

# 4 SPIRIT-RAPPING

IN

GLASGOW IN 1864.

K

A TRUE NARRATIVE,

BY

ONE OF THOSE PRESENT.

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"I can call spirits from the vasty deep!"

"Why so can I, or so can any man—

But *will they come*, when you do call for them?"

HENRY IV.

"Aye! There's the rub!"

HAMLET.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE facts narrated in the few following pages were written immediately after each *Séance*, and are correct.

For the opinions expressed in the introduction and elsewhere, the various remarks made, and explanations given, the Author is alone responsible. Those of the other gentlemen present at the *Séances*, who may see this pamphlet, and readers in general, must judge for themselves as to their probability or otherwise.

The details of the final *Séance* are, in every particular, unadorned truth. The questions and the written Spirit-answers are in the possession of

THE AUTHOR.



## SPIRIT-RAPPING.

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WHAT is Spirit Rapping? Its claims are lofty—it lifts the veil of Isis—opens the portals of the Tomb—levels that dread barrier before which all men in all ages have hitherto knelt in vain. By it is the seal of silence broken, and the living have converse with the dead. It pries into Eternity; fathoms the secrets of the unknown; all highest reach of Philosophy left far behind—finds the sternest difficulties simple—the unsolved enigmas of the wise easy, even as a child's puzzle.

All this, and much more, it does, not by some transcendent discovery, authoritative revelation of Religion, or voice even as of God's—but by means of that exceedingly commonplace piece of household furniture, a wooden table! Yes! verily! the Spirits of the dead; the souls that in unutterable joy or woe have looked face to face on their Maker, who have solved the great mystery—on whom the inexpressible awfulness of Eternity has passed—return; to tilt tables, to make odd noises, to break china, to deliver equivocal oracles, to wait the call of questionable mediums, to answer trivial inquiries;

and, generally, to do all these things in so purposeless, uncertain and blundering a manner, that even the stoutest believers must often doubt and stumble.

For ourselves, we refuse to credit this. *We believe that the dead are holy and may NOT be meddled with.* Or, if in truth, they *may* be summoned from that solemn other world, apprehend that their coming would be as that of Samuel's when he spake, "why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" and Saul "bowed himself unto the ground and was sore afraid."

Spirit Rapping then, independently of the teachings of Religion and Philosophy, assumes to settle—

1st, That men live after death.

2nd, That the dead do not rest until a general resurrection, but at once enter on a Spirit life.

3rd, That remaining at large, being cognisant of what is going on in this world, and having full possession of their active powers, they can, of their own free will, or at the bidding of others, return to earth—be their abode heaven or hell.

4th, That they in a manner attain to omniscience, notwithstanding which they are constantly in error; and, in their communications with the living, make the most melancholy exhibitions of themselves.

5th, That the Spirits manifest themselves physically by various noises, such as rappings, creakings, sounding of footfalls, ringing of bells, hammering, sawing, &c., have a general disposition to smash crockery,

and in an especial manner take possession of the tables which they rap on, tilt, turn; and, it is said, even suspend in the air. Now these manifestations, though ridiculous, and to our minds utterly beneath the dignity of any, the least respectable of Spirits, are, *if true*, not the less extremely important—as they introduce us to *effect* without *cause*, unless we believe that the invisible Spirits move the tables; and this again involves the assumption that disembodied Spirit, otherwise than through *matter*, can physically affect matter. It is evident that the tables could be easily moved by the feet, knees or hands of the Mediums, and even involuntarily (this Faraday has proved) by the hands of the performing circle. It may even be that the hands, after long pressure on the table, acquire some electric or yet unknown power capable of causing motion; and before we resort to Spirits, we would go the length of assuming that the circle of performers might charge the table, like an electric receiver, with, say, “animal magnetism;” or even, if driven to extremity, with a positive *brain force*, giving *power of volition* to the table.

Until all these modes of movement, down even to the last preposterous one, are eliminated, we are *not justified* in presuming supernatural interference. At all events, effect without cause is impossible, at least impossible to be conceived by finite minds.

