. How-



ever, I am bound to respect his wishes in this particular, and my readers must therefore, for the present, be content to know him by the initial L., and his wife by the Christian name of Estelle. I have given to my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Howitt, Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson, Dr. Ashburner, and others, most ample evidence that this is not a tale of fiction, and I shall not object to show to any serious inquirer the evidence in my possession. With Mr. L. I became better acquainted. He invited me to his residence, where I saw two very fine portraits of his wife, painted in Europe, and she appears to have been a very lovely young woman. Mr. L. also read to me the diary he had kept of the evenings he had spent with Miss Fox, which contained some curious particulars not mentioned in Dr. Gray's paper, and I was especially interested with the numerous cards in his possession, on which were written long notes addressed to him in the most loving and natural terms of endearment, and which are *fac-similes*, as shown me by comparison with his wife's own hand-writing: some of the cards are written upon on both sides, and it must be understood that the writing was obtained by the card and pencil being laid upon the floor, and came *direct from the spirit-hand*, and not through the medium, or any other human agency. One of these cards is in my possession, and I have had it lithographed for this publication. I have exact copies of several others, and as it will, no doubt, interest the reader to know the style of composition of these "loving-letters," I give the following as a specimen, and it is one of the shortest:—"My darling—little did I think when I was departing that I should have a blessing like this. Had I then the knowledge that I have now, the grave would have lost its gloom. There is no separation—no death! and what is so beautiful to me is, the fact of angels being the watchers of their loved on earth. My darling, I look forward with joy to the time when I shall be permitted to raise the veil which clouds your vision, and talk *with* you face to face. The time is near; be happy; meet me to-morrow night, and be free from fatigue. God bless you; love to my father; when can I meet him?—Yours in heaven.—ESTELLE."

On the day before I left New York I received the following letter from L.:—

"My dear Sir,—I enclose herewith two cards, *fac-similes*, as nearly as I can write them, of those you have seen. The division of words and sentences and the underscoring is precisely the same as in the original. They were written for me by spirit-hands in the presence of Miss Fox. I have had as many as six of these cards written upon both sides at one sitting, and most of my communications have been written in this way.

"My first experience was in February last. I have never

sat with any medium except Miss Catherine Fox, and up to the time I first saw her I was not only a thorough sceptic, but had taken no interest in the subject. The accounts of the extraordinary manifestations published by Dr. Gray were written by me at his request, in order to avoid any exaggerations which might creep into a verbal narrative. You may rely upon the facts as being exact in every particular, the same having been witnessed by Miss Fox; both of us being in a normal condition. Each manifestation was promised by the spirits, and the time appointed beforehand in their own handwriting on cards. You are quite at liberty to state the facts related by me to you, but for reasons which you understand I beg you will withhold my name. Wishing you a pleasant voyage and safe return to your friends,—I am, &c.

“B. Coleman, Esq.”

“L.”

Previous to my leaving New York I made a special visit to Miss Fox to inquire from her as to the facts and character of these manifestations. She fully corroborated all Mr L. had told me; and said that, with one exception, these appearances far transcended anything of the kind she had ever witnessed through her own or any other mediumship. She appeared as much surprised at the results as Mr. L., and was, she said, much more nervous when witnessing them. Whilst at Boston I received another letter from Mr. L., from which I make the following extracts:—

“April 30, 1861.—I enclose herewith a *fac-simile* of another remarkable card, written for me last night, which I have no doubt you will be glad to have. I called at the St. Nicholas a few minutes after you had left, and regret that I missed seeing you, as I should have liked to have shown you the original. It is so near an approach to perfection in its execution—not a word misplaced, &c. Another card was written at the same time, purporting to come from Dr. Hull, a valued friend of mine, and brother-in-law of Dr. Gray. Thus far every promise has been literally fulfilled. One only has not been as perfectly accomplished as I expected, namely, that of conversing in familiar tones on the part of my wife. If any further remarkable development occurs, I shall send an account of it to you,” &c.

The card enclosed was neatly written on both sides, and in the following terms:—“My darling—We have much to contend with, but we must be patient and abide God’s time, which will, I know, be soon. When there is anxiety in your mind, it is almost impossible to come near you, and therefore I pray be not too wishful or too anxious. I have been with you to-day, and the past was vividly recalled when returning home to the room where I had passed so many happy hours. Even my last

moments were made precious, a peace surpassing all earthly power entered my soul while I waited for the bridegroom to come. God bless you, darling; bless you when you rise in the morning, and bless you when you rest at night. Thine shall be a happy future. Flowers are blooming in heaven for me, and I am with the pure and holy. Live a pure life.—*Eternal*. When can I meet my dear father? Love to him.—*Eternal*.

I can imagine nothing more real than the earnest, affectionate tone of these letters; the anxious desire to be remembered by her father, to whom, I was told, she was especially attached, is a peculiar feature of these communications. Believing that I could not relate anything which will interest the reader more than Mr. L.'s experiences, though I have yet in store something of a different character quite as marvellous, witnessed by myself, I shall continue the narrative, and give the reader the information which has reached me since my return to England in letters I have received from Mr. L., and which, as will be seen, contain an account of further most astounding manifestations, and presents some suggestions which will, no doubt, interest the serious student of spiritual philosophy.

"New York, May 20, 1861.

"My dear Sir—In compliance with your request to be informed of any further experience which I might have, I beg to say that it has continued with such interesting and varied developments, that it is impossible for me, at this time to enter into anything like detail. We have now arrived at that point where cards are written, with the date prefixed. The first of this kind, headed 'Friday, May 3rd, 1861,' was most carefully and correctly written, and the identity of my wife's handwriting proved conclusively by minute comparison. You have seen the cards of an earlier date, and hence it is unnecessary for me to speak further of them, except to say that the spirit, style, and handwriting are positive proofs to my mind of the identity of the writer, if the other more convincing proofs still, which I have had, were left entirely out of the question.

"A portion of one of my last was as follows:—'We have in preparation for you, greater manifestations, greater developments than you have yet witnessed; do not forbear to give them to the world. You must benefit others by your experience.' I was requested, soon after you left, to procure drawing paper and material for 'a picture.' Three sheets of paper, about two feet square, and three large crayons were brought and placed upon the table in front of Miss Fox and myself. Each sheet was privately marked by me, the room carefully closed, and all made secure. The light being turned down, a selection was made by the spirits of one of the sheets of paper; the other two were

handed to me with the signal that they should be laid aside. The crayons were asked for, and handed to the spirits by me. For, perhaps, half an hour, we heard them as though being used in drawing. At the end of that time, they were again handed me, and the paper commenced floating about the room, occasionally touching our heads. Cards were called for, and written upon as usual. The two crayons were also again called for, and taken from my hand. A light was now struck, and upon looking for the picture, *neither it nor the two large crayons could be found.* Upon reading the cards, they explained as follows:—‘We have concealed the picture and crayons in the atmosphere of the medium.’ Notwithstanding the most careful search, I could not find either paper or pencils.

“Two evenings afterwards I went to Miss Fox, and that there should be no mistake, I at once suggested going into another room upstairs. I then locked the door, carefully examined every nook and corner, and Miss Fox’s pockets as well, and am *positive* that neither the paper nor pencils were in the room. Upon sitting down and turning out the light, a pair of scissors was called for, and placed by me upon the table. In about fifteen minutes a spirit-form stood by me, tapping me lovingly upon the shoulder. *The two crayons were dropped one by one on the table from over my head, and the rattling of the paper indicated that it also was in the spirit’s hand.* The scissors were now taken, and rapped out a communication by my side upon the table, and commenced cutting vigorously the thick drawing paper, replying to my questions when asked, and going on again immediately, cutting as before. Nearly half-an-hour was thus employed, when the fragments were dropped upon our heads and hands, and at last the picture was placed in my hand.

“Upon getting a light, we discerned a very pretty sketch of a spirit, with the veil and rose in the hair, precisely similar to the appearance as described to you of my wife. This was about five inches square. The remainder of the paper was cut into grotesque shapes and forms very ingeniously done, many small hearts, &c., &c., which I have retained to show to any of my friends. I have since had a beautiful large picture done in colours, representing the removal of my wife’s spirit from the earth, supported by angels, with others above strewing flowers in their path. I shall probably write you again, but please not to mention my name, as I am not yet ready for publicity.

Very truly yours,
L.”

B. Coleman, Esq., London.

" New York, June 24th, 1861.

" My dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed favour of 4th instant, and shall at all times be happy to hear from you.

" The very short time, during which my investigations of spiritual phenomena have been made do not, perhaps, permit me to speak authoritatively, yet the developments have been so wonderful, that I should feel recreant to my sense of duty were I to hide them under a bushel.

" You are, no doubt, correct in saying that anonymous statements carry less weight than when attested by a respectable signature. In my case, however, the credibility of the witness can be proved, first by your own testimony, as well as again by that of Dr. Gray, to whom I am well and intimately known. And here permit me to say, that I regard Dr. Gray's opinions on spiritual science as entitled to, perhaps greater weight than those of almost any prominent Spiritualist in this country. He has an eminently comprehensive and practical mind, with great analytical power, and is not likely to be unduly influenced by imaginative minds. He is strongly opposed to what he considers the too great prevailing confidence in spiritual identities. Dr. Gray fully understands the practical nature of my investigation. How I have receded step by step, from a state of thorough scepticism, and therefore he attaches importance to facts so important, which he knows are free from exaggeration. My earnest desire was, above all, not to be deceived myself, and now that my faith is impregnable, I wish to keep it pure by a strict adherence to positive truth. From the first I have kept a record, including the state of the atmosphere, direction of the wind, &c. My experiences and observations prove that the electric conditions, both of the atmosphere and of the persons receiving manifestations, are, if possible, more important and subtle than mental conditions. I find that a perfect manifestation can only be received under a combination of favourable conditions—mental, physical, and atmospheric. A north wind and clear sky are both desirable, but the greatest electric phenomena (of lights) witnessed by me was during a snow storm, when the atmosphere had become highly electrical by the action of the falling particles of moisture suddenly congealed by an extraordinary change of temperature to intense cold. Our atmosphere, you are aware, is ordinarily dry, while yours is surcharged with moisture; and I am satisfied it would for that reason be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain as perfect manifestations in London as in New York. As Miss Fox says, she has never received such powerful ones with any other person it would, perhaps, be proper for me to state that my condition has always been highly electrical. The combing of my hair elicits

electrical sparks in profusion in dry weather,* and I find no difficulty in lighting gas, by applying the end of my finger to the burner, after having excited the electricity in my system by friction of my feet upon the carpet. This, however, is a not an uncommon occurrence here, although I have repeatedly tried it in England without success. I give you these facts, because I think it important to look at all the means, by which spirits are probably enabled to produce their wonderful phenomena without transcending the laws of nature.

"You ask if I believe all the manifestations are from one spirit. Most certainly not—for it has been repeatedly explained, and I think proved, that the spirit made itself visible to me through the powerful aid of other spirits. The startling noises, I believe, were made by others for the purpose of exciting the nervous system, and throwing off from the body of the medium and myself the electric fluid, which is then seized upon and made available by the will of the active spirit. This is my theory gathered entirely from observation.

"On the occasion of the first appearance, I was told that the spirit of Benjamin Franklin had aided in producing the electrical phenomena by means of which the spirit was made visible. From that time he has invariably announced himself. His identity it has been impossible for me to prove, except upon his own affirmation confirmed by that of my wife. But *her* identity has been established beyond the shadow of a doubt. First, by her appearance; second, by her handwriting, and third, by her mental individuality, to say nothing of the numerous other tests, which are conclusive in ordinary cases, but upon none of which have I relied, except as corroborative evidence.

"The weather has of late been so warm and unfavourable, that no further efforts have been made at crayon drawings, beyond perfecting the one which I named to you. It is a representation of the departure from earth of the spirit of my wife, borne upon the shoulders of four angels, while others above are scattering garlands of flowers. I send you enclosed memorandum of an

* A similar statement is made by the Rev. C. H. Townshend, in his *Facts in Mesmerism*; the passage appears to us so interesting and suggestive in this connection that we here transcribe it. [*Ed.*]

He says:—"I am of an electric temperament, so much so, that long ago, when a child, I used to amaze and even alarm my young companions by combing my hair before them in the dark and exhibiting to them the electric coruscations. Of course, also, this phenomenon takes place most remarkably in a dry, and, therefore, non-conducting atmosphere. Now between this electrical endowment and whatever mesmeric properties I may possess, there is a perfect relationship and parallelism. Whatever state of the atmosphere tends to carry off electricity from the body hinders in so far my capacity of mesmerising; and whatever state of the atmosphere tends to accumulate and insulate electricity in the body, promotes greatly the power and facility with which I influence others mesmerically."

evening, when drawing paper, crayons, &c. disappeared and re-appeared in face of a most scrutinising search. *The facts are beyond any question*; and the explanation given by the spirits, is as follows:—‘The paper, &c. was concealed in the atmosphere of the medium, dissolved in the air, and spiritualised by being in our presence.’ The appearance of my wife has taken place several times since you left, and I am now promised the appearance of another person; an account of which, should it take place as promised, I will send you. But it is not likely to occur until the fall, as during the very hot weather, Miss Fox will be absent from the city, as well as myself, and the manifestations are not as successful in such a temperature. She and her mother, after considerable deliberation, concluded not to undertake the journey to England, and have given it up, at all events for the present. I have had many wonderful experiences since seeing you, but nothing particularly new. It is not uncommon now for the spirit of my wife to come in form, and spell out messages upon my shoulder, with repeated kisses and tokens of love so palpable that I could not if I would avoid realising her presence. The writing continues and has become as perfect as her handwriting in life. I enclose a card, as requested by you. I do not wish to part with it, and shall, therefore, feel obliged if you will return it after keeping it as long as you wish. It may be difficult for me to send you a specimen of her handwriting, as most of her notes and letters contain private matter, which I would not wish to have made public. I will, however, before closing this search for something, which can be sent without violating (what I consider sacred) her private thoughts and feelings. I send this card because it is a test. I had been that day at Greenwood Cemetery with my sister and Miss E——, and while looking at some flowers planted upon my wife’s grave my attention was called by Miss E—— to some little birds which flew across (after stopping an instant) to an adjoining copse of trees. I thought no more of the birds until they were mentioned as you will notice in the card. I have also lately received several cards written in French. My wife was an excellent French scholar and both wrote and spoke the language, while Miss Fox does neither. Should I have further drawings in the Autumn, I shall be very glad to send you a specimen; but you are of course aware that they are not done with the same care and facility as those of Mrs. French, which seem almost like photography.”

“June 25th.—I had written thus far, not supposing I should have any new manifestations of interest during the warm weather, but last night the wind having suddenly changed to the north-west with an unusually clear, cool and pure air, I went to see Miss Fox, and received the most wonderful manifestation it has

ever been my lot to witness. My wife appeared to us in such glittering transcendent beauty and perfection, as no human mind can conceive of; and I have been completely overpowered and overwhelmed at the recollection of that glimpse of heaven. Do not, I beg of you, think me a demented enthusiast—for such I am not. Miss Fox is in raptures at what she conceives to have been the most stupendous and wonderful of anything she has ever dreamed or thought of.

"I was requested to write a series of questions upon a card, numbering each. This I did, keeping them entirely private. No living person but myself knew what these questions were, and I did not take them from my pocket until the light was turned out. Yet the blank card was returned with every question answered perfectly, with numbers corresponding. Benjamin Franklin purports to have answered them; and on another card gave me a brief account of his life and purposes, written in his peculiar style, terse and expressive.

"I shall from time to time write you of any further developments. I expect them. I feel great confidence that I shall not be disappointed, as my spiritual promises have all been kept. I will make enquiries respecting spiritual telegraphy soon. I have received but three back numbers of the Magazine. You will excuse the hasty imperfect style of my communications, as they are necessarily written without care, from my want of time.

"With kind regards, I am sincerely yours,
"L."