We now proceed to details of the various *Séances*

held in 9 West Regent Street, Glasgow, under the surveillance of some sixteen gentlemen, who, failing to procure the "Marshall Mediums," had engaged from London a Mr. C——kl——n, warranted by the aforesaid Mediums to be even more highly favored in Spiritual matters than themselves—a Medium of thirteen years' standing—an intimate of Mr. Home's, and a powerful contributor to the spiritual press.

1st *Séance*. Twelve present. Medium, seized by the *afflatus*, wrote a communication purporting to be from his guardian Spirit, (George Fox, the Quaker), to the effect that "he, the Medium, was not in a favorable physical condition for manifestations that evening, and must not perform."

Medium did not, however, object to our trying for ourselves, which we did, fruitlessly, for about an hour, (don't laugh, please!) entering into conversation with him from time to time, and hearing some very marvellous stories, of which we only recollect that he, the Medium, "had been carried through the air, seventy-five feet in a straight line, and then dropped undamaged;" also, "that recently in Washington, whilst senators and soldiers, secretaries and under secretaries were waiting, dozens deep, for audience with Abe Lincoln," no sooner did that great man hear the name of the still greater C——kl——n, than at once, &c., &c. Medium relating how he had a two hours' "Spiritual con-



versation with the President, and gave him much important information," which does not seem as yet to have borne any fruit.

Now, as regards the Medium's unfavorable *physical* condition, a sceptic would object that it was an unfavorable *mental* one. That, before commencing operations, he, the Medium, wished some opportunity of taking *mental stock* of the company; at least, we twice caught his eye fixed on ourselves, and noticed others undergoing a like scrutiny.

The communication was also written backwards (so that we had to read it by the reflection of a mirror), for what reason we know not, unless to add some affectation of mystery, and to have *more the appearance* of coming from the Guardian Spirit than from the Medium. It is by no means difficult to learn to write backwards, whilst it has this advantage for a Medium, that it exercises him in *reading the questions* put, which he will generally see reversed, if allowed to see them at all, when in process of writing by his questioners.

2nd *Séance*. After slight tilting of table, Medium requested one of the party to write three relationships on three separate slips of paper, such as:—

1	2	3
Father.	Mother.	Sister.

and to fold them one by one, and put them in centre of table. Medium then, with a violent trembling

and agitation of the hand, with the help of a pencil put one of the three aside.

He then requested the three names of the three relationships, thus:—

1	2	3
John.	Mary.	Jane.

to be treated in same manner, he also putting one of the three aside.

The same manipulation takes place with the three ages:—

1	2	3
60	55	20

and when the three papers put aside by the Medium, containing respectively a relationship, a name, and an age are examined, they allude, or ought to allude, to the same party.

Now it requires no Spirits, and very little conjuring, to do this exceedingly simple trick. The questioner does not shake the papers together, (at least did not do so in this instance), and in all *probability* has written all the particulars of say "Father," on *the first of each of three series of slips*, thus:—

1	1	1
Father.	John.	60

In this case, Medium having picked up first of first series, will also take first of the two remaining series, and is of course correct.

The questioner may, however, seek to puzzle the Medium, and write papers in this arrangement:—

1	2	3	3	2	1
Father.	Mother.	Sister.	Jane.	Mary.	John.

  

3	2	1
20	55	60

If, now, Medium takes first or third of each series, he is right in two and wrong in one. Should he, however, take second of each series he is still correct in all three; and, were we a Medium, we should generally fix on second of each series, as being least likely to be disarranged. At the worst, if each series of three slips is shaken up and disarranged in every possible way, the chances are in favor of their being right in two out of three of the particulars; and, in both cases tried at this Séance, the Medium was only right in two out of three.

By this process Mr. Z., being informed that his sister was present, was requested to ask a question. Mr. Z., without shading his hand or hiding motion of pencil, wrote, "Are you happy?" Two of the gentlemen near him objected "that this question was too easy," "too usually put as a first question;" and, moreover, that it was quite possible for the Medium, (who sat opposite), from the motion of hand and pencil, to make an easy guess at what was written. Another question was therefore substituted, hand and pencil being carefully concealed from the Medium. The question was, "Is Spirit Rapping untrue?"

After considerable hesitation, Spirit seized the Medium, and he wrote backwards a sheetful of paper, the contents being an indignant epistle from Mr. Z.'s Spirit sister, to the effect that she, his sister, "*would not* answer the second question, but *the first*; that she had *inspired* him to ask that first question, and was *astonished* that her brother should consider any other question *more important* than one concerning her happiness, and ending, 'I am happy.'" Now, this was certainly clever; but although Mr. Z., after so merited a scolding, refused to proceed further, it was a cleverness not calculated to convince a sceptic. It was evident the performer had taken advantage of his knowledge of the first question to conceal his ignorance of the second, and had further seized the opportunity of making an impression, by introducing "the scolding sister." It is also to be observed that "the scolding sister" assumes, though she will not answer it, that she *knows* the second question, stating the first to be *more important*. Now it was *not* so, as the answer to the second question involved the possibility of there being any *answer at all* given to the first.

After this, several questions were written by Dr. Y. and other parties, so that Medium could see nothing, and in *no* case was any correct answer given. Medium now abruptly said, "Let us try some physical manifestations;" but nothing whatever took place, the table being a large and heavy one.

3rd Séance. On entering, we were informed that

decided tilting had taken place, and were requested aloud to watch the Medium. The table had been changed, and was now a light somewhat rickety piece of goods on four legs, having projecting flaps supported by brackets. (See plate 1.) The Medium sat towards corner marked with  $\frac{1}{x}$ , his legs immediately under the brackets. The table had been tilted *from* the Medium. Watched the Medium attentively, sitting on his right hand at a little distance from table, so that we could observe his hands and legs perfectly. Noticed a strong muscular movement of outer fleshy part of right hand, which rested a little on side of table at  $\frac{2}{x}$ , tending slightly to move the table round. Called Medium's attention to this, and no further motion took place with hands.

Now watched the legs for some time, nothing taking place. Medium complained, and requested us to join the circle. We did so, but still watched; and, observing inclination on the part of the table to rise, suddenly looked under and found Medium's legs crossed, and knee of crossed leg resting against the bracket. Protested against what we saw; and, bringing on a dispute, were deposed from office of watcher.

The table now showing considerable liveliness, Dr. X. sat down under it, at once stopping the manifestations. After some slight pause, the Medium got impatient and requested Dr. X. to rise. Dr. X. (feeling it necessary not to exhibit distrust) protested his "*entire confidence*" in the Medium's honesty,

but at same time declared that he could have no faith unless he remained under the table. It was, however, soon evident that if *any scepticism* was annoying, "*entire confidence under the table*" was most of all *peculiarly* disagreeable to the Spirits.

The Medium declared himself quite upset, persisting "that the Séance could have no results," "that the Spirits required faith," "that certain conditions must be observed, &c., &c.;" and finally declined to proceed any further that evening.

Here, it must be remarked, that when the Spirits require faith, and at the same time, insist upon conditions which make it *impossible* to have that faith, the Spirits are unreasonable, demanding what they themselves would not have granted in their lifetime; further, when the *principal condition* which is required, seems to be "do not watch the Medium," it is, to say the least, unfortunate.

The only written manifestation this evening was the Medium writing a Spirit letter to Mr. L. Now, Mr. L. having had that forenoon a private Séance, acknowledges having left in Medium's possession three slips containing the names of two deceased brothers, and also of his mother. One of these brothers had been drowned. Mr. L. cannot, however, recollect whether he did or did not mention this fact to the Medium. On the assumption that he had not mentioned it—Mr. L. having taken considerable interest in the Séances—it is quite possible that the Medium may have made some enquiries, and

gathered some, more or less, correct information concerning Mr. L. and his family.