The card enclosed in this letter is three inches long, and two inches wide, containing, *on one side only*, the following interesting message, written in a very neat small hand, and exactly like the natural handwriting of which a specimen for comparison was also sent by Mr. L.:—

"Heaven bless you, my dear Charley. In all your earthly walks I glide by your side. Dear Charley, did you not notice as you were standing over the grave that now holds the remains of one you knew so well, that even the little birds seemed conscious of the event? They seemed to fly so noiselessly, winging their way to less sacred groves. Oh! how I tried to awaken you then from your musings and transport you from the past to the present. Oh! dear Charley, it gives me so much happiness to talk with you, to write to you, to manifest to you in every way. You are in no dream, dear Charley. Let no dream of unbelief enter your heart.

"Anguish may drown the swelling hymn, may check the voice of love, but faith shall burn more brightly.

"But now, dear Charley, I must go. The harps of heaven have already sounded. The invisible choirs have commenced the

song 'Hallelujah' to our Father and our King! There is rejoicing in our angelic hosts, rejoicing in the happy choir, for a new seraph has joined our glittering files. Good night.—ESTELLE."

"*June 13th, 1861.*—The object of this meeting was to finish a picture, previously commenced upon a sheet of drawing paper, about two feet square. This was unrolled and spread upon the table, placing a book upon one corner, and a box, containing twenty-four coloured crayons upon the other. The door of the room had been locked, and the key placed in my pocket, and both of the medium's hands were held in mine. Soon, the box of crayons was rubbed against my hands, various loud raps, &c., were made upon the table, during which the paper was noiselessly taken from its position. Cards were called for, and a written explanation returned as follows:—"My darling, I have taken the picture to perfect it—you shall have it to-morrow, finished." Upon turning up the gas, the paper and box of crayons had both disappeared. I made a most careful examination of the room, no police detective could have done it more thoroughly; and I am as positive as I can be of anything that neither of the articles were in the room. The medium did not leave the table; both her hands were held by me, and there was no person but ourselves in the house."

"*Friday, June 14th, 1861.*—On this occasion, I determined to make thorough work of my examination of the room, &c. After locking the doors and taking the key, I locked the drawers of the bureau, and examined every corner and crevice, as well as the medium's pocket, and having satisfied myself that neither the picture nor the crayons were in the room, I tied the medium's hands, took them in mine, and put out the light. At the end of half an hour, the rustling of spirit-robes was heard. I turned my head in the direction of the sound, when a hand was placed upon each side of my head, turning it back to its former position. The rustling indicated an approach to the table, at my left (the medium being on my right), and gentle raps, as though made by the knuckle, were made, the box of crayons was shaken, and its contents turned upon the table. The paper was now heard as though in a roll: it was unrolled, and placed against my face. Holding the medium with one hand, with the other I took the paper and laid it upon the table, while raps upon my shoulder spelled out as follows:—"Be careful with the picture—I wish you to have it copied." The spirit was now distinctly heard to walk to the other side of the table, to open and shut the drawer after apparently making an examination of its contents, and repeating the operation. For nearly an hour, the spirit was in form by my side, during which I was kissed audibly, probably twenty times.

During this time, at intervals, startling manifestations were taking place. The heavy sofa was lifted up and down; the marble-topped bureau was pounded violently upon by a daguerreotype case, by chance lying there, and a bunch of keys was shaken about our ears. An effort was made to speak, which was so far successful as to call me by name, audibly, several times; but the medium, at this, became so nervous that it could not be continued. A card was written upon, in explanation of the former one, as follows:—
 ‘The new seraph, darling, was one not known to you—Daily and hourly we are called upon to minister to the sick and dying—It is our duty—ESTELLE.’ Upon getting a light, the picture was found completed, and the identical one which had disappeared. I had put a private mark upon each, and from the extraordinary examinations and care which I took, I am positive that the disappearance and re-appearance have been entirely without human agency.”

“*Monday, June 24th, 1861.*—Locked the doors, placed the key in my pocket and made everything secure. Sat in quiet, and was told not to ask questions. Then by raps—‘There will be no failure to-night—I will come to you first—ESTELLE.’ Soon, a bright light followed a rustling sound, and appeared near our shoulders, between us. The medium became nervous, when I requested it to come to my left. This was immediately replied to, by three raps upon my left shoulder, and a corresponding movement of the light to that side. Hands were placed upon either shoulder, turning me a little to the right, then upon my head, pushing it down till my forehead was near the table. Three taps upon my head indicated that the position was satisfactory, and I remained passive. The intention was, evidently, to prevent my too earnest gaze. Vigorous rustling was heard, and the light, now very vivid, rose to a height of about three feet above the table (at the side). It was so bright as to illuminate surrounding objects, and as it approached, there seemed a heavy dark substance before it. Reaching a point, about two feet from my eyes, the dark shadow was lowered, revealing beauty, such as God only, in his infinite goodness and power, could permit those in the flesh to behold. A glimpse of heaven it was, and of an angel, as bright as ever stood before his throne:—the spirit of my wife, a white rose in her hair over the left temple, and her loving eyes smiling inexpressible blessings. She appeared in this manner six or seven times. The perfection of the appearance was such that every feature, lineament and expression was as complete as a full blaze of light upon a face could make it. A roll of veil surrounded her head, leaving a clear space of about a foot or eighteen inches between it and the hair, and this veil glittered like silver gauze. The whole scene was transcendently beautiful, beyond the power of description. About fifteen minutes after-

wards, the light appeared in a corner, illuminating the centre of the room, and a female figure in full proportions stood before us, back towards us, with a veil depending from the head to the feet, of silver gauze, which glittered and shone almost like diamonds when the light struck upon it. I asked if she would raise her arm above her head, and my request was immediately complied with. No pen can describe the exquisite beauty of what was revealed this night to us. If heaven is half as bright or beautiful, death should have no terrors. This appearance was very much more vivid than any previous manifestation, and each one seems more nearly perfect."

Mrs. Kennison, of whom I have spoken, is herself an "impressionable" medium, by which is understood that she is impressed by spirits, and forced, in her natural state, to act upon her impressions. One spirit in particular, she informed me, used to come frequently and impel her to carry out his anxious desires for the welfare of his former clients. This was the spirit of Robert Rantoul, of Washington, a well-known lawyer. She took messages for him as directed to many persons whom she did not know, and they invariably understood them; for instance, she said, "A short time since I was told by Rantoul to go to Mr. Bassett, a merchant in Boston, and warn him, that if he did not give immediate attention to a particular debt due to him of 5,000 dollars he would lose it. As I did not know Mr. Bassett, and it was not convenient for me to go to Boston, I did not at first attend to the request. But Rantoul came again, and again, until at length I was obliged to comply with his wishes. I made inquiries for, and found Mr. Bassett. I explained to him, as well as I could, the nature of my errand. He seemed at once to understand it, and said his attention had been called to the transaction that very morning, and that he had taken the necessary steps for his protection. I then said, Rantoul also told me to say to you, 'For God's sake to give up the law-suit.' And this, too, Mr. Bassett said he perfectly understood."

Some days after my interview with Mrs. Kennison I met when travelling a Captain Jonathan Hallett, of Quincy. Our conversation turning to the subject of Spiritualism, I found he was a believer, and strangely enough he incidentally mentioned Mrs. Kennison, and confirmed the statement she had made to me of the special character of her mediumship. Captain Hallett said, "I had been for a little time looking into the subject, having up to this period no belief in a future life, and I had attended a meeting of Spiritualists; on coming away a lady, who was an entire stranger to me, addressed me, and said, 'I do not know who you are, sir, but during the evening I was

impressed to give you this message from the spirit of your mother ;' and the lady, who proved to be a Mrs. Kennison, gave me this paper, which I preserve, as from this incident I date my complete conversion from infidelity." The paper, which he took from his pocket-book, and which I read, congratulates him on the light which is dawning, and exhorts him to follow it, "in the blessed hope of a brighter future for my dear son," &c. Captain Hallett then went on to say, that as he pursued his inquiries his faith became strengthened from many sources. He found that two very remarkable mediums lived immediate neighbours to him. One was the daughter of his friend Mr. Southworth, a girl of 15, named Sarah. The other was a professional man, who had not announced his name to the public, and therefore he did not wish to mention it; but, he said, it is a common occurrence for him to be carried about by the spirits, and he had assured him that he prescribes for his patients with great success entirely by spirit dictation. Captain Hallett then gave me a very curious and interesting history of the manifestations he had received through Sarah Southworth. "Sixteen years ago," he said, "I lost my brother Charles, to whom I was much attached, by the wreck of his ship. I went to claim his body, and I expressed aloud my surprise to find it looking so fresh and life-like. One of the first messages written to me through Sarah's hand purported to be from this brother, of whom I am certain she had never heard. Captain Hallett gave me the message to read and copy. It runs thus—"Dear Johnnie—I have at last the satisfaction of controlling this medium by the kindness of one of her spirit guardians, and now that the way is open before me, I have so many things to say, that I scarcely know where to begin. I am glad, dear brother, that you have opened the doors of your heart, and invited the spirits to enter. Many spirits, I find, are unhappy, because their friends do not receive them. I think if the unbelieving ones only knew this, they would reflect a moment ere they let them suffer thus," &c., &c. The letter then goes on to speak of various subjects, and an allusion is made to the circumstance of his going to claim the body, repeating the exact words he, Captain Hallett, said he had used on that occasion, and adding, "I then stood by your side, Johnnie, and was surprised that you did not recognise me." The message is written quite sailor-fashion, full of seafaring phrases, and it completely satisfied Captain Hallett of the identity of his brother's spirit.

After the lapse of some months, Captain Hallett got another written message through Sarah Southworth, which I think is worth transcribing in full, and it is as follows:—

"Dear Brother Johnnie—I have, at last, got the control of

this medium again, though she is pretty much used up; but I guess I can steer her into a safe harbour after I get through, although I ain't much used to this kind of rigging. I have many friends that I would like to speak to, but they are so much wrapped up in the mists of orthodoxy, that I can scarcely see them. If I could get a chance I should talk plain, for the doctrines they believe can no more nourish the soul, than paving stones can the human body. Oh, the inconsistency of mankind! They shut themselves up in their houses, bolt the doors, and bar the windows, and then call upon God to reveal himself. There is a mighty change sweeping through the earth, Johnnie. It speaks in thunder tones, and startles the priest at his altar—the king on his throne. The blade is now drawn, and the banner unrolled, for the struggle between the old and the new; and though the sea may roll mountains, it cannot prevail against this mighty spirit. Humanity has wrangled over musty creeds too long; but when the light of the present and past are combined, a glorious day will dawn upon the world. Man has been an animal long enough—be men and women now. Angels have come to earth for a purpose—let it not be thwarted. Communications now come, and the world heeds them; and in time, they shall give place to a grand, noble, inspiring religion, where God shall be worshipped in spirit and in truth. These rappings broke the shell of selfishness, and man is free; and when he is once free, and has plumed his wings and soared away on the breeze of liberty, he cannot return, and, hugging his wings close to his side, enter the old shell again. He may put his head in, but his heart will be outside. It is by the power of will that man communes with man. Spirits send out their thoughts upon this magnetic ether, and very few are insulated from this power. Inspiration comes not in words, but in ideas, and flows in mighty currents through the human mind. Many upon earth, in coming time, will recognise the good seed that has been sown, and taken root, which will yield an abundant harvest. Hell fire and damnation have done their work: so long as the human heart remained cold as an iceberg, such a fire could be tolerated; but now it is being warmed with the fire of love, and so the fire of brimstone is failing, and those Divine teachers who for eighteen hundred years have been endeavouring to teach the Good Father the error of *His* ways—that it is *His* duty to damn nine-tenths of *His* children, and divide heaven among the few that be saved—will, no doubt, take a sea voyage for the benefit of their health, and to enlighten the heathen a little further away from home. I heard a minister say the other day that he thought God ought to send a rain of fire and brimstone on the earth, it was so wicked. But I dare say he would like to be perched

up somewhere out of harm's way. I knew at once what sort of man he was, by his ideas of our Heavenly Father. But why is it that the world is not better, when Christianity has been the ruling power for eighteen hundred years? If the world is so wicked, it is certainly time that God sent his spirit-messengers to redeem it. I have been wanting to write to you sometime, Johnnie. I don't make much head-way though—Mum's the word. Sister Lucy's playmate Sarah is here, and will write to her soon. I will steer this craft into port now, so good-bye, Johnnie—from your spirit brother—CHARLEY."

"Mum's the word" is an allusion to the Doctor, through whose mediumship it appears the spirit occasionally manifested to his brother.

The readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* were made aware some few months ago of an entirely new and very remarkable development of spirit-power through the mediumship of Mrs. French, which was then exciting great attention in New York. It was stated on the authority of Dr. Gray, Dr. Hallock, and several other well-known and intelligent Spiritualists that elaborate pencil drawings had been done in their presence by the spirits in the inconceivably short space of a *few seconds*. Before leaving for America my friends requested especially that I should try to see and report upon this new phenomenon; I accordingly took the earliest opportunity after my arrival in New York of making the acquaintance of Mrs. French; she resides together with her daughter at the house of Mr. J. Culbertson, No. 8, 4th Avenue, who is a serious, respectable, and very intelligent man—one upon whose word without enquiry I should be disposed at once to rely. Mr. Culbertson took some trouble to explain to me Mrs. French's history, and more particularly the incidents attendant on this new development OF INSTANTANEOUS SPIRIT-DRAWING PRODUCED WITHOUT THE AID OF HUMAN AGENCY. Mrs. French it appears has from her childhood had peculiar gifts, and several extraordinary stories are told of her power of second sight at a very early age, and since the first advent of the "Modern Spiritual Manifestations" she has been prominent as a trance-speaking medium and medical clairvoyant, and she now practises as a "physician," which title with her name is inscribed on her door-plate. The new development is entirely apart from her professional avocations, and is only exhibited occasionally, being without her control, inasmuch as the spirits entrance her first, and then make their own arrangements for a *séance*. The circumstances immediately preceding and attendant on this new and most extraordinary phase of Mrs. French's mediumship were thus described to me by Mr. Culbertson.

On the 15th of February, 1860, Mrs. French left her house

at two p.m., and returned at five. It had been snowing furiously all the day, and the side walks and streets were almost impassable from the melted snow and deep mud. She said she had been to visit Mrs. Melins, a lady friend of hers residing at Brooklyn, which, as my readers no doubt know, is a town lying on the opposite bank of the river to New York. Whilst there she said she had been entranced, and the spirits had made to Mrs. Melins some indefinite prediction of coming events, which they said, if realized, would be the greatest possible proof of spirit-power. Mrs. French spoke of other communications which had transpired at Mrs. Melins', and added that she did not leave her house until 35 minutes past four, that she had no recollection how she got to Brooklyn nor back again, nor of anything on the way until she found herself in the street cars opposite her own door. Mr. Culbertson and her family listened to her statement in doubt and astonishment, and concluded that there must be some delusion, that she had concealed herself in a trance, and had never left the house, since there was no appearance whatever in her dress to indicate that she had been in the streets. *She had on thin shoes, they were not in the least soiled, and her stockings were not even damp, and the time occupied in coming from Brooklyn, according to her statement, was at least half an hour less than the journey could be done in under ordinary circumstances.*

Whilst they were cross-questioning her she became entranced, and a spirit speaking through her said—"You need not doubt her, all she has said is true; Mrs. Melins will confirm it. Mrs. French *did not* ride from the ferry at Brooklyn to Mrs. Melins' house, nor back again to the boat, nor did she ride on this side to or from the cars, and she *did* come home in the time she has stated." Mr. Culbertson and Mrs. French's daughters were very much puzzled and surprised at this statement, and asked—"How is it if she did not ride that her shoes and feet are not wet, and her dress unsoiled? She could not possibly step even across the side walk without wetting her feet in the present slushy state of the streets." The spirit answered—"She was in our hands—sustained by our influence; she could not, as you say, have walked, and did not, she was carried along with a rapid gliding motion seemingly walking, but not actually so, and never stepping into the mud." Mr. Culbertson was disinclined to receive this explanation, but looking at all the facts it was inevitably so, since it was quite impossible that she could have passed to Brooklyn and back under ordinary circumstances. He then asked if they had carried her across the river, they said "No, the electrical emanations of the earth and water differ, besides there was no necessity for incurring unnecessary risks nor for attracting attention which we especially wished to avoid, very few persons saw

her, as very few were out in such a day in the streets at Brooklyn." In the evening of the same day Mrs. French went out to pay a professional visit, and though she had gone fully prepared with thick boots, she returned home with wet feet, and all the appearance of having had to tramp as other people through the thick mud of the streets.

On the following day she went out again in a mysterious way ; was absent four hours, and could give no account of herself, but she brought home with her some drawing paper, pencils, and rubber, though no one knew with what object. In the evening she sent for Mrs. Melins to come to her immediately, and though all this was very strange, her daughters humoured her, waiting to see what would come of it. On Mrs. Melins' arrival she fully corroborated Mrs. French's statements of her visit on the previous day—and they all, including several friends, accompanied her to the drawing-room, where, selecting a small table, she placed it in the centre of the room, and invited them to be seated. She then commenced, in a state of trance, to manipulate the drawing paper in a very elaborate way, using wine and acids as a preparation, and in *thirty minutes* the first of a series of spirit pencil drawings was produced, and thus the mysterious promise made to Mrs. Melins was realised. Several other drawings were done at the time in like manner, the subjects being suggested by one or other of the party, and the whole proceeding, though witnessed only by those accustomed to spiritual manifestations created the greatest interest and excitement.

Up to the period of my visit many *séances* had been held at intervals. The sittings were not of a public character, nor did Mrs. French make the exhibition a money question, all who came were invited ; and thus, even the most feeble of all objectors have no foot-hold in this case,—I mean that class of persons who if asked to compensate professional mediums for loss of time, make sure at once that imposition lies at the bottom though their sagacity fails to discover it. Among these visitors, the one most constant in his attendance, as I found by his name being attached to the list of those who certified to the conditions, and time of producing the drawings, was Mr. J. Gurney, who is an artist of celebrity, and the leading photographer of New York ; and as this gentleman attended the two sittings I had with Mrs. French, and was in quiet conversation with her on the only other two casual visits I made to the house, I inferred, but have no other reason for saying so, that he made a practice of consulting the invisibles, and whilst others were smiling at his "silly credulity," he was very possibly getting useful, and practical hints, and accumulating a fund of knowledge, which has already placed him, though but a young man, at the head of his pro-

fession. My stay in New York being limited, I begged Mr. Culbertson to arrange a sitting for me either on Friday or Saturday. Mrs. French, being consulted, said she was engaged professionally on Friday, and she had promised to take her family to the theatre on Saturday evening, it must, therefore, be one evening in the following week, and as she entirely deferred to the dictate of the spirits, she would be told by them, and would then send to inform me of the day. I continued my conversation with Mr. Culbertson, who was showing me a number of the earliest drawings, and explaining the circumstance under which they were obtained, when Mrs. French, entranced, again entered the room, and advancing to me, said, "My name is Jemmy—I have not the pleasure, sir, of knowing you, but you are very well known in the spirit-world; and hearing you express a desire to see our drawings, I am sent to say we shall be glad to see you at eight o'clock on Saturday evening. We cannot promise much, but we will do the best we can—good day, sir;" and with a formal bow she retired. Mr. Culbertson said the engagement was binding on her, and would supersede the intended visit to the theatre, and as the result enables me to record one of the most wonderful facts developed in Spiritualism, and witnessed by myself, my readers will no doubt think the change of purpose an advantage.

On the evening fixed I went, accompanied by Judge Edmonds, who had not seen this new phase of spirit-power, and our party numbered about twelve, including a lady, who was the mother of the spirit Jemmy, and he, I found, was the principal artist in the production of these spirit-drawings. As soon as we were assembled, Mrs. French became entranced, and with great formality invited each to take a particular seat, reserving the post of honour next to herself for me, where I could best see the exact mode in which the whole *séance* was conducted. A very small drawing-room table was placed in the centre of the circle, and not within three feet of any of us. A shawl was then tied round the lower part of the legs of the table to form a dark chamber. Under this was placed a thin board to make a firm surface, on which to spread the drawing paper, two saucers of water-colours and brushes, a bundle of coloured crayons, some drawing pencils, and a glass of water. A number of fresh sheets of drawing paper were then handed to the medium, which she gave us to examine, and then she cut them into exact squares. Rolling them up in the shape of a tube, she commenced breathing through them, exercising an effort which lasted five minutes, and which appeared to exhaust her, this singular process she explained was to give the necessary moisture to the surface of the paper, and superseded the use of wine and acids as at first used.

1. There were several of us to night, we got --

paper, and superseded the use of white paper.

It used

by her for damping it. She then handed the roll to me requesting that I would place it under the covered part of the table, whilst she at the same time went on her knees, and placed her hands under the cover, spread the sheets out flat, and returned to her seat by my side. All these arrangements being made with the gas burning, she then requested the light to be lowered, which was done, though it was still light enough for us to see each other, and even the hands of our watches. Thus seated in perfect quiet, after a brief interval the medium cried "time;" when presently we heard a rapid scraping and scrubbing on the card board, as if many hands were at work with the quickness of steam power, and "time" being again called, the pencils were heard to drop suddenly and simultaneously from the hands as it were of the invisible artists.

The same process and arrangements being repeated, four elaborate and beautifully executed pictures of birds and flowers were produced in succession, the first being a pencil drawing, and the others in colours; and the time occupied was, respectively, eight, eleven, twelve, and fifteen *seconds*. I am aware how difficult it is to realise such a statement, that finished drawings should be executed in such a way and in such an inconceivably short space of time; but all that I can say, is—that I have faithfully recorded the facts. There was, I can assure the reader, an absence of everything like conjuring arrangements. Mrs. French never left our sight. I saw the white surface of the cardboard immediately before the operations commenced, and the most striking and convincing fact, to those present, of the work having been done on the instant, was *that the coloured drawings were wet when taken up, and that they took some minutes to dry after they were in our hands*, and at the close of the sitting I removed, at Mrs. French's request, the shawl which was tied round the legs of the table. No one present suspected imposture, and indeed, under the circumstances, it would have been foolish and absurd to do so. The scene and results are not imaginary, as some wise people might suggest, for I have the four drawings in my possession, endorsed with the names of several gentlemen who were present, including Judge Edmonds and Mr. J. Gurney, the artist. When the fourth drawing was completed, the medium, addressing me, and still speaking in the trance state, said—"That is all we purpose doing this evening. I am sorry, sir, we could not manage to put a Bible chapter into one of them, as you wished; we meant to place it in the centre of the wreath; we will however do it for you another day."

I then asked—How many spirits were engaged in the work this evening?

Ans.—There were eleven of us to-night; we go on adding

one or two to our numbers whenever we can find suitable ones to aid us.

Q.—You appear to have less ceremony in preparing for the drawings now than you had at first?

A.—Yes, that is because we did not know at first what we could do or what conditions were absolutely required, so we had to go on trying our own powers as well as the force of the medium.

Q.—Don't you think you could produce these drawings without the aid of any of our materials, except the cardboard?

A.—No, sir; we don't expect to do that, we never heard of such a thing as that being done.

Q.—Yes; there is a medium in France, who receives communications in writing in various colours, without any pen or ink being at hand. You will, perhaps, consult your friends and tell them this, and see whether, as you go on, you cannot produce the drawings without paints or pencils, which might be called spiritual photography.

A.—Well, sir, I will tell them what you say, but I don't think we shall ever do that. Good night!

I was preparing to take my departure from New York, and had given up all expectation of seeing anything more of this remarkable phase of spiritual manifestations, when I received, two days before leaving, the following note—

“Dear sir,—Our spirit friends have appointed a drawing circle for this evening. Mrs. French says it is principally on your account. I hope, therefore, it will be convenient for you to come.”

“Very respectfully yours,

“THOS. CULBERTSON.”

I at once put aside all other engagements, glad to avail myself of a second opportunity of testing the reality and integrity of these marvellous productions with the advantage of previous observation and reflection on all the conditions and circumstances of the first sitting. Dr. Hallock, Mr. Gurney and Professor Lyman were of the party. The arrangements were made much as I have before described them, except that there was even less formality and preparation than before, and the medium instead of breathing through the roll of paper, tied a damp towel round it, to give to the sheets the necessary moisture. I was, as on the former occasion, invited to take my seat by the side of the medium at the best point for seeing the entire operations. The small table stood in the centre of a large circle, comprised of about an equal number of both sexes. When “time” was called there was the same rubbing and scrubbing helter-skelter sort of haste to do something in the shortest time possible, and when “time” was again called we heard as before the pencils drop suddenly from the hands of the invisibles. Six drawings were

produced on this occasion in rapid succession, each occupying but a few seconds. The first one was presented to me, and I was gratified to find that the spirits had not forgotten their promise. They had drawn a beautifully executed bouquet with a hand rising from the centre holding an open Bible, with a part of the 14th chapter of John, 200 words most minutely but legibly written in pencil, and the time occupied in its production complete as I have described it was just *eleven seconds*.*

On the first day of our acquaintance, Judge Edmonds did me the favour of introducing me to his friend, Professor James J. Mapes, who, as a chemist, holds a leading position in the scientific world both in America and Europe. He is a man of varied attainments, possessing a brilliant intellect, and extraordinary conversational powers. He has mastered, after most careful study and examination, the philosophy of Spiritualism, and would help, were he to publicly identify himself with the subject, almost more than any other man, to inculcate and spread its truth and doctrines.

Professor Mapes' history in connexion with Spiritualism teaches an instructive lesson, and answers in itself two of the most prominent questions which have been put by its opponents in this country; namely—If Spiritualism be worth consideration, how is it that no man eminent in science has ventured to investigate its claims and expound its philosophy? And, admitting the reality of the phenomena—*Cui bono?* Well, the answer is that Professor Mapes, of New York, like his compeer, the late Dr. Hare, of Philadelphia, a man of science, undertook the investigation several years ago, with an entire disbelief in its reality, and a determination to expose "the delusion;" and, like Dr. Hare, he was driven step by step from his original position, ultimately converted to a full belief in spirit-intercourse, and as a consequence, to a belief in a life hereafter, which he had previously denied. Can men, in the face of such facts consistently go on asking what is the good of it; and asserting that if it is really true, it must be all of the devil?

The Professor is largely engaged in agriculture, and has a farm at Newark, New York, where his family reside; whilst his professional pursuits oblige him to remain a great portion of his time in New York. He was (as he told me), a materialist, up to the age of 45, and in the early start of the modern manifestations, now thirteen years ago, he set to work earnestly to investigate Spiritualism, without saying a word on the subject to his family. Shortly after, he discovered that one of his daughters

* The very wonderful character of these drawings induces us to publish two of them, *fac-simile*, which illustrate the *Spiritual Magazine* for October, 1861.—Ep.

was also engaged in a somewhat similar way. She had in fact become a writing medium, without knowing it. On one of his usual weekly visits to his family, this daughter said, "Father, I want to shew you something very curious. Don't laugh at me, here are pages that from time to time I have been influenced to write, without my will or my mind being engaged in the work. It has been going on for weeks, and I should not have named it now, but that I saw in the *Tribune* newspaper yesterday, that others had been similarly influenced; and it is said to be the work of spirits. I want to know the meaning of it." Curious to obtain evidence from such a source, though anxious to avoid explanation and encouragement, the Professor asked her to take a pen and let him see what she meant. Her hand was moved excitedly, and she at once rapidly dashed off a long message purporting to be from the spirit of his father. The Professor said, "If there is any meaning in this I should like, if possible, to have some proof of identity." Miss Mapes' hand again wrote "You may recollect that I gave you, among other books an Encyclopædia; look at page 120 of that book and you will find my name written there, which you have never seen." The book alluded to was with others in a box at the warehouse in town. On his arrival in town, Professor Mapes opened the case which had been fastened up for 27 years, and there, to his great astonishment, he found as described his father's name written on the identical page 120.

This incident awakened a new interest in him, and he accordingly determined to conduct a serious investigation, and at once secured the services of Mrs. Brown, the eldest daughter in the Fox family—a well-known and very reliable medium of great power. His next step was to obtain a party of friends to join him, which was, however, a very difficult task. He first invited his son-in-law, Mr. Dodge, a Member of the Senate, who laughed at the request, said it was too absurd, and hoped the Professor was not going to sacrifice his time and his fame to such a delusion. And in this way he was met by others until at length making it a personal favour and to oblige him, he got a party of ten together; having, as he said, purposely selected one half of *positive* minds who would believe in nothing, and the other half of *negative* minds who might be induced to believe in anything. They agreed to meet every Monday evening for twenty sittings, and up to the nineteenth evening they had not elicited anything sufficiently satisfactory to carry conviction, or to be worth recording; but on the twentieth evening some very curious and striking phenomena were displayed. The spirits who purported to be present gave peculiar names, such as Pierre Wilding, Deliverance, &c., insisting, against the belief of these

present, that they were their ancestors, and indicating in the most definite manner their relationship. Upon subsequent enquiry, each of these statements was verified, and a previously hidden page of family history being thus unexpectedly revealed, it excited a natural interest in the minds of all to continue their sittings, which Professor Mapes assured me were prolonged uninterruptedly for FIVE YEARS, during which every conceivable test was applied, *resulting at length in the entire conversion of the whole party.*

At that period, Spiritualism was spreading in America in all directions. Mediums were developed in numerous families, and daily the press announced, on the testimony of more or less reliable witnesses, the most marvellous accounts of new manifestations of spirit-power. Professor Mapes having become satisfied that a great truth lay at the root of it, though mixed up, as he thought, with fanaticism and some charlatanism, determined to see everything for himself; and wherever he heard of new wonders, he packed up his portmanteau, and without regard to time or expense, started off to make a personal investigation. In this way he visited, among many others, the Davenport Boys at Buffalo, and the spirit-room of Jonathan Koons, situated in the mountains of Ohio; and he fully corroborated the extraordinary statements made respecting them.

To those who are not acquainted with the history of American Spiritualism, it may be acceptable for me here to introduce some account of these remarkable manifestations. I take the following from a letter written by a reliable witness, Mr. Charles Partridge, whose acquaintance I made in New York. He says:—

"I attended three public circles (open without charge to all comers) in the spirit-house of Mr. Koons—a house or room a little distance from his residence, built expressly for the purpose. The presiding spirit is an Indian named John King. The room will seat about 30 persons, and it is usually filled. After the circle is formed the door and windows are shut, and the light extinguished. Instantaneously a tremendous blow was struck upon the table by a large drumstick, and immediately the bass and tenor drums were beaten rapidly, like the roll-call on the muster field, making through the hills a thousand echoes. This continued for five minutes or more; and, when ended, King saluted us through the trumpet, and in an audible voice said, 'Good evening, friends; what particular manifestations do you desire?' King then requested Mr. Koons to play on the violin; the whole spirit-band playing at the same time on the drums, triangle, tamborine, harp, accordion, &c. Upon these instruments the spirits perform scientifically, in very perfect tune. They commence at one instant in full blast, and stop suddenly after

sounding the full note. After playing an introductory piece on the instruments they sing. The spirits *spoke to us*, requesting us to remain silent. Presently we heard, as it seemed, human voices singing in the distance, in so low a tone as to be scarcely distinguishable; the sounds gradually increased, each part relatively, until it appeared as if a full choir of human voices were in our small room singing most exquisitely. I think I never heard such perfect harmony—so captivating was it, that the heart-strings seemed to relax or to increase their tension to accord with such heavenly sounds. It seemed to me that no person could sit in that sanctuary without feeling the song of 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill to all men,' spontaneously rising in the bosom and finding expression on the lip.