The letter (of which we give a fac-simile in frontispiece), purported to be from the drowned brother, and stated—

“It is pleasant to die, I am here with mother and brother, am as alive as ever I was on earth, &c. ;” and, after entering into usual statement that death by drowning was rather agreeable than otherwise, was finally signed “Allen.” Now, Allan was the name of one of the two deceased brothers, but “Allan” was *not* the name of drowned brother. We must, therefore, suppose that the one deceased brother had not only forgotten his own name, but had appropriated that of his other deceased brother; so *crucial a mistake* as this, unless we are to consider it only an extreme instance of the Christian virtue of “having all things in common,” evidently stamped the whole letter a forgery.

We must here guard ourselves against the suspicion of prejudice. In common with the other gentlemen, our object was to arrive at the truth. We had heard much, and read more; were not unwilling to believe, but had never had any personal contact with Mediums. It was only when, by this personal contact, the absurd discrepancy between the means and the end first dawned upon us, and the charlatanism of the Medium became ever more and more apparent, that we settled down into decided hostility. We now proceed to

4th Séance. Six present. Only Medium's hands on the table, which displayed considerable tilting; the tilting always in *one* direction *from the Medium*.

Medium sat as in Plate 2.

The extreme lower edge of hands at junction with wrist resting on edge of table, hands not quite flat, but slightly arched; elbows slightly depressed and coat cuffs always maintaining a curious nearness to the hands, so that it would have been difficult to detect any firm matter, such as a steel rod slipped under the table; even the cuffs themselves, if lined with metal and attached to elbow or shoulder, if pressed against the edge of the table, would tilt it. Do not, however, consider any such complications necessary, the hands alone being quite sufficient, the extreme lower edge of hands *not resting* with remainder of hands on top of table, but on its side (of one inch in depth). It is manifest that can Medium preserve the appearance of his hands lying flat, and at same time press with slight upward motion on edge of table, table will then tilt *from* him.

Tried this on Medium's table, but could not do it without slightly raising the fingers. Tried at home on a still lighter table, and succeeded; and think, with some little practice, could do it easily on any table of description used by Medium.

Watched Medium's hands narrowly, and *never* in any instance saw the tilting *from* Medium take place, except when hands exactly in position described. Medium at this Séance made no use of his legs, and



he now began his performances by Spiritual selection of papers having relationships, names, &c., of which we have described the "Modus operandi" in 2nd Séance. He began with ourselves, and although table uncommonly violent, and Medium's nervous agitation extreme, leading us to expect something more than usual—having taken care to write the slips in no regular order—result an entire failure.

Medium then tried Mr. W., with curious result of all, of five papers being different (whilst they ought all to have agreed). This, on principle of extremes meet, might be considered almost a success.

Dr. X. now sat down and gave—1st, Relationships; 2nd, Names; 3rd, Ages; 4th, Causes of Death; 5th, Where died; and, in the easiest manner to himself, wrote them so that the various particulars of first party would be written on the first of each of the five separate series of slips, and all of second on second, and so on. Medium had taken first of first series, first of second, and so on, but blundered at fifth, consequently four particulars right and only one wrong. Medium seemed to consider this very fair Spirit work, to which we object. That when Medium asserts that he does not *himself choose*, but is simply the material agent of unerring Spirits, gifted with clairvoyance, supernatural power, &c. &c., the selection ought to be entirely correct, and this not only in *all particulars of any one case*, but in *all particulars of all similar cases*, otherwise either there are no Spirits in the case, or the Medium is no Medium.

Dr. X. was now considered in communication with his father, and wrote a question, and was much perplexed by the answer, stating it to be correct, and that it also contained a colloquial expression of his father's, of which colloquialism it was impossible that Medium could have had any knowledge. The answer was, "I have, my son." The expression, "My son," Dr. X. afterwards told us was usual with his father, who would say, "Yes, my son," "No, my son," "I will, my son," or, as in this case, "I have, my son." Now it must be confessed as *the first words of first communication* from presumed Spirit of his father to Dr. X., that these words should be the exact phrase customary to that father, was sufficiently startling.