"After this vocal performance, in which, however, no words were articulated, several pieces were separately performed on the instruments by the spirits. Spirit-hands and arms were seen; and that we might see them distinctly, they wet their hands with a weak solution of phosphorus, prepared at their request for the purpose by Mr. Koons. At one of these circles there were three hands, which had been covered with this solution, apparent to all of us at the same time. They passed swiftly round the room over our heads, carrying the instruments, and playing upon them, keeping perfect time. The phosphorescent illumination from those hands was so strong that it occurred to me I could see to read by it. I took a pamphlet from my pocket, and asked the spirit to place its hand over it, that I might see to read. The spirit did so, and I immediately perceived that I held the book wrong end up. I turned it and could read. The members of the circle said they could, at the same time, see my face and the pamphlet in my hand. These spirit-hands were, at our request, placed in our own; I looked at them, and felt them, until I was entirely satisfied. They appeared to be reorganised from the same elements that ours are. One spirit hand took a pen, and we all saw it write on the paper lying on the table; the writing was executed much more rapidly than I ever saw mortal hand perform; the paper was then handed to me by the spirit, and I still retain it in my possession.

"At the close of the *séance* the spirit of King, as is his custom, took up the trumpet, and gave a short lecture through it—*speaking audibly and distinctly*, presenting the benefits to be derived both in time and eternity from intercourse with spirits, and exhorting us to be discreet and bold in speech, diligent in our investigations, faithful to the responsibilities which those privileges impose, charitable towards those who are in ignorance or error, tempering our zeal with wisdom," &c., &c.

Professor Mapes described to me the exhibition witnessed by him through the Davenport Boys. These boys permit themselves to be bound by cords, hand and foot, in any way the operator pleases, and in an instant they are liberated by the spirits. The spirit of John King is also chief actor in these manifestations. With this spirit Professor Mapes said *he conversed for half an hour*. The voice was loud and distinct, spoken through a trumpet. He shook hands with him, the spirit giving a most powerful grasp; then taking his hand again, it was increased in size *and covered with hair*. The Professor said he went, accompanied only by his own friends, among whom were Dr. Warner and Dr. Wilson. They had a jocular sort of evening, into which King entered heartily, and at length played them a trick, for which they were not prepared, and which rather astonished them. Their hats and caps were suddenly whisked from their heads, and replaced in an instant. Turning on the lights, they found each hat and cap was turned inside out, and it took many minutes to replace them. Dr. Warner's gloves, which were in his hat, were also turned completely inside out. This exhibition took place in a large club room at Buffalo, selected by the Professor and his party, having but one place of entrance and exit. The boys sat on an elevated platform at a large table; and this table, in an instant of time, was carried over the heads of the auditors, and deposited at the most distant part of the large room.

Whilst Professor Mapes continued his own investigation, he felt it necessary from its all-engrossing character to restrain his daughter from pursuing her mediumship, fearing that her health, which was delicate, would suffer, though he said some of her writing was brilliant and powerful, and much beyond her natural capacity. An arrangement was accordingly made for her to visit some friends with a view of weaning her from the fascination which occupied so much of her time. Mrs. Mapes was at this period altogether opposed to the whole subject, and unacquainted with the fact that her husband was so deeply intercasted in it, said to him one day, "I am very much distressed to think our daughter Sophy should deceive us, I have written a strong reproof to her as I feel sure it is most improper conduct." Professor Mapes dissuaded his wife from sending the letter, telling her he had his own motives for wishing her to delay doing so. In a short time after Mrs. Mapes herself was impelled one day to write, and became at once developed as a writing medium. Fascinated with this new power, she continued day by day almost exclusively occupied with her writing, until at length Professor Mapes felt it necessary to interfere, and said—
 "Wife, you and I have been married 30 years, and I have never before interfered with your personal liberty, but now

I have seriously to request that you will not at least for the present give any more time to these influences, and that you will consent to destroy all you have written." With many protests Mrs. Mapes at length consented, and tearing the leaves from a large manuscript volume, she consigned them page by page to the flames—the understanding being that she would not put her hand to paper for 12 months to come.

Months having passed, and the tendency to yield to the influence having been effectually repressed, her husband and family were surprised one day by her making preparations for drawing, and declaring that she believed she could copy plants and flowers. They smiled at this announcement they were incredulous, as she had never been instructed, and had never shown the least talent for the art. She went, however, into the garden, plucked an apple blossom, and sat down to copy it. In a few minutes she made, greatly to the surprise of all around her, a most excellent copy of this very delicate flower, and thus spiritually influenced, she commenced a series of coloured drawings, which as they proceeded increased in beauty, and have now become most perfect specimens of the art.

On referring to the date of their compact, Professor Mapes found the drawing had commenced exactly twelve months to the day on which Mrs. Mapes had promised him not to write any more. The Professor has not attempted to interfere with this development; on the contrary, he appears to encourage it, and is highly interested in her progress; and as a portion of each day is devoted to drawing and painting, and as they do not part with many, a large accumulation has taken place, comprising now a great number of very interesting volumes. These drawings, which are produced with great rapidity, unlike most mediumistic productions, are of natural fruits, flowers, and birds, and this extraordinary fact attaches to the birds, that each bird, without study or any knowledge of the natural history of the subject, on the part of Mrs. Mapes, is placed in the accustomed associations of tree or plant on which it builds or feeds.

I am indebted to Mrs. Mapes for two specimens of her work, which she kindly presented to me, and which have created the greatest admiration in all to whom I have shown them; one is an iris, and the other a collection of American autumnal leaves. They are both pronounced by connoisseurs to be works of high art, and the marvellous fact remains to be told, that *both paintings were commenced and finished in little more than one hour.* No artist, I believe, could copy them in less than two days.

Miss Sophia Mapes, after a brief period of repose, resumed her writing mediumship, and during my visit I had an opportunity of seeing it exercised. In the absence of the other mem-

bers of the family, I sat at a table with her and Mrs. Mapes, when her hand was moved with the usual nervous excitability which accompanies writing mediumship, and in the most rapid manner, at a rate indeed in which it would be thought almost physically impossible to wield a pencil, the following communication, which I have in my possession, purporting to be dictated by the spirit of Win. Humboldt, brother of the well-known traveller was given, with the erasure of two words only:—

“The truths of spirit-intercourse having become plain to the greater portion of intelligent observers of the manifestations, it is of the utmost importance that there should be the most careful endeavour to comprehend the relation which the newly acquired knowledge bears to our former ideas of God and truth. We are in the spirit-world, and on the earth, in the relation to God and to each other which constantly provokes our enquiry. We are co-working. The human spirit is a power in the universe of material creation, and it awakens by its intelligence to know of the laws of nature; and you may be assured that the natural man becomes cognisant of no law in which it is not itself a power. We are *en rapport* with all the visible universe. When spirit is not in active association with matter, it ignores all connexion with its changes and progression. The old idea long ago conceived as the *logos* is a truth. But as the idea among the Church fathers was supposed to be culminated in Christ Jesus, so is now the spirit of man constantly active on the world of matter to develop the latent forces in the atomic relation of the particles, and the peculiar forces of combination. Man controls the laws of which he becomes cognisant, and neither knows nor dreams of laws in which he is not a creative and sustaining power. We acknowledge the action of mind on matter, and of the relation of the human forces to the laws of the material universe. Man must not deceive himself that he is apart from creation, viewing it as if he were a sculptured obelisk, or made of the rock itself, and no part of the ever-changing material universe. In truth he is law itself, and is force, when he little recognises his prowess or influence. We know that the natural developments of life in all ages have contributed to the status of this age, and now when the present life exists in more complete form, in more extended power, and more intense action, the truth is all the more manifest, God is all-apparent in man, and spirit, as a force; and could you once conceive of nature and spirit as a totality, you would then conceive of God as a Spirit. Now, you only know him as love, or as intensity and vigour in your own spirit, and in the law you may realise. Never forget that to see God, to realise God, you should be God. He is not so

distant from your being that you may conceive of him as a personality, and therefore, it is impossible for the human mind to realise His existence but in its own extent of power and control. We, as spirit, know better than when we inhabited the earthly form, the extent and all-pervading power and nature of individual spirit. And as the communication of force, and of heat, knows no channel, neither does the spirit know by what means it becomes a power in causes which apparently have no connection with our own intention, or conscious will-power.

" WILLIAM HUMBOLDT."

The labour bestowed by Professor Mapes in the investigation of Spiritualism, and the knowledge thereby acquired by him, it is to be hoped will yet be turned to useful public purposes. He had an intention of visiting England shortly. The present political troubles in the States, however, would no doubt delay the period of his visit. When he does come, we must endeavour to prevail on him to deliver a course of lectures on the subject, to which I do not think he is indisposed. If he consents to do so, I venture to say that the foremost student of the spiritual philosophy in this country will have many new pages opened to him for his further advancement. For my part, I am bound to say that I never heard a man express himself more eloquently on any subject. During the last conversation I had with him, Professor Mapes summed up his argument for Spiritualism thus—"If after making every allowance for the incongruities, false theories, fanaticism and the common errors attached to Spiritualism only ten per cent. of the whole should prove pure and impregnable, it is still as sound a science as Chemistry was at the beginning of this century, which has thrown aside ninety per cent. of the teachings then received as truths."

The narrative of Mr. L., recording the marvellous manifestations of a WIFE to her HUSBAND, which I have given in a former number of the Magazine, created as I have found very great interest, and has been received with a degree of respectful attention, which I confess surprised me, inasmuch as the incidents embrace a mass of phenomena, which, taken as a whole, exceed in wonder anything of the kind that has yet been given to the world. Although I expressed my entire confidence in the integrity of the narrator and his facts, I fully expected they would have been seriously questioned, even by many who acknowledge the reality of spiritual appearances, and that of course the general reader, and especially the members of the press, who for the most part know nothing of the subject, would treat them as the greatest delusion of any of those which have been seriously endorsed by

the advocates of this great truth. I have, however, been agreeably disappointed in finding that that portion of the press, which has given extracts from my paper, has done so without offensive comments, and that the *Star and Dial* in reviewing the general character of my American notes did it in a tone quite unexceptionable, and thereby led to a deeply interesting discussion, published in the columns of that paper. I am told that the editor was obliged to bring it to a close, only on account of the overwhelming number of letters, extending I believe to several hundreds, that were addressed to him; a fact which in itself proves the wide-spread interest with which the subject is regarded. Indeed, some of the most popular writers of the day are now familiarising the minds of their readers with the marvellous, by introducing stories of spiritual manifestations into their journals, almost as wonderful as any that I have ventured to record. Take for instance "Mr. H.'s own Narrative," which appeared recently in Mr. Charles Dickens's popular journal of *All the Year Round*. It is gravely introduced by Mr. Dickens to his readers as "A Remarkable Narrative," which he had received from "a real existing person, and a responsible gentleman," as if he had never before had a remarkable and well-attested ghost story from a responsible source. I may here state for the satisfaction of the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, that I have since made the acquaintance of the gentleman who wrote the narrative, and have had it corroborated from his own lips, with some additional particulars strange as any he has published. It is therefore a veritable story, told by "a responsible gentleman," and not, as might have been suspected from the way in which Mr. Dickens has been wont to treat the subject, a story got up to raise a laugh, at the credulity of some of his literary compeers, who received long ago the light which I hope is now beginning to dawn upon himself.

I mentioned when introducing Mr. L.'s experiences, that Dr. J. F. Gray, one of the most respectable physicians of New York, had first brought the facts to the notice of the members of the spiritual conference of that city, and that he gave very good reasons for believing that they were genuine. I have now the satisfaction of introducing to my readers a letter, which I have just received from Dr. Gray, corroborative of that statement, and one also from my friend Mr. L., enclosing a full account of his further experiences, which it will be seen are of a very extraordinary and deeply interesting character.

The cards referred to and which are in my possession, it must be understood, are written upon by the spirits without human agency, and therefore, the writing is not done, as we are accustomed to see it, through the hand of the medium. The following is Dr. Gray's letter:—

"New York, Sept. 30th, 1861.

"Dear Sir,—As our friend Mr. L. is not yet ready to exemplify his wonderful experience by attaching his name to the record he sends to you for publication, it seems to become my duty to make the lack of his name good by testifying to the accuracy and credibility of his statements. Mr. L. is by no means an exaggerative man, as you doubtless found in your close acquaintance with him during your visit to our city. Though quick to feel and perceive, he is slow in making deductions from occurrences around him; he is calm and amiable in deportment, deliberate and intrepid in action when his conclusion is attained, and not at all an enthusiast or poet, or reformer of other men's errors and vices. In this great topic of our investigations, he has gathered and registered his facts with calm precision; in no instance within my knowledge has he drawn an inference except on the straightest line and compulsion of his fact. He colours nothing by any, the least, over statement; he omits nothing of imaginable scientific value. His verbal statements to me, and to others in my presence, correspond fully with the written report he has drawn from his diary, for your use. Besides, his general character for veracity and probity, Mr. L. is a competent witness to the important facts he narrates, because he is not in any degree subject to the illusions and hallucinations which may be supposed to attach to the trance or exstastic constitution. I have known him from his very early manhood and am his medical adviser, and I can safely aver that he is less liable to be disturbed by the agitation of others in his society, or misled by errors of his own organs of sense, than almost any man of my large circle of patients and acquaintance. I likewise knew his late wife (Estelle) from her early childhood, when I became her physician, and I can confirm her husband's averments as to the moral and mental indications of identity contained in the communications purporting to come from her to him, and to others of her relatives and friends. Miss Fox, the medium in whose presence Mr. L. receives these grand and useful demonstrations of spirit-presence and power, has been intimately known to my wife and me from the time she was a very young girl, that is to say, from 1850 to this date. At that early day in the history of the manifestations, she was frequently a visitor in my family, and then, through that child alone, without the possibility of trick from collusion with others, or I may truly add, of imposture of any kind, all the various phenomena recorded by friend L., except the reproduction of visible human forms were witnessed by Mrs. Gray and myself and many other relatives and friends of our family. Among these I may mention, as frequent, attentive, and very able observers, the late Dr. Gerald

Hull, my brother-in-law, and Dr. Warner, my son-in-law. Miss Fox is a young lady of good education, and of an entirely blameless life and character. Her deportment is unassuming, amiable, and void of all artifice or affectation. From her lips my wife and I have received the same narrations as to the size, colour and movements of the lights exhibited, and as to the action and other characteristics of the beautiful apparition of Estelle, as those heretofore, and now forwarded to you by Mr. L. To this brief statement concerning the two principal witnesses and my competency in some degree to confirm their testimony, I may add, that a few years before this new phase of spirit phenomena occurred in Western New York (1848) I had conducted a careful series of experiments in Mesmerism, and had attained instructive and highly useful results respecting the trance state, clairvoyance, anæsthesia and physical and psychical *rapport*. In these experiments I was assisted by Dr. Hull and a few other learned and ingenuous men, *each one of whom afterwards became a Spiritualist*. From this preparation in my own experience, after having carefully inspected the records of my dear friend L.'s intercourse with spirits (of the very first part of which my wife and I were personal witnesses) I can safely and truly affirm that the whole statement he publishes is worthy of credit and, in my belief, most accurate.

"B. Coleman, Esq.,
"London."

"Faithfully your friend,
"JOHN F. GRAY.

The further narrative of Mr. L. will be best given in his own words, as follows:—

"New York, Oct. 1st, 1861.

"My dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 5th ult., and, in accordance with your request, I enclose herewith a memorandum of some of my further experience. To bring the facts before you simply as facts, and not as theories, I have made extracts from my diary, and should you desire to give publicity to any of them, you can make your own selections. You may depend upon their entire reliability. They were recorded as they occurred, and are without exaggeration or coloring. I feel some diffidence in presenting such statements even to you, being myself astounded at my own experience. If then to you they may seem marvellous, how will they be looked upon by those without knowledge but as the ravings of a madman—or as the wild vagaries of delusion. It is difficult to convince the world of facts so contrary to general experience, and it is well not to accept them on insufficient evidence. This has been my rule of action from the commencement of these manifestations, and but for their gradual development, step by step, I could never have been prepared for such results. The receptive quality of the human mind is neces-

erily limited to, and dependant upon, this preparatory process; and the wisdom of our Creator in no way more strikingly manifests itself, than in this principle of adaptation—and in rendering our condition such, that we reject even great truths, until the soil has been first prepared to give them root. We become familiar to-day, with what yesterday we could not realize; and I look back now to my first experiences, which at the time seemed so marvellous, and regard them as but the very lowest rounds of the ladder which has been leading me towards the *Divine Light*. From the glimpses I have had of the spirit-world and its beauties, I am forced to the conviction that in our earth-life, we have little conception of the higher destiny which awaits us, in the perpetual and eternally progressive elevation of the human soul after it shall have shaken off its shackles of flesh. I hope before the winter passes, when the electrical conditions of the atmosphere become favourable, to be able to give you corroborative evidence beyond my own, having been promised that a circle of four, shall witness and bear testimony to the truth of these developments. My sister has been designated as one who can witness them without a disturbing influence. I send you herewith ten cards written by spirit-hands, which I know cannot fail to interest you and your friends, with a memorandum of those which you are at liberty to keep if you desire. The others I will thank you to return after you have made such use of them as you may think proper. The one written in ink will no doubt be looked upon with interest. It was done with an ordinary steel pen, which, with a glass inkstand and the card, had been placed upon the table in front of us. In the process of writing, the pen was frequently heard to strike against the mouth of the inkstand in obtaining its supplies of ink. I have also had others written in ink, and on one occasion in the morning; not, however, in a full light, but with the shutters partially closed. In exhibiting these cards, do not forget to state that this result has only been arrived at, after frequent sittings of the most patient attention to conditions. At first the initials of the name, rudely done, was all the spirit could execute; but by perseverance from these rude beginnings, has the writing been brought to its present state—and it is now executed more or less rapidly—according to the strength or weakness of the electrical atmospheric conditions. Nearly all my spirit-communications are now written by invisible hands, the spirits expressing a decided preference for this method over all others as being free from interpolation, and untinged “*by any shadow of other minds.*” The same may also be stated with regard to the luminous phenomena; which, from having been at the outset comparatively dim, and of the size of an orange; are now in-



tensely bright, of almost any required size or shape, with power to illuminate and render visible spirit-forms or surrounding objects—and that which was only achieved after repeated and long-continued experiments, is now accomplished with the greatest ease and facility, under ordinarily favourable conditions. These phenomena can only be witnessed by those having experience, who by this means have become gradually familiarized with them, who are possessed of calm self-control in presence of such startling manifestations; and they can never (according to my observation) be obtained when the circle, either large or small, is composed of diverse and inharmonious persons. The spirit-form seems too pure and ethereal to withstand the rude gaze of the merely curious, or to come into the presence of, and in contact with the conflicting doubts and disturbing influences of mixed and unconfiding natures. One must become partially changed and assimilated to peaceful harmonious conditions, or, to a certain extent, be *en rapport*, before the spirit has power to concentrate and present itself in form. I fear I shall have already wearied you with the length of my communications. If, however, my experience shall prove of any benefit in *giving light* on this great truth, I shall have the satisfaction of having done my duty, and of having obeyed the injunction of the spirits '*to give it to the world.*'

"Very sincerely and truly yours,
"Benj. Coleman, Esq., London." "L.

I recommend to my readers an attentive consideration of my respected correspondent's statement as to the probable means to success and causes of failure in obtaining spiritual manifestations. The electrical atmospheric conditions of which he speaks, will no doubt account for the failures which at times occur even with the most powerful mediums. We know of course that a want of harmony in the circle is another cause of failure, and tends to lessen, if it does not altogether destroy the value of an experiment. Thus, early inquirers are disappointed if they cannot at once see and hear something equal to what they have heard of from other witnesses, unacquainted with the fact that there is more or less of specialty with every medium, and, therefore, that phenomena through different persons will vary both in kind and in degree.

I have had as much experience, perhaps, as most persons in observing the impressions made on the minds of the uninitiated, when first viewing the spiritual phenomena. A table rises from the ground, and is poised in mid-air, for a period of time, more or less, as I have seen it do an hundred times, despite of gravitation, and instead of pondering to consider the fact and the

agency by which so great a marvel has been accomplished, the sceptic insists on something else being lifted. Why not a chair? Why not a sofa or piano? And if neither chair, sofa, nor piano can be raised on the instant, the rising of the table goes with him for nothing. This is thought by many to be quite fair, philosophic and rational, and they have the boldness too to assert that they came to the investigation in a calm and dispassionate spirit free from prejudice. The Rev. Dr. Maitland, in considering the evidence for and against this subject, says:—

"If Samuel Johnson had made an affidavit, that twenty times in twenty different years he had seen his chair jump over his table at his word of command, thousands from the day of the date of the said affidavit to the present would have thought the matter worthy of discussion, even after philosophers had strictly forbidden any such goings on, under the penalty of their wrath and rebuke. There would have been a constant reclamation that Johnson was purblind and stupid, and went to church, and always believed everything.

"Some very sharp people would be calling for proof of Johnson's ever having existed—some would denounce the document as a forgery, without looking at it—others would quietly state that the thing was impossible, and the story not to be listened to by persons of mental cultivation—others would satisfy select companions, and perhaps (if very stupid) themselves, by asking, "Why did not the table jump over the chair?" or, "If the chair could jump over the table, why could it not crawl under it?" or, "If Johnson's chair did it, why do not other chairs do it?" or, "Why don't I see it, if he did?" But notwithstanding all this, even while this funny philosophy was in some sort flourishing, and explanations of detective philosophers (the Faradays and Brewsters?) were civilly listened to by those who could keep their countenances, and wished that what they heard might be true, there would still be thousands and tens of thousands who would not know how to get over, or what to make of such an affidavit from Samuel Johnson."^{*}

The cards sent to me by Mr. L., and now in my possession, are certainly marvellous productions, not that they convey any elevated thought or deep philosophy, but that they prove our intimate and near relation to the spirit-world, and that spirits in their intercourse with mortals retain the natural sympathies and affections of their earth-life. Two of these cards, the one purporting to be written by the spirit of Mr. L.'s wife, and the other by the spirit of Benjamin Franklin, are here given to the reader,

^{*} *Superstition and Science; an Essay by the Rev. J. R. MAITLAND, D.D., F.R.S., and F.S.A. Published by Rivingtons.*

fac-similes of the originals. The coming together of two such opposite spirits as the gentle, loving wife, and the sturdy philosopher, will be explained by a perusal of the following messages received, and description of the phenomena witnessed by Mr. L. during a series of continuous sittings, taken from his diary:—

“*July 4th*, 1861.—Upon the evening of my birthday, and just before leaving home for a sojourn in the country, the following message was addressed to me by the spirit of my wife.”—

“*July 4th*, 1861.

“‘This morning’s rising sun found me watching by your bed. Did you, dear Charley, feel the kiss you wakened with? How much I would say were I in the form, and yet I could not say one half that I do *now*, for every word is clothed with the spirit from whom it comes. This day is of *great* worth to me, darling, from the fact that the greatest joy of my life was then sent into this world. I am happy to be so closely with you, happier still to make you conscious of my presence. I often hear you reason with others upon this truth. It is well to try to teach them, and give them light, but talk not to those who will not listen. You can preach to the wind, it will not hear you. Tell them, darling, that the greatest truth, the most improbable truth, when once understood and learned, when once made clear, proves of great value when familiar to an unknown longing for something felt, yet not seen. What is more important to yourselves than that you should prepare yourselves daily for the life hereafter. The time must come when the soul will return truthful and powerful to Him who gave it. You no sooner wake to a sense of being, than you sigh to learn the *spiritual* part of which you are formed. I have learned, Charley, that we commence to live here before we are born into the world. The soul aspires ever higher and higher where it is *pure*. The spirit changes with the life; blessings attend patience and forbearance. I shall go with you to-morrow, and, oh, I hope that I shall be able to give you some sweet tokens of my presence. I will if I can. While I write Doctor Franklin is aiding me. The atmosphere weakens, and I will say good night: good night, and still I cannot go or say good night without a desire to say more. My darling, what a blessing we have: what a privilege. Be happy. Meet soon again. Your dear head shall rest near mine to-night, while blessings fall on us both. Doctor Franklin will shew himself to you soon. We will both come together. Good night, good night.

“‘ESTELLE.

“‘*July 4*, 1861.’”

“*July 15th*, 1861.—The following card was written upon my return from the country. I was at home alone, my family

being absent, and a little relic, *which had disappeared before leaving* (two weeks before) was returned with the message—

"Dear Charley,—I return the little relic with many blessings, and many kisses. Will you accept them all? I shall be with you, Charley, in our house. I will walk by your side in the shade of the evening, and in the morning time you will not miss me, for I shall be there. You will not feel sad. How could you, when I shall be near to comfort you. I say you will not. I mean, dear, that you *must not*. Be happy—I am—and never undervalue these *great* blessings. Teach others to *value* them. God bless you evermore, and let not a shadow cross the bright interior. Let not the counteracting opinions of others jar upon the truths given so freely to you, lest I too become disturbed, and a barrier be placed between our two souls which now breathe together. Men understand too little of this world, and forget that the other is its counterpart, only purified from sin. Yet we must all have charity. To err is human. The light of a soul is easily blown out. The shadows will grow longer upon it if permitted to remain and become sorrows. Never doubt, as faith is believing in God. The great star lights your path, and flowers bloom for us both. God bless you. Good night, but not good bye. Good night. "ESTELLE."

"July 21st, 1861.—At the expiration of the usual half hour of quiet, the bolt of the lock was turned violently backwards and forwards, and various other demonstrations took place, such as striking violently upon the bureau with a Bible lying thereon. The rustling, and a tap upon my shoulder, indicated the presence in form of the spirit. My head was pushed gently forward by spirit-hands, and bent towards the table to prevent my looking in the direction of the light, and soon after the electrical rattle approaching, we raised our heads to see the same beautiful spirit surrounded with flowers; while bending over her left shoulder, another face was indistinctly visible. As a spirit purporting to be Dr. Franklin had promised to make an effort to appear on this occasion, I looked for him. My wife soon appeared again, when I found that by turning my gaze from her, she could approach much nearer, and thus re-appeared very vividly four or five times, the whole expression and smile being perfect; during the last two or three appearances, I noticed a dark figure indistinctly standing at her right, between myself and her. Some ten or fifteen minutes now elapsed, when from behind us was heard a movement and a striking upon something like glass, with a clear sound, resembling the tone of a silver bell. This as it approached us, was placed near my left ear, and was struck vigorously, the reverberation passing to different parts of the room. The tone was exquisite; at first rather solemn, but becoming more and more musical and agreeable.

The medium assured me there was no glass ware or vessel of any kind in the room, and my subsequent examination proved the correctness of the assertion. The spirit at the same time informed me that it was not a material but a *spiritual instrument* brought by Dr. Franklin. This instrument, whatever it was, was frequently placed on my head, and rubbed against it and my back, feeling like a glass globe of about six inches in diameter. It was also placed against my ear after having been struck. Its vibrations were distinctly felt, and its reverberations became almost deafening. I was told to sing. I did so. The instrument was drummed upon in perfect time to an air, with sounds sufficiently loud to be heard in other rooms in the house. This done, more vigorous strokes were made, the instrument being pushed towards my ear, and while the reverberations were dying away, I found the spirit could, by its aid approach me with wonderfully augmented facility. During this time I was kissed repeatedly, and a successful effort to speak was made a few distinct words however only being articulated. A half or three-quarters of an hour having thus been spent, the sounds ceased, and shortly after the spirit of my wife again appeared in great splendour, approaching very near, and this time the figure of a man was distinctly visible. He seemed short, thick set, heavy, with broad shoulders, dressed in black, and wearing a black velvet cap, the silk tassel of which hung dangling about six inches long in front of his face. Here the medium became very nervous, and I have no doubt prevented the face being made more distinctly visible. I saw a face dimly, but no recognisable features; while those of my wife were radiant. A second and third time the effort was renewed, but the force had become exhausted by the wonderful manifestations so long continued, when we were told that *complete success had been prevented by our starts and exclamations*. The following explanation was written upon a card. 'The echo you heard was brought for the purpose of aiding me in speaking. It was an invention of Dr. Franklin's for me. You see that he is still useful and great. How grateful I am to him; how grateful you should all be. You shall hear music from heaven soon.—ESTELLE.' By raps, I received the following, as well as answers to my questions—'Dear Son, You do not know the great object I have in future for you.—B. F.' Question by me, 'Why am I selected for these developments?' Answer—'You are the only person we have found who could come in our personal sphere and respond to every condition.' Question—'What enables me to come into your sphere?' Answer—'The organisation and interior mind; the soul and comprehension; you have all combined in a fine spiritual sense.—B. F.' I scarcely need say that with my usual care I minutely

examined every part of the room before unlocking the door, and could find no trace of anything by or upon which the sounds described could have been produced. *The same phenomena again occurred a few evenings subsequently with the same results.*"

"*July 25, 1861.*—After the usual preliminary and the electrical rattle, my wife stood by me in all her beauty, and, on this occasion, her complete figure, dressed from head to foot in white, with roses, and her hair bound with what seemed to be a narrow blue velvet ribbon, the ends of the hair being visible over her right shoulder appeared. Above her head was the bright gauze previously described. Her features and expression were perfect, and she came, apparently, with great ease and without effort. After appearing once, she rapped out upon my shoulder as follows — '*The next time I appear, I will bring a little glass.*' She soon came, holding in her hand a small oval mirror about three inches long, the glass glistening in the light. An indistinct figure (supposed to be Dr. F.) seemed to hold the light like a lantern; his dark arm passing across her waist, while his whole figure was distinctly visible. She seemed now to come with her little mirror more easily than ever before, and returned to us at least a dozen times, in loveliness and beauty beyond description. My theory is, that the mirror was intended to attract and divert a portion of our gaze, which at times is no doubt too strong for spiritual presence. I have frequently observed that looking intently at the light itself disturbs its brightness, and listening to spirit-sounds with great fixedness disturbs them also.

"*August 18, 1861, 8 p.m.*—Present, the medium and myself. Atmosphere heavy and warm. Carefully examined the room, locked the door, took the key and made all secure. Sat in quiet half an hour, when a spherical oblong light, enveloped in folds, rose from the floor to our foreheads, and rested upon the table in front. By raps—'*Notice how noiselessly we come.*' Heretofore the light had generally appeared after a succession of startling sounds and movements of moveable objects; but in the present instance, all was quiet. From this time, 8.30, till 11.30, the light was constantly visible, but in different forms. It remained upon the table a full half hour, the size and shape of a large melon. As during this time it was passive, I asked if it could rise, whereupon it immediately brightened, flashed out, and rising, seemed a living breathing substance. By raps—'*This is our most important meeting, for it brings to our circle two powerful spirits great and good.*' The light became gradually more powerful, and so brilliant upon the side opposite us as to illuminate that part of the room. It now rose from the table, resting upon my head and shoulder, the drapery in the meantime touching and falling upon our faces, with a peculiar scent of violets. After

Welcome back dear Charley, welcome
to the temple of perfect happiness

It is in this way I love to command
write my happy thoughts. In this
way I can - talk without the trammels
of other sinners - In this way I
can talk to you purely which to me
is so sweet - What more can I ask
Truly Charley we are blessed I feel
every hour but more when in this
close communion and particularly to
night I feel overpowered to find that
I can as in former days, write to
my dear Charley with pen and ink

The chain is not broken only
remains passive and undisturbed

Remember the success of these meetings
depends much upon you. Memory Lane
is filled with bright flowers to night and
joy of the past. The troubles of life
have vanished from you now dear Charley
and a higher future is marked out.

I am glad to see dear Father
back. Write me some private
Questions.

Good night - Good night

Estelle

"The one written on in ink will no doubt be looked upon with
interest. It was done with an ordinary steel pen which with a
glass inkstand and the card had been placed upon the table
in front of us. In the process of writing, the pen was frequently
heard to strike against the mouth of the inkstand in obtaining
its supplies."