Dr. X. was questioned afterwards if any biography published of his Father, or if any writings could have been seen by Medium, from which he could have appropriated the phrase; but no solution could be arrived at, and matters looked decidedly Spiritual.

We mention this case particularly, as analogous cases which are unsolved, if *all particulars known* might, as this case in point eventually was, be found equally easy of solution.

That solution was very simple. Whilst debating over it, Mr. O. joined, and at once said I had exactly same answer to question I put to my Father, "I have, my Son." Therefore the "My Son," was simply habitually used by the Medium as an *intensive*. "I have, my Son," being more impressive than "I have," alone.

The Spirits then wrote a communication stating that they wished each of us to have a separate Séance with Medium, and arrangements were made to that effect.

Separate Séances. 1st. Mr. O. reports many of the answers correct, or presumably so, and that finally having asked, "Have you seen —, and is he happy?" Medium became fearfully excited, went into a trance, and giving name (which Mr. O. does not know how Medium came to knowledge of), spoke, "He is happy; but that a barrier existed that day preventing further communication, and that Mr. O. must persevere, and soon the flood-gates of full knowledge would be opened to him." Mr. O. somewhat impressed by Séance.

2nd. Dr. X. reports answers, "Some few passable, most very far wrong." During devination by names, &c., noticed Medium spread out three of the slips on his knee and read them; also noticed distinct movements of hands, legs and feet. Séance unsatisfactory.

3rd. Our own. Séance commenced with bitter complaint on part of Medium that his landlady wanted to charge extra for coal and candle; referred him to Mr. K. We then said our friend Andrew was to communicate with us to-day (having received the night before a Spirit letter to that effect). Medium replied, begin as usual with names, &c. Wrote three relationships and three names—first guess wrong.

Wrote others—this time correct, the two slips chosen being—Sister and Jessie.

Spirit then seized Medium, and he wrote, "Dear Brother, your friend Andrew and myself are present; you must wait till Thursday, at *five o'clock*, when we will freely converse with you. I am, JESSIE."

Remark.—Five o'clock has always been the hour we have given as most convenient to us, and it was *at least considerate* of the Spirits to make their time to suit ours.

Medium now asked, "Is Jessie a deceased sister?" Replied "Yes;" and Medium at once sprung up, said, "I am going into a trance," seized our hand, drew us to a sofa, shut his eyes, and in name of deceased sister discharged at us a sermon of five minutes length, exceedingly profane, and meaning nothing; but ending, "I will now give you a sign that I am indeed your sister Jessie." At this we pricked up our ears; but if we may be allowed the expression, as rapidly dropped them, on finding the sign to be, that out of four papers on floor Medium would guide our hand first to one containing "Jessie," and next to "Andrew," which he did.

1st Remark. These four papers were four of first set of six which Medium had pulled towards him, whilst we were writing second set (first set having failed).

2nd Remark. Our sister died before she was ten, and was the companion of our early boyhood, and could have no knowledge of, or sympathy with

"Andrew," the friend of a few years of our mature manhood. Also, the wording of trance was that of a quite grown woman, and sounded curiously false to one who only recollected his sister as an innocent child.

The Séance was now happily over, and we gave Medium a gratuity of 10/, which generosity at once produced an important sympathetic revolution of Spiritual feeling on the part of Medium towards us, as will be related in next Séance.

4th. Private Séance. We understand that Mr. W. has sent two dozen ale to Medium, so presume he has had favourable news of his friends and relations. Have since seen Mr. W., who says "nearly every guess wrong," and that "pity sent the ale, and not belief."

We pass over 5th Public Séance, it being very short, and an entire failure, and proceed with details of 6th, having pleasure in being at length able to announce an astounding success! table triumphant! and *much laughter!* For it is curious that the more violently the Spirits manifest themselves, the less are we disposed to solemnity, and ever the more strongly experience a comic sense of Spiritual absurdity. The hilarity may be in part owing to the Spirits being *always happy*, or in *very bad* cases, *sufficiently comfortable*, which, though satisfactory, is, on Calvinistic

data, impossible; and even to believers in any broadest of broad churches, somewhat too latitudinarian.