Vide M. L.'s letter.

resting upon, and pressing my head and shoulder, *with the weight of a living head*, it descended to the floor. I was now satisfied that the purpose of this meeting was some other than the appearance of the spirit of my wife. The light now rose with increased brilliancy, showing a head upon which was a white cap surrounded by a frill. Seeing no face, I asked what this meant. The reply was by raps—*'As when I was ill.'* This was correct, for it was to all appearances the peculiar cap worn by my wife during her last illness. This having passed away, the light appeared again very brilliantly, showing a crown composed apparently of oak leaves and flowers, a very *very* beautiful manifestation. I had brought with me on this occasion some new cards of a larger size, different from any before used, and had placed upon two of them private marks. These I put upon a book on the table. In a few minutes they were taken from the book, and one of them appeared near the floor, suspended three or four inches from the carpet—I could not judge accurately—but the light brightly showed the centre card and radiated from each side to a distance of some three or four inches—or, in other words, the card was the centre of a circle of spirit-light, of a foot in diameter—while an imperfectly-shaped hand, holding my small silver pencil, was placed upon the card and moved quietly across from left to right, as though writing, and when finishing a line, it moved quickly back to recommence another. We were not permitted to look at this very long at a time, as our steady gaze disturbed the operating forces—but it remained more or less visible for nearly an hour. The full-formed hand was seen only a portion of the time, but during all this time, a dark substance, rather smaller than the natural hand, held the pencil and continued to write. One side of the card being finished, *we saw it reversed and the other page commenced.* This is satisfactory evidence of the reality of spirit-writing, if any evidence can be satisfactory. There could have been no possible deception here. I held the medium's hand: the door was locked, and every precaution was taken by me as in previous instances. The identical cards were returned subsequently covered with the finest writing. I send them herewith:—

"August 21st, 1861.—The following card was written in explanation of the electrical chain, and its being broken:—

"The thread when broken is hard to mend, the work is not easy to get your conditions right, we surround you with influences which aid you to see us; these influences are so fine and pure that we find it difficult to keep them. When the chain is broken for a long period the mind seems changed, the conditions become less electrical, and that which we worked so long to make perfect, dissolves into more material things. For instance—You take a

root and transplant it; its growth is retarded, and it takes a long time to re-bloom in its new change of soil. Were you to cease your investigations now and lose your interest—your ardency—we *could not* come in form. You know not how much depends on you for all the blessings you receive, darling—heaven is bright and beautiful. My home is there undisturbed by the cares of earth, unshadowed by sorrows—Oh, how happy, how blessed in you am I my own! How can I say enough! I walk with you daily through the sweet companionship of your thoughts. I hover over you at night, and cover you with my mantle of love. While you sleep and dream of me, visions of the future come silently and vividly to you. Oh, my loved one, do you know how happy you make me by your faith and trust in me! Your own in heaven.

“ESTELLE.”

“August, 28th, 1861.—The following explanation of the disappearance of cards, &c., was written by the spirits:—

“My darling—We conceal the cards in the sphere of the medium, and make them invisible to the naked eye as other atmospherical substances are. You have yet to learn that the atmosphere has great power, and does great wonders for the creation of men. We conceal the cards in the shadow of our spiritual atmosphere, and then we surround them with an electrical covering which withdraws them from the sight. Let Dr. Franklin explain, he can better.

“ESTELLE.”

[By raps]:—“Do not be disappointed at the writing. The excitement in your mind disturbs me, and makes my hand quiver.” [The writing of both the previous and the following card was irregular, and not as well done as usual.] Explanation continued by Dr. F.:—

“Let me explain the disappearance of the cards. We first spiritualize them so that you cannot see them, then we retain them between the two spheres, the natural and the spiritual. In this way we can often make material objects so spiritual that the naked eye cannot behold them, and thus retain them between the two spheres. We use elements of the atmosphere for our channel, and the elements of the atmosphere are the channel through which we manifest. Paper is most easily made invisible. Be not doubtful when things appear vague and incomprehensible.—B. F.”

“September 11th.—The following directions were written upon a card—

“Meet on Friday evening, for the purpose of seeing me in form. The hour, half-past seven; the place upstairs. Let your minds be calm and undisturbed; have faith, and do not mar the success by making exclamations. My son, fulfil the conditions, and I will appear as naturally as when on earth. Once more, I entreat you, be calm; be not disturbed; have faith. The circle

will all be here to aid me. Wonder not at their wish to come. Of one clay God hath formed us all, and the good love to come where they can do good. Friday will be our greatest manifestation yet given, but not the greatest to be given.—B. F. 'My darling, you have at times disturbed dear Dr. Franklin by your little impatience. Do you know how much depends upon you? By getting up, you greatly disturb us. Do not leave your seat until we tell you. Every time you get up, you break the chain.—ESTELLE.'"

"*Friday Evening, September 13, 1861.*—Unfortunately, the appointment for this evening, at half-past seven, was not punctually kept, and it was half-past eight before we were seated at the table. I locked the door, taking the key after the usual careful examination of the room. We sat in quiet for three quarters of an hour, when I became impatient from the length of time elapsing without a demonstration and was answered—'*No failure to-night, be patient.*' I was then told to '*open the window*' to admit fresh air, and afterwards to '*darken.*' Immediately upon resuming my seat, a light appeared upon the floor some four or five feet behind us, and rose with a rustling and rattling sound. This light assumed the form of a cylinder or canister, about six inches long by three in diameter, enveloped as usual in exquisite folds, while after each display a dark covering was thrown over it. This cylindrical light was waved over the table and shaken, producing the electrical rattle, and throwing its radiations upon the spirit, who was now discovered to be standing directly in front, where she remained for an unusual length of time, frequently changing her floral decorations, and assuming a great variety of positions. At first, she appeared as she had done before; then, with a large rose in her hair, placed behind the temple. The light then had the dark covering thrown over it. A rattling was heard. She again appeared, and a small white rose was seen on her forehead; and again, with a lock of hair drawn across one eye; then again, with a bunch of white tube-roses just behind the left ear in her hair. I asked to see her hand, when she came forward holding a pink rose and violets—the hand and arm distinctly visible. By raps, we were told to '*Notice the flowers,*' which seemed so natural that I asked if they were not real flowers. The answer was, '*Yes, real flowers to us.*' The room was warm, and a pearl-handled fan, which had been in use, was lying upon the table, together with a blank card, which had been placed there accidentally. Suddenly, in the absence of the light, the fan was heard to move, and *open and shut.* Upon the next appearance, I was very much astonished to see the spirit of my wife standing before us, holding the fan open before a portion of her face, while the blank card was held

by a dark form about a foot above the table, the light shining full upon each. By raps, it was spelt, '*Dr. Franklin holds the card.*' On looking carefully while the card seemed thus suspended, I discovered a dark form behind it, but saw no other face but that of my wife. The fan was opened and shut several times in full view while we were looking at it, and afterwards it was placed in my hand. The card was taken from its first position, and held in front of the spirit's eyes like a mask, and both the fan and the card were seen in a variety of positions. For an hour and a half the spirit thus stood before us, at intervals invisible; but during these intervals of invisibility, the changes of position and of flowers and robes were arranged, each change being accompanied by the rustling sounds so often adverted to. The light frequently rested upon the head or shoulder of the medium '*gathering power,*' and in consequence of the nervousness thus produced, and the delay at the outset, the spirit purporting to be Dr. Franklin, probably found it difficult, if not impossible, to make himself visible.

"*September 14th, 1861.*—The following card was written on Saturday evening, Sept. 14, after my return from a drive in the Central Park. A band of music had enlivened the scene, and the music, together with the beauty of the park, is alluded to:—

"I have been with you to-day, dear Charley. I kissed your brow, and many times looked in your face to see if it still wore that look of peace and happiness which I love to see. Your thoughts were of the earth, but mine were with you, and though music filled the air, there was nothing so sweet to me as your voice. The cerulean heaven holds more happiness than the beautiful place which you have to-day visited; but there are no fields on earth half so beautiful as those through which your '*Estelle*' wanders to bless her Charley. There are pleasant paths on earth for you to walk in, green and fresh. There is a sky above you, calm and serene. There are clouds also, which will often come to mar the happiest moment. The flower fadeth, the grass withereth, and the sky above you grows dark and gloomy; but the happiness that we feel, and the light which we have given you, lives for ever. Oh, dear Charley, what if weary cares come? What, if disappointments shadow over you? Bear them all. What are the troubles of life to bear, when you have one in heaven to share them with you? Always be happy, dear Charley, for I share both your happiness and sorrow. I long to come to you again in form. I long to stand before you as naturally as when in the earth-form. I long to speak to you face to face. Love to dear patient little C.—. Good night, good night.

"'*ESTELLE.*'"

My dear son

I had other duties to perform
but in respect to the
I enabled you to do this soon
to witness a real manifestation
that you have got. Helel
I needed to communicate
and your dear wife wrote to
upon her own card
which she shall in
tell it her own way

Benjamin Franklin

The above is a fac-simile of spirit writing
purporting to be from Benjamin Franklin.
Written in the name of the Medium.
Written with a lead pencil.

Dear Charles I know that you will
as soon as the letter reaches Franklin's hands
you are deserving of all his words of approval.
I would have said you last night. He says we are
and from it brighten the many of our friends look
upon us happy that I had made you so happy. He
thinks he is longer an eye of death and wishing that
we were where this without a thought of the future,
show different with you and Benjamin who has
been a very happy kind in the past than of light when
he was there. I know now that he looked for no good
all the world. He has made his brotherhood even in
this. - Alas! how little variation in our women.
I am for the good things of earth - dear Charles,
I shall write many a blessing in your book - may a joy in
your soul. Good night. Good night, and good night
also to dear letter. Lovingly

Benjamin Franklin

The above is a fac-simile of the card as written
upon by the Spirit of Mr. I's Wife and closely
resembles her natural handwriting. It is written
with a lead pencil.

"Sept. 15, 1861.—Copy of card written on the above date—

"My Son—When the atmosphere is cold, we shall have no difficulties, no obstructions, and the promises which we have made will be strictly fulfilled with many blessings. Of one thing let me warn you. When you sit at home, avoid exertion of any kind, but more particularly warn those who sit with you to avoid *all* and any exertion on their part, lest they cause involuntary movements of the table, and thus mar the beautiful truths which should never be tarnished by thought, word or deed. We can accomplish all without the aid of mortals, and bitter will be the life of those who attempt to deceive, or misuse this truth. Your truth and sincerity are bright gems in your nature. This is why I take pleasure in communicating with you, and this is why I have chosen you to work through. My son, good night.

"BENJ. FRANKLIN."

"Written communications are not tinged by the reflection of another mind. We come to you without a shadow. This is why we are so happy to write our messages.

"BENJ. FRANKLIN."

"September 22nd, 1861.—By accident we were behind time about half an hour, when the following reproof was written on a card, which I send to you.

"My Son—Promptness is requisite always to accomplish great objects. A kingdom has been lost before now, for want of punctuality; hence it is, that we often fail in fulfilling a promise, and are obliged to wait for some future opportunity to carry out our wishes and promises, which we would never fail in were the conditions favourable. Always keep in your mind the importance of the electrical chain which unites us with yourselves. We are very finely linked, and therefore the connection is very easily marred. When I name a meeting for the purpose of coming to you in form, you must endeavour to be here at the very moment, as we lose power by waiting for you 'to gather.' We are always ten minutes before the time, and when I was in the furn, I never kept a party waiting for me—never failed to meet all my engagements. Once, when quite a lad, not being able to find my hat, I walked five miles bareheaded, in order to get a situation in a printing-office. The time is approaching when *all* that we have promised will be fulfilled. My son, you have a better conception of this subject, and more clearly understand it than some who have studied it for years. Be firm and faithful to your faith.

"BENJ. FRANKLIN."

"September 26th, 1861.—After the usual preliminaries, a terrific knock upon the table startled us. This was made by a heavy piece of marble, by chance lying upon the bureau, which was brought across the room by the spirits for the purpose. A

brilliant light now rose, accompanied with rustlings and the electrical rattling and the spirit of my wife stood before us *'enveloped in white and flowers.'* Her face was radiant with spiritual life and beauty and expression. The light was held by an outstretched arm and hand passing across her waist, and displaying dimly the figure to which it belonged. After five or six appearances of my wife, the light rested upon the floor some 10 feet distant from me, then rising, it suddenly darted across the room backwards and forwards, until having gained sufficient power, it flashed brightly upon the wall, and brought into relief the entire figure of a large heavy man, who stood before us. He was rather below the medium height, but broad-shouldered, heavy, and dressed in black, his back towards us, and his face not visible. He appeared thus three times very perfectly, remaining in view each time for about a minute. The moment his entire form was discerned by us, rappings commenced simultaneously in all parts of the room, which continued during the time he was in sight, as if to express delight at the achievement of a new success. On asking if the spirit we saw was that of Dr. Franklin, we were answered in the affirmative by three heavy dull knocks upon the floor, as though made by a heavy foot, which were several times repeated. During this sitting the spirit of my wife approached, tapping me upon the shoulder, smoothing my hair, and caressing me, *while her long tresses as natural as in life dropped over my face, with the peculiar scent of delicate freshly gathered violets.* A new and very curious manifestation now took place, shewing us how the echoes were produced, and there was spelt out: *'Darling, have you not been rewarded?'* The light in producing these echoes or explosions assumed a lily shape, nearly the size of my head, and so brilliant as to light the entire surface of a table and the centre of the room, so that Miss Fox and I could see each other distinctly, as well as various objects in the room. Then bounding up and down from the surface of the table some 12 or 18 inches it struck the table, and descending on my arm, produced the raps or echoes."

"September 27.—The following was written upon a card, in explanation of the manifestations of last evening:—

"My darling—I was so happy to come here to you last night with Dr. Franklin; and on that sweet occasion when I could come in flowers and white robes, with a crown of happiness. I was very happy, and I know that dear Dr. Franklin was overjoyed. He lost his power in lending all his aid to me. Next time you will see his face: the effort last night aided him greatly for the next meeting. Good night, darling. "ESTELLE."

"We wish you to meet to-morrow night, but not for the purpose of seeing us. We will not attempt again to come in

form until we have a cold atmosphere; but it is well to meet often, in order to keep the chain perfect. Great manifestations are in preparation for you. I long to come again in form; it must be on a cold night. "B. F."

"On another evening I wrote a number of questions for Dr. Franklin to answer, which was done categorically in writing, on cards, which I also send to you. I think it only necessary to claim especial attention to the following:—

QUESTIONS FOR DR. FRANKLIN.	ANSWERS.
No. 1.—For a test, I wish you to give me the year of your birth?	No. 1.—I was born in the year 1706.
No. 2.—Also that of your departure?	No. 2.—Departed the earth-life in the year 1790, after a calm struggle for life on the night of April 17th, a little before midnight.*

"The questions were put by me without premeditation, and without being seen by any one; and it is most important that I should add, *neither I nor the medium knew the date of Dr. Franklin's birth or death*, which, on reference afterwards, I was pleased and surprised to find had been correctly given by the spirit.
"L—."

In a former number of the Magazine, I gave the history of the spirit-drawings in my possession obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. French and Mrs. Mapes, which have excited very great interest.

Mrs. Mapes, it will be recollected, had never been instructed, and had no knowledge of drawing, but spiritually influenced, she now produces most perfect specimens of the art in water colours. Of the two drawings which Mrs. Mapes kindly presented to me—one is an iris, and the other is a collection of American autumnal leaves. *Both were commenced and completed in little more than an hour!* It was suggested to me that no artist could copy them in less than two days. I am now told by Mr. Heaphy, an artist of known celebrity, who has examined them with great care, that there is a peculiar stereoscopic effect in one of the drawings which cannot be imitated by any process known to the artists of this country. This testimony is most important and interesting, and confirms, to a certain extent, the spiritual origin which is claimed

* "On the 17th of April, 1790, about 11 o'clock at night, he quietly expired, closing a long and useful life of 84 years and three months."—*Vide Life of Benjamin Franklin.*

for these drawings. The following is Mr. Heapby's note to me on the subject, which I publish with his permission:—

"5, Bulstrode-street, Manchester-square,
October 20th, 1861.

"My dear Sir,—I was greatly interested in the drawings you showed to me as having been executed by, or with the aid of, spirits. You are aware, that while I respect the arguments of the Spiritualists, I am not a Spiritualist myself. I must, however, say that the drawings in question possess many peculiar points, especially one of them representing a number of leaves of plants. This drawing is highly coloured; and, on being looked at through a powerful lens, the surface of the leaves—especially of the red one—possesses a reality of appearance quite stereoscopic. Indeed, I was obliged to pass my finger repeatedly over the surface of the paper to assure myself that the surface was flat. Having been an artist from my childhood, more especially in water colours—as was my father before me—I think that I am pretty well acquainted with all the processes used in painting; but I must candidly confess that I know of no process by which the effect I mention can be produced; and were I to offer any sum of money, however large, to-morrow, for the production of such a work, I should not expect to obtain it. Though, as I said above, I am no Spiritualist, yet, in a matter of a work of art, I can have no objection in stating my honest opinion.

"I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"B. Coleman, Esq."

"THOMAS HEAPBY.

My first introduction to Spiritualism occurred in the early part of 1855. At that period, I resided in the village of Ealing, and within a few doors of the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Rymer, at whose house Mr. Home, the celebrated medium, was then living as one of the family.

As Mr. Rymer and I travelled to town every day by the same conveyance, I was told by him of the wonders then taking place nightly at his house through Mr. Home's mediumship. Being invited to join a circle, I heard, for the first time, the rapping sounds. I held an accordion in my own hand apart from any one, whilst the air I asked for was most beautifully played upon it, and I witnessed a variety of phenomena, that at once satisfied me of a reality of which I had no previous conception. On another occasion, I saw at his house and felt the spirit-hands, and I was present when a large-sized drawing-room table rose gradually and steadily to the ceiling of the room, and descended again to the floor, with no more sound, than if it had been a snow-flake. I know that amongst some hundreds of visitors, who were freely invited during the months Mr. Home resided with Mr. Rymer,

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, and Sir David Brewster, attended more than one *séance*, and were witnesses of some very striking phenomena, and that Mrs. Trollope, the talented authoress, who, as she herself said, made the journey from Florence for no other object, than to see these wonders for herself, was also a visitor. She remained many days in the house with Mr. Home, and had almost hourly proofs of the presence and agency of spirits. After this lady left, she wrote a letter to Mrs. Rymer, in which she said, "My visit has given a pillow to my old age I little dreamt of." I refer to these early reminiscences for the purpose of introducing the name of an American lady, who arrived about that period, and became the guest of the Rymer family. I allude to Mrs. A. E. Newton, of Boston, a quiet, unassuming person of child-like appearance and manners, but gifted, in a remarkable degree, with mediumistic powers of a very high order. She could not induce physical manifestations; but she saw spirits—was impressed by them—impelled to act independently of her own volition, and her organs of speech would at times be controlled by minds foreign to her own. The spirits of friends or relatives of the individuals with whom she was in conversation, would speak through her, whilst she was apparently in her normal condition. She appeared to be an earnest Christian woman, thoroughly versed in the Bible, which she quoted with great readiness, and she talked at all times with an ease and fluency which was surprising, and seemed like inspiration.

To the advantage of having made this highly gifted lady's acquaintance, I owe a great source of happiness. It was her earnest eloquence, that first impressed my mind with the meaning and tendency of what at first appeared to me, whether influenced or not by spirits, to be undignified and objectless manifestations. I soon, however, through her brilliant exemplifications, realized the wisdom of the words of the Apostle Paul, when he says that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." Thus was the blank wall of ignorance and educated prejudices at this time overthrown, and an entirely new vista opened to my refreshed senses. I accepted the fact that these manifestations were effected by spirits, and I thus saved myself from being further bewildered by the futile and contradictory theories of *pseudo* philosophers.

I recollect an incident occurring at that time which conclusively proved Mrs. Newton's mediumship. A Mr. Holmes engaged her one evening in conversation. He was confessedly a materialist, and of course an unbeliever in Spiritualism. He started several propositions, which she combated in language so eloquent, and manner so earnest, and with reasoning so logical, that Mr. Holmes

was speedily driven into a corner, and at length he said, "Well, well, all that you have urged may be true, but it does not convince me, and indeed nothing will, until I have direct evidence from some one whose memory I revere. If, for instance, I could obtain a manifestation from my mother, it would go far to satisfy my doubts." "Why," exclaimed Mrs. Newton, "it is your mother's spirit who has impressed me to speak these truths to you; I see her standing by your side; her name is Betsy, and she is accompanied by the spirit of your child Ellen; they implore you to believe that there is a spirit-world and a life immortal." Mr. Holmes's countenance changed, and he became silent. I asked him if he recognized the names, and he admitted that his mother's name was Betsy, and that he had lost an infant daughter, whose name was Ellen. But the seed in this instance was scattered on "stony ground," as I found, on meeting him some years after, that he was still an unbeliever.

On my arrival at Boston, I at once made a visit to my interesting friend, and was introduced to her husband and children. Mr. Newton I knew, of course by reputation, as one of the best writers and most earnest advocates of the spiritual faith, and by his contributions to various periodicals, and his papers recently published in the *Spiritual Magazine*; he is known to many in this country, and recognized by all, as an excellent Christian man and a profound philosopher. He and his gifted wife were respected members of a Congregational Church, at Boston, from which body they felt compelled to secede, about eight years ago, upon their conversion to a belief in Spiritualism. Since then, they have suffered severe trials for the maintenance of their faith; and I hope those who have received pleasure and advantage from their teachings will join with me in raising the means of presenting to Mr. and Mrs. Newton some substantial testimony to mark our appreciation of the services they have rendered to the cause. Their reasons for seceding from the Congregationalists were given in a letter, which they addressed to the members of the Church; and as this letter will best illustrate the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Newton, and at the same time convey much useful and interesting instruction to my readers, I feel that I cannot do better than to transfer a portion of it to these pages, and in doing so I especially invite the attention of those who admit the facts but insist on the phenomena being of Satanic origin—to the clear and unanswerable position taken up on this head, in their eloquent address, from which I make the following extracts:—*

"Dear Brothers and Sisters,—The undersigned are induced to intrude themselves upon your attention in this extraordinary

* *Ministry of Angels Realized: A Letter to the Edwards Congregational Church, Boston, U.S.* Baillière: London.

manner, in consequence of a series of most extraordinary events and experiences, to which, in the providence of God, they have recently been called, and which, they conceive, lay upon them the burden of an unusual duty.

"Our 'manner of life' from the time when we became connected with you in church relationship, is known to you all,—to some of you it is known for a much longer period,—'that after the most straitest sect of our religion we have lived' Orthodox Congregationalists. When we sought to be received into your fellowship, it was from the sincere desire, as expressed at the time, to render ourselves more useful in the kingdom of Christ, and thus to attain higher degrees of advancement in spiritual life; though we wish not to be understood as claiming any special purity of motive in this respect. When we assented to your creed, it was with sincerity and cordiality, believing it to embrace a very accurate epitome of the Christian faith, according to the light we then had. And we had little expectation, at that time, that any further light would dawn upon us or the world while we should remain in the body.

"But we feel bound to make known to you that it has pleased the Father of Lights, 'from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift,' within the past few months, to shed a new and glorious light upon our pathway, and to open our eyes to clearer and higher perceptions of His truth, His wisdom, and His wonder-working providence. This has been done in a manner most unexpected to us, and, in latter times, most extraordinary; but the revelation has been attended with such convincing and overwhelming proofs, as to leave in our minds, after a most deliberate and searching investigation, no possible question as to its heavenly origin. As we have freely received, we feel bound freely to give; and we cannot be 'disobedient to the heavenly vision,' without rejecting the most positive convictions of truth ever formed in our minds, and resisting the clearest obligations of duty ever felt by our consciences.

"Aware of the sensitiveness usually felt in our denomination respecting any variation from the commonly received standards of faith and holding no truths which we desire to conceal, and none in which you are not equally concerned with ourselves, we have judged it proper, in Christian frankness and confidence, to lay before you a concise and truthful statement of the position in which we now find ourselves, and of the wonderful means through which we have been brought to it. Such a statement we feel to be due to ourselves, in order that we may not be held responsible for views which we no longer entertain; and also due to you, that you may not be considered as endorsing the orthodoxy of our present convictions, should you fail to be convinced of their truth.

We then invite your candid attention to a brief narrative of observation and experience.

"Upwards of two years since we were induced, by the solicitation of an esteemed and intelligent friend, to witness for ourselves certain extraordinary phenomena, which he believed were produced by the agency of disembodied spirits,—alleging that he had received convincing proofs of the presence and ability to communicate of personal friends who had been long in the spirit-world. We complied with the solicitation, from the conviction that it was neither manly nor Christian to refuse to investigate a subject fraught with consequences of such interest and importance to every human being. 'PROVE ALL THINGS; hold fast that which is good,' is a maxim sanctioned equally by common sense and divine authority. There seemed to be nothing absurd or impossible in the supposition that spirits of the departed should manifest themselves, since it was the almost universal sentiment of Christendom, not only that angels are 'ministering spirits' to human beings in the body,—having 'charge over them in all their ways,' and 'encamping round about to deliver them,'—but that our departed friends also, having become 'as the angels,' are among that 'great cloud of witnesses' who encompass us about, watching over us with undiminished love, and endeavouring to lead us upward toward the realms of purity and bliss. That they should *wish* to make us sensible of their presence and love, that we might more fully realize the benefits of their ministration, seemed extremely probable; and that the means of gratifying this wish might be granted them in this latter day, when ADVANCEMENT seems to be the order of God's providence in every department of human interest, appeared by no means impossible.

"The results, however of this investigation, at that time, were (for reasons then not apparent, but which have since been made plain to us) far from satisfactory. Though we witnessed some striking evidences of invisible intelligent agency, there was nothing by which this agency could be positively identified; and the conclusion seemed most in accordance with our previous opinions, that if any agency beyond that of human beings was concerned, it was that of evil and seducing spirits.

"Some months subsequently to this we were led again to attempt the investigation, under circumstances more favourable to arriving at a satisfactory conclusion. At this time public attention was beginning to be turned somewhat extensively to the subject, and many were yielding credence to these marvels, as the precursors or attestations of a new dispensation of Divine truth. We felt that if these things were from the Spirit of Evil, that fact could and ought to be ascertained and exposed; and

that it did not become those who profess to have had their minds enlightened, and their spiritual perceptions quickened to discern between truth and error, between evil and good, to sit by with folded hands, and not attempt to rescue from this new 'snare of the devil' those who were being 'taken captive by him at his will.' It must first, however, be proved to be a snare of the devil, lest, in our efforts at rescue, we should 'be found even to fight against God.' This proof could not be obtained without a candid personal examination, and such we resolved to make, as the only basis of a rational conviction.

"The results of the first interview were of the most surprising, yea, astounding character. An intelligence, claiming to be the spirit of a venerated parent, who had long since passed within the veil, manifested its presence, and addressed to one of us a communication glowing with parental affection, and breathing the very spirit of the upper realm. This was accompanied by the statement of a number of facts pertaining to his earthly life, none of which, we were fully satisfied, could have been known to any person bodily present, except the inquirer, and some of them unknown even to him at that time. Although the investigation had been approached with minds on the alert, and perceptions sharpened, to detect collusion, imposture, deception, or diabolism in any of its forms, no trace of them could be perceived; all was conducted with evident frankness and candour on the part of those concerned; and no solution of the mystery was then arrived at, and no adequate one has since been offered, which does not recognize the agency of invisible intelligent beings. A trumpet-blast from the clouds could scarcely have been more startling to our prejudices and unbelief than was that message from the hidden world. For days it seemed as if a voice from heaven was indeed ringing in our astonished ears, and never were our souls more deeply stirred than by that solemn exhortation to 'lead a life of holiness and sobriety on earth,' that we might receive the 'crown of glory,' and the Divine benediction when we should enter upon the life to come.

"As may be well supposed, the interest awakened by this occurrence was sufficient to lead to a further investigation. But a truth so novel and startling could not be at once received, however demonstrative and convincing the evidence upon which it rested. Nor was it until evidence had accumulated upon evidence, and proof became piled upon proof,—not until manifestations of the most marvellous character had been repeatedly witnessed under a great variety of circumstances, and notwithstanding the application of every conceivable test,—that we could consent to acknowledge even to ourselves a belief in the agency of spiritual beings. That belief, however, in spite of prejudice

and scepticism,—in spite of the general cry of ‘humbug’ and ‘imposture’—in spite of all attempts of ‘scientific men’ to explain the marvels on the basis of materialism (which explanations we found to be in every case wholly inadequate to account for what we witnessed), that belief became at length forced upon our minds by irresistible evidence.

“But the question still pressed upon us, Who were these invisible things; and what their character and designs? They claimed to be the spirits of departed human beings—some of them insisted that they were our relatives and friends who had thrown off the mortal tenement, and arisen to a higher form of life—and they furnished most startling and inexplicable proofs of their identity. They professed to be thus manifesting themselves to our outward senses for the purest and holiest of purposes—to re-awaken long buried affection, and cause the conscious reunion of our hearts with the ‘loved and lost,’ who indeed were not lost, but ever watching around us to dissipate the clouds of fear, and ignorance, and doubt, which hang over the portals of the tomb; to quicken our faith in the realities of the unseen world, and the glories that there await the earnest seeker for truth and goodness; and to proclaim the speedy coming on earth of that glorious promised day, when ‘the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations,’ shall be removed; when ‘death shall be swallowed up in victory,’ and ‘the tears wiped away from all faces.’

“Were they what they claimed to be, or were they deceivers? Were they good spirits, or evil? Or were they both good and evil? Some people were ready to decide at once, that, if spirits, they *must be* evil, and, therefore, wholly to be avoided. But this was a condemnation without a trial. The injunction of the apostle is,—and it was now seen to have an application before unthought of—not to reject them altogether, but to ‘*try* the spirits whether they be of God.’ This certainly implies that some *are* of God, and some not. And surely, if any dependence can be placed upon the representations of the Scriptures on the subject, we are surrounded and watched over by ministers of good as truly as of evil; and why should the former, whose duty it is to have ‘charge over us in all our ways,’ neglect to interfere, and warn us of, and save us from the machinations of the latter? To suppose they were not allowed to do so would be inconsistent with the goodness and promises of God.

“But some will ask, at the outset, Is not all converse with spirits forbidden by the Deity? We reply that we know no evidence of such prohibition, except as regards evil or undeveloped spirits, and with such we have no desire for intercourse. If the prohibitions given through Moses included good as well as evil,

then they were transgressed by Moses himself; for did he not talk with the 'angel at the bush?' And did he not receive the law 'by the ministration of angels,' spending forty days with them in the mount? It was transgressed also by Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and doubtless all the prophets, for do they not describe their interviews with spiritual beings, sometimes terming them 'men,' and again 'angels of the Lord?' It was transgressed also by Christ at the transfiguration, and by the apostles and others in numerous instances. And, lastly, John the Revelator wrote the whole book of the Apocalypse under the direction and inspiration of an 'angel,' who, at the end, announced himself to be his '*fellow-servant, and of his brethren the prophets.*'

"It was thus evidently our duty not to condemn or avoid all indiscriminately, but to distinguish between them. Moreover, the rule by which they were to be tried was given, both by the apostle and by Christ. 'Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.' 'By *their fruits* shall ye know them.' Having thus the tests put into our hands, with the all-sufficient promise, 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth unto all men liberally, and it shall be given you,' why should we refrain from applying them?

"The most favourable opportunities were offered us for making this investigation; and they were carefully and prayerfully improved. For several successive months did we continue to apply to what was transpiring under our notice, through the mediumship of others, the keenest powers of observation, and the highest exercise of moral perception which have been granted us, ever seeking aid and light from Him who has said, 'Ask, and ye shall receive.'

"At length these intelligences from another sphere began to manifest themselves to us in a manner most unlooked for, and diverse from anything we had elsewhere witnessed, in the quietness and seclusion of our own home, and without the intervention of any other person. From small and gentle beginnings they have gone forward, as we were able to bear the increasing light, to give greater and higher and clearer proofs of the reality of their presence, their identity, and their heavenly mission; until, through a period of six or seven months, we have been permitted, as we believe, the almost daily enjoyment of the sweetest and most intimate communion with the spirits of 'just ones made perfect' above.