At this Séance, ten present, sitting in close circle round the table (no outsiders), and Medium's legs were left entirely to his own sense of honour.

After preliminary creaking, said by Medium to be the Spirits charging table with electric or other force, table commenced moving, turning, tilting, heaving, jerking, etc., and finally became unmanageable, stood up on two of its legs, deluging us with a shower of papers, and to repeated requests that it would rise up bodily, performed a violent spring, complicated with a twist round—something like a buck-jumping horse—highly creditable either to the Spirits or the Medium; all this being accompanied by a sharp fire of written interrogatories from Mr. O. (who was in Spiritual communication), answered by an equally brisk cannonade of raps on the floor, from legs of table. Three raps being “yes;” one, “no.”

Now, in reference to answers of this description, chances to begin with are equal; but, in general, the questions will agree best with an affirmative answer. One does not ask, Is my Father, Brother, &c., *unhappy*? Is my friend so and so in hell? but are so and so happy? so and so in heaven? The Medium, therefore, as a general rule, will reply “yes” to first questions. There is also a large class of questions which admit of either answer, as for instance, “Will there be a European war?” answered, “yes;” “Will the South gain its independence?”

answered, "no." Still the Medium ought *not* to be always correct, neither is he. For instance, Mr. O's Spirit friend, after writing that "He was in heaven, and happy as it was possible to be"—rapped out "yes," to the question "Do you wish to return to earth?" and, therefore, could not be as happy in heaven as it was possible to be.

One singular answer given. Mr. O. wrote "will ship Vestalinden, forty days out from —, arrive?" Medium this time wrote answer—"Spirits will reply in five minutes." On expiry of time—"Will be in Channel to-night." Was then asked—"Do you know how many here present?" Answered—"By the 1st of May." An enigmatical reply; but easily solved by supposing that the Medium having got "ship into the Channel," and noticing some part of of "Do you know," had calculated the next question to be "Do you know when it will get into port?" And considered (this being 20th April) by the 1st of May to leave him a very safe margin.

As regards two first answers, should they even turn out correct, though it might confirm believers, as any irrefragable proof of the truth of Spirit Rapping, they *are worthless*. As, if not at bottom of the sea, a vessel long over-due and anxiously expected home, might happen—without *any very extraordinary coincidence*—to be in some part of Channel on night in question.

As regards violent physical manifestations, the table was surrounded by the circle, and the Medium

was not watched, it being from the number at table difficult to do so; and, moreover, to have so done would certainly have stopped an amusing performance.

Medium, at this Séance, changed his position; first sitting at X, marked three (plate 1), having complete command of the interior of two of the legs, and also by slightly raising his knees to the drawer, of the bottom of table. He sat well under, and being on this occasion unwatched, could of course (with thirteen years' practice) perform some puzzling motions. When table tilted up, so as nearly to fall over, he sat in his usual position, and we think under 4th Séance we have shown that it would not be difficult to do what was done.

Though not watched at this Séance, Dr. X. did *once* look sharply under the table, and saw knees distinctly lowering themselves, and feet stretching themselves downwards. Dr. X. also remarked, that all the more violent manifestations occurred when circle's attention was distracted by some singular question or answer. Séance, with ever-increasing hilarity, lasted till  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 9, by which time Medium, thoroughly exhausted, (and no wonder), wrote Spirit message of dismissal for the evening.

7th (and we believe) final Séance. *Catastrophe, and utter rout of the Spirits.*

Having remarked that, notwithstanding many attempts, we had not yet had an opportunity of putting any question to Spirits, received, as we



expected, (our 10s. of previous day having, as we have said, created an important sympathetic Spiritual revolution), a communication, purporting to be from our father, warranting us in trying divination by names, &c. Tried this half-a-dozen times, with only three relationships and three names, and though we honestly did our best to help Medium, his awkwardness (if not intentional) in selecting wrong names was almost provoking. Finally, got father and correct name chosen.