"We cannot undertake to detail to you in this communication the extraordinary scenes which we have passed through, nor to recite the wonderful messages we have listened to during this period. A volume would be required to present the subject adequately to your minds. Nor will we attempt to describe the mental struggles which it has cost us to overcome the barriers of

prejudice, and yield our hearts to the truths and convictions which have been irresistibly forced upon us. We can mention only the general features of our experience, with the results to which we have been led.

"First, That there are false and wicked spirits seeking in this way to communicate with men, is as fully evident as that there are false and wicked men in this life, and they are to be judged in the same manner, by their words and works. The fact that the human body may be possessed and controlled by evil spirits, is, to us, no longer a fact of history, but of observation; and more than once have we been called upon to 'cast out devils in the name of Christ.' Through the earlier part of our experience, it was a matter of perplexing inquiry how we might be secure from the annoyances and deceptions practised upon us by these ill-disposed intelligences. At length the whole question was solved in a manner so plain that we wondered it should have caused us any difficulty. We were taught that the great law of attraction or affinity holds as universally in the spiritual as in the physical world; that we draw around us spirits like ourselves, those whose motives, feelings, aspirations, are most in affinity with our own, and that if we would attract only the good, the pure, the exalted, we must ourselves be pure-minded, sincere, devout; and the channel of communication must also be pure and elevated."

The charge of a young family, domestic cares and perplexities forced upon them by the straitened circumstances in which they have been kept ever since their reception of the new light, have been unfavourable to the full development and exercise of Mrs. Newton's peculiar faculty; but her husband acknowledges that he owes his success, when writing on spiritual subjects, almost entirely to her inspired suggestions, and her varied experience of psychological and inspirational phenomena have given him rare opportunities for their careful investigation under the best conditions.

I was informed of the circumstances that influenced Mrs. Newton's visit to England at the period I have mentioned, which are curious and interesting. It appears that she was on a visit in a distant part of the country, and one day, while she was ascending, for air and exercise, one of the Alleghany Mountains, entirely alone and no human presence near, the words "You must go to Europe" were spoken to her inner hearing with startling distinctness and force. At that time nothing seemed more improbable than her compliance with this injunction. But soon after, invisible intelligences—sometimes through other mediums, and again directly to herself—began to set forth the desirableness of a visit to the Old World. Various reasons were urged, but prominent among them was the importance of

making known in England the elevated and practical views of the significance of the great movement which was then influencing so large a number of the inhabitants of the Western World, and by her personal mediumship, to effect an immediate *rapprochement* between some of the prominent minds of the two continents.

It was also said that travel would be beneficial to herself in an educational point of view, to fit her more completely for future usefulness. At length, after the lapse of some months, her husband and friends were satisfied of the propriety of her mission, and she trusting, as she has told me, to a protecting Providence, which had already carried her through many scenes of trial, made up her mind to separate herself from her husband and young family, to whom she was most devotedly attached, and to prepare herself with very slender means, to obey and follow her leadings to accomplish what she considered a sacred duty.

That she had been instrumental in impressing many minds with a sense of the deep religious significance of the new unfolding, has been abundantly evidenced by numerous testimonials received from England since her return home. That she was protected in a very marked manner, was amply shown by the fact of her being welcomed on her arrival, though an entire stranger without credentials, by several families, and by them tenderly and affectionately cared for. I may mention, as prominent in these acts of kindness, the names of Mr. and Mrs. Rymer, who in their turn have since been called on to make great sacrifices for the cause of Spiritualism; and Mr. William - Cox, a gentleman who has ever been foremost in disseminating the truth of Spiritualism, with the phenomena of which he has been acquainted for more than five-and-twenty years.

In closing my remarks on Mrs. Newton, I will relate one further proof of her peculiar gifts, as shown in the following touching incident, evincing spirit affection, which recently occurred:—

A gentleman, an entire stranger, having official business with the Bureau of Emigration, with which Mr. Newton is connected, arrived from Hayti. Immediately on hearing of his arrival, Mrs. Newton felt the presence of a spirit, who seemed to take a deep interest in this gentleman. The spirit urged her to make him a gift of flowers. These flowers were meant to be emblematic, and she was shown in vision a peculiar arrangement which it was desired should be made of them. They were, she was told, to consist of a full-blown white rose, with a little red bud beside it; the two were to be placed in a small pasteboard box, between two layers of pure cotton wool, the top layer to be turned down, like the upper sheet of a bed. Though unable to discover the object of all this, the wish was carried out by Mrs. Newton, and the flowers were presented to the gentleman with

a statement of the facts as above related. On receiving the flowers he was much surprised and affected, and he explained that just before leaving Hayti he had lost a tenderly devoted wife, who had died after giving birth to a child, and that mother and infant—the full-blown rose and the little bud—had been consigned to the tomb side by side.

Mr. Freeland, an intelligent, gentlemanly young man, called on me at my hotel, explaining the object of his visit to be, that hearing of my visit to New York, and that I was enquiring into the subject of Spiritualism, he was anxious that I should make the acquaintance of his friend Mr. Andrews. I ought not, he said, to leave the country without seeing Mr. Andrews, and hearing his peculiar views; and he thought I should also be interested with Mrs. Andrews, who is a remarkable trance medium. I accordingly accompanied Mr. Freeland at once, and was introduced to this gentleman and his wife, who reside in a superior house, with all comforts about them. The walls of the room in which we sat were hung with a variety of frames, containing trite aphorisms and moral exhortations. Mr. Andrews, who is a man of education, past the middle age, of grave mien, and evidently a serious and deep thinker, explained to me that he and a few others were engaged in organizing a society, *spiritually* originated, and guided, for the universal regeneration of mankind, which embraced the establishment of a Catholic Church, in the broadest sense of the word. "Of course," he remarked with a smile, "I and my followers are looked upon by the multitude as a band of madmen." The plan of this party proposes a NEW SPIRITUAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE WORLD, called THE PANTARCHY, which includes a NEW CHURCH and a NEW STATE, with, to use his own language, "all other subordinate institutions, educational, informational, &c., which are universal in their scope and nature, and which can be devised and established as subservient to the collective wants of mankind."

The new church called "THE NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH," as described by Mr. Andrews, is "to concern itself especially with the culture of the EMOTIONAL and SENSATIONAL attributes of man, and more especially of these in their higher and universal aspect, known as religion," &c. &c.

From a printed pamphlet, describing the constitution and organic basis of this NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, I extract the following:—

"ARTICLE I.

"CONSTITUENCY OF THE CHURCH.

"The Church is the world. The Church universal can do no less than embrace all mankind. This is in the largest or most

extended meaning of the term. In another sense, the true CATHOLIC CHURCH is an interior organized body, which should be the spiritual mother of the race. The relation between mother and child exists equally, whether the children have so grown as to recognize the mother's face or not; so, in the world, great numbers of men and women have not hitherto known any spiritual mother, nor consciously recognized their need of one. Others, following legitimately the analytical process of the intellect, or the self-assertive instinct of individuality, have been led to deny and abjure all relation to the Church; the truth of their essential and spiritual unity with the race, and hence with the true spiritual Church, is not however affected thereby. These two classes of persons, the uninformed or ignorant and the intelligently infidel, belonging, equally with the most spiritualized or sanctified persons, to the CHURCH UNIVERSAL, should be the especial objects of the labours and care of the more interior body," &c.

In Article VII., entitled "FAITH AND PRACTICE," it is prescribed—

"That unity of the FAITH of the CHURCH is not to be found in the truths apprehended and accepted by any single or individual mind, but in all the truths apprehended and accepted by all minds. Hence the creeds of the Church are not one, but many; different and even opposite faiths, combining, balancing, and harmonizing with each other in the bosom of the greater truth—INFINITE VARIETY in UNITY. As in the constitution of the Church, so in its faith, all truths derived from all sources—or the universe of truth, observational, scientific, institutional, and inspirational—constitute the universal creed of the Church—a creed which is therefore progressively developing in time; but, in a special or interior sense, the creed of the Church is the aggregate of the TRUTH, known or believed, in relation to the highest sphere of thought and feeling, and in relation to the out-working of DIVINE LOVE and WISDOM in beneficent action.

"Every pastor of a Church congregation will rally his flock under that creed, which will best express the aggregate unity of his and their sentiments or religious beliefs; or under no written or formally constituted creed, if that method is more highly approved—the religious unity consisting of love, and of that knowledge of principles which not merely tolerates but accepts and approves of diversity of opinion as necessary and beautiful, resulting from diversity of organization and development."

During my visit, and whilst in conversation with Mr. Andrews, his wife passed into the trance state. Laying her hand on my

breast and her head on my shoulder, she addressed her husband and Mr. Freeland, and gave them a minute description of my character. It will be sufficient for me to say on this head, that her remarks were very flattering. I said, "Her language is glowing; but I am afraid the picture is too highly coloured." Mr. Andrews replied in a very serious tone, "Mr. Coleman, her words have a deep significance with us. We are almost entirely guided by the precepts which fall from her lips, inspirationally influenced as we believe her to be whilst in that state, and we never think of acting contrary to her dictum."

I mention the fact of this visit to Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, to show my friends at home one of the many, and certainly not the least curious phase of American Spiritualism. I make no comment on Mr. Andrews' scheme of universal regeneration, for, indeed, I do not, as I candidly told him, fully comprehend it. My experience, however, teaches me to be humble in my judgments of other men's philosophy, and rather at all times to mistrust my own wisdom, than deride what I do not understand. I recollect the words of that eminently learned and pious prelate, Jeremy Taylor, who said—"Although I be as desirous to know what I should, and what I should not, as any of my brethren, the sons of Adam, yet I find that the more I search, the further I am from being satisfied, and make but few discoveries, save of my own ignorance."

Perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon to which American Spiritualism has given birth is Andrew Jackson Davis, known as the Poughkeepsie Seer. Those who have read the history of his life will know that he was of the humblest parentage, and with scarcely any school education. When he was about 18 years of age, Professor Grimes visited Poughkeepsie, and there delivered a course of lectures on Mesmerism, illustrating the subject by experimenting, as usual, on some members of his audience. The phenomena induced by the lecturer set the villagers at work to try their power of producing the same effects, and young Davis, who was at that time apprenticed to a shoemaker, was one upon whom the experiment was tried by a neighbour, with the most perfect success. He was at once thrown into the mesmeric sleep, and soon became a clairvoyant. His clairvoyance was at first used exclusively for tracing the origin and seat of disease. His diagnosis was considered extremely clear and reliable, and he was instrumental, it appears, in effecting some very wonderful cures. An ignorant youth in his normal condition, he was yet, when placed in a state of trance by his magnetiser, an illuminated and profound philosopher. Like Emanuel Swedenborg, he became

a seer, and had visions, and ultimately he developed into a state designated "THE SUPERIOR CONDITION," which as distinguished from clairvoyance, enabled him not only to see objects, but to analyse and explain them scientifically.

In this "superior condition," he delivered several lectures, showing, as it is said by Professor Lewis, who was one of many persons present on the various occasions when these spontaneous effusions were eloquently poured forth, "a complete mastery of the subject in its various ramifications and relations, and forming in the whole a profound and elaborate discussion of the *Philosophy of the Universe*." These lectures were published, and form a large volume, extending to several hundred pages, and are entitled *Nature's Divine Revelations*, which no doubt many of my readers have seen, as the book has had an unusually large circulation in England as well as in America.

Since that period, Andrew Jackson Davis has become widely known as the author of several books, which have become very popular among a certain class of American Spiritualists, and in the production of which he has been under spiritual influence. He is personally held in the highest respect and regard by all who know him. I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance, and was agreeably surprised to find him bright, active, and solidly intelligent, with nothing of the dreamy mystic about him. His personal appearance is extremely prepossessing, with a massive and most intellectually formed forehead, prominent nose, long black hair and profuse flowing beard. He presents, on the whole, not a trace of plebeian descent. He has established a spiritual paper, entitled *The Herald of Progress*, of which he is the chief editor. He resides in the country, and spends half his day, as he told me, in gardening, and the other half in his study; once a week only he visits his office in the City, where numbers of persons of both sexes call on him, chiefly, as I understood, to consult him and receive medical advice, which he gratuitously prescribes, and which is inspirationally given to him.

His character, as I have said, stands high. Professor Mapes informed me that he made the most rigid inquiries as to Davis's antecedents, and found them exactly as is stated in the preface to *Nature's Divine Revelations*.

I spoke with Mr. Davis about his peculiar gifts. He said the continued exercise of them in no way interfered with his health, as his time was systematically apportioned. His power of complete abstraction is very great. He can walk, he said, through the throng of Broadway, and feel as isolated as if he were in a forest. He was delighted to look on the likenesses of William and Mary Howitt, which I showed him; and it will be a satisfaction to all the friends of this amiable couple to know that their literary

talents and private worth, are as fully understood and appreciated throughout the States of America as they are in Europe.

The *Herald of Progress* throws open its columns to all classes of religionists. The reader will find occasionally from some of its correspondents the utterances of a pure spiritual Christianity; but most frequently its pages are occupied by what the orthodox would properly denounce as rank Infidelity, and of this character are the editorial articles. Davis, indeed, does not acknowledge the divinity of Christ; and it will thus be seen that Spiritualism does not mean any defined doctrine or creed.

One column of the *Herald of Progress* is devoted to "Medical Whisperings," which are answers to correspondents, who ask medical advice from the seer; and it may be interesting to the ordinarily educated physician to hear what Andrew Jackson Davis is spiritually influenced to say on the subject of disease.

"All diseases, he says, are but modifications of one disease—namely, a want of spiritual and physical harmony, or a loss of equilibrium in the atomic motions and temperature of the body; and that individuals are subject to *one* or *more* of these almost innumerable variations from the primary harmony according to progeniture, or acquired predisposition; and that the weakest part of the organization will be the seat of its or their development. All acute and recent diseases are physical disturbances, primarily caused by a positive, or magnetic condition of the atmosphere, which throws the spiritual principle out of its natural equilibrium." And again he says:—

"The mind can, by its own action, cause and cure disease. Even as prominent an organism, as a cancer, can be psychologized into being by the same law. It is very necessary that modern Spiritualists should understand the whole force of this principle. They would be saved from many hasty conclusions respecting 'Evil Spirits' and other trials with which they frequently come into close and painful relations." Andrew Jackson Davis is, indeed, a wonderful phenomenon, a profound philosopher, educated chiefly by those wonderful spiritual experiences to which I have adverted.

Having now exhausted the Notes of my American Journal, I hasten to bring these papers to a close. I have given nearly every incident and fact connected with Spiritualists and Spiritualism which came under my notice during a sojourn of just three weeks in the cities of New York and Boston.

Objections have been taken by friends, some to one, and some to another, of the manifestations recorded in this narrative. It is

not agreeable to our refined ideas of a future life, to think that the spirits of departed persons would come to engage in a game of cards, as spoken of in one instance, or in any of the lower occupations of this world. But I respectfully submit that to be faithful to the task I had undertaken, I was bound to record everything which came to my notice, tending to elucidate the subject of my investigations without stopping to consider whether I offended the religious scruples of one, or destroyed the poetic dreams of another. If the phenomena attested by so many unimpeachable witnesses are *facts*, we want them *all* to lay the foundation of a sound philosophy. It would certainly mislead us, were we to receive only those which accord with our religious bias, or with our individual and peculiar views of the spirit-life.

Let me say, then, in conclusion, that though we have leaders of public opinion amongst us, like the Brewsters, and the Faradays, whose erroneous theories on this subject remain unrevoked, and are still accepted by vast numbers who have not thought upon and thoroughly investigated the question for themselves—yet, in the face of the accumulated mass of facts which lie broadcast throughout society in America, attested there by men and women of the highest intellect and character—and by the more limited, though very marked experiences we have had in this country—it must be acknowledged by every fair and intelligent reasoner, that to deny the occurrence of what are called “spiritual phenomena” is to impeach the veracity of our senses, and deny the value of human testimony in relation to this class of facts. That the study of them may lead to differences of opinion, honestly entertained, I have already admitted; and will only add that in America the most searching and best-qualified investigators, while differing as to the origin of these phenomena, all agree in admitting their reality.

FINIS.