Table tilting considerably, to intimate it was now at length "all serene."

Purposely displayed considerable nervousness; muttered something about its being a solemn thing to summon the Spirit of a Father—and so indeed it would be to any one believing that he was really doing so—and, having at Medium's request, seated ourselves opposite to him, wrote *our first question*.

Now, we had long before come to the conclusion that Medium answered principally by his skill in reading, reversed, some part of question, or failing to do this, by watching movements of hand or of head of pencil (which is a long one); and, therefore, allowing him to have some idea of the "Are you," and an excellent glimpse of the motions for h and y, wrote

"Are you "*hungry*?"

Now, the *first question usually put* by any impressed party being almost invariably, "Are you happy?"

the great similarity of "Are you hungry?" would at once guide Medium to his answer. We were therefore not surprised to receive in reply a boldly written "I AM." Did not read question or answer but put them solemnly aside together; and, allowing same opportunities to the Medium, wrote very seriously our second question.

"Have you seen my mother, and is she hungry?" eliciting an immediate

"I have, and she is."

Put these two also solemnly aside, and wrote,

"Are all then hungry in heaven?"

Answer—"Yes."

Then allowing the "is" (which in questions relating to heavenly matters, generally requires an affirmative answer) to be seen, but carefully concealing all the rest, wrote,

*"Is the medium a gross humbug?"*

To this question the table rapped out an impatient "yes," before we had got any further than the fatal "is." To our objection, "You cannot know our unwritten question," Medium replied almost scornfully, "The spirits read your intention."

For mark, unlucky man! he was triumphing. Notwithstanding our extra 10s. he owed us a grudge. We had not concealed our scepticism so well as others had done; and now seeing us, as he believed,

walking blindly as the meekest of neophytes into the usual trap, he scarce cared to hide his contempt for so easy and possibly unexpected a victory.

Alas, poor medium! not *this time* was he the *trapper* but the *trapped*, and we were pitiless. Not yet content, we declared the last question to be a most important one, demanded further confirmation from the Spirits, and received again another, and a still more emphatic "YES."

Enough, we dropped our nervousness; took up the three first questions and answers, and read out aloud, how Father and Mother and everybody else in heaven were all alike "Hungry." At 4th, stopped, telling Medium it referred unpleasantly to himself, but he said "Read," and every one said "Read," and we *did* read, and this time the tables were turned indeed, and laughter was inextinguishable.

For, in truth, the dilemma was unexceptionably delicious. If Spirits were *truly* present, they had—in the most emphatic manner by an answer, and a confirmation of that answer—pronounced Medium "*a gross humbug*;" and if *no* Spirits were present, Medium was *equally* "*a gross humbug*."

And, now, if any consider that we were cruel to a very poor and unhappy-looking grey-haired man, we *may* own to a little remorse, for in truth his eyes were ever melancholy exceedingly. But we cannot forget that, holding our unwilling hand, this charlatan, in a mock trance, with mock solemnity,

in the name of our innocent and long since dead Sister, inflicted on us a mock sermon, in which amidst much other profanation of all things holy, he made that Sister speak,—“Dear Brother, I have BIN commanded from on high, (aye! even by the Deity), to tell thee, &c., &c.”

Surely such a profession as this is a perilous one! If true, it deals in *sacrilege*; if false, in *blasphemy*.

We have stood by the dying beds of those nearest and dearest to us, and feel that death is a solemn and a sacred thing, and that those who thus miserably pretend to tamper with its mystery, have no claim on our forbearance, nor plea to urge for any man's mercy.

Again, should it be said, “Why trouble yourself with so manifest an imposture?” We reply, thousands believe, and tens of thousands know not what to think of it. And granted that this man is a sorry trickster, (though it took long patience to convict him), we have strong suspicion that his more famous brethren differ from him but in degree; that, tracked with a like patience, and met with, of course, a subtilty proportionate to their own, their inflated pretensions would collapse, even as this man's did, and vanish amidst a like laughter.

FINIS.

