

THE

# WESTERN STAR.

A Magazine

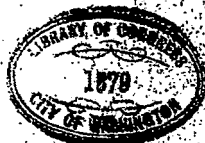
DEVOTED TO A RECORD OF THE FACTS, PHILOSOPHY, AND  
HISTORY OF THE COMMUNION BETWEEN

SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH.

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BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY THE PROPRIETORS,

25 BROMFIELD STREET.

Price \$4 a Year. Single Numbers 35 Cents.

# THE WESTERN STAR.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY,

COMMENCING JULY 1, 1872.

## PROSPECTUS.

THE principal features aimed at in this undertaking are:—

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

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

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OF  
MODERN AMERICAN  
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A TWENTY YEARS' RECORD

OF THE

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BY

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THE  
WESTERN STAR.

VOL. I.—DECEMBER, 1872.—NO. 6.



PREFACE TO PROFESSOR DENTON'S SHAKESPEARE  
SERMON.

*Delivered at Music Hall, Boston, phonographically reported for the  
"Banner of Light," and revised and corrected for THE WESTERN  
STAR by Professor Denton.*

As our opportunities for printing specimens of the oratory and literature presented on the Spiritual rostrum must of necessity be few and far between, and, in a publication of the character aimed at in this magazine, essays of any considerable length could not be too frequently introduced, we have sought earnestly to find such a representative discourse as would instruct the readers of the present day, whilst it might help to hand down to posterity a fair sample of the nineteenth century's Spiritual rostrum eloquence.

Amongst the many admirable speakers who furnish this kind of daily bread for the soul, none ranks more deservedly high, or is held in more general esteem, than William Denton. Amongst all the noble things that William Denton has said and written, nothing finer than the present address has ever fallen from his lips or pen. When it is added, moreover, that the publishers of this work have enjoyed the rare advantage of his personal revision for an extemporized report, their objects in its presenta-

tion will, we trust, be understood and appreciated. — Ed.  
WESTERN STAR.

A SERMON FROM SHAKESPEARE'S TEXT,

"TONGUES IN TREES, BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS, SERMONS IN STONES, AND GOOD IN EVERYTHING." GIVEN IN MUSIC HALL, BOSTON.

BY WILLIAM DENTON.

My text will be found in the play of "As You Like It," Act II., Scene 1.

"And this our life, exempt from public-haunt,  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

Shakespeare was a mental Argus, whose hundred eyes nothing could escape. Men see by their brains still more than they do by their eyes, and his were brains so developed that they enabled his eyes to see what mortal had never beheld before. He was a walking polyglot, with as many tongues as eyes; what his eyes beheld, his tongues had the ability to speak — ability how rare! He peered through the palace walls and beheld the secret deeds of kings, and there was no dungeon so dark but his eye beheld the prisoner. He saw, too, the thought of each; he heard their aspirations or their uttered fancies, and embodied them in glowing language that speaks to every heart. In him the silent trees found utterance, the hubbling brooks discoursed in rational speech, and the very stones cried out with eloquent tongue.

Nature, the ready helper of genius, bowed to him, and opened wide the door of her domain for his observance and appropriation. She whispered her choicest secrets into his ear, and found him a worthy listener, a true man, who proclaimed them aloud for the benefit of the world.

I can fancy William Shakespeare, after rambling by the

banks of the flowing Avon, and watching the pellucid stream flow over its pebbly bottom, and the trees bending lovingly over it, returning to write, "And this our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." Let us this afternoon hear these tongued trees, read the books that are in the running brooks, hear the sermons that the stones dispense, and find and appropriate the good that dwells in everything.

It is autumn. We lie upon the velvet sward, and watch the squirrels skip. Grand old trees! lordly possessors of the soil, how I love you! You lift your myriad hands to heaven and wave your tinted banners in your joy, as if a wintry wind could never blow. Generations of leaves have flourished, dropped, and decayed around you, but there you stand, renewing your beauty from year to year. You have put down your radiating roots deep into the soil; have sucked up by a million mouths the nourishment needed for your growth, and transformed the gross, dark mould into the regal garments you wear; and though the storm has howled many a time around you, you have only knit your hearts the firmer, and soared daily nearer and nearer to heaven. Beautiful trees! eloquent trees! we listen to your tongues, and we learn your lessons. So stands the true man; rooted in the earth, watered by its springs, fed by its soil, but using these only as a means to climb into the spiritual realm above him; shedding old opinions, false notions, barbarous creeds, as a tree sheds its leaves; but his firm heart grows but the firmer in the right, his aims the purer; new and true opinions take the place of the old, and he climbs year by year nearer and nearer to perfect manhood.

Down drop the acorns around us. What magical globes are these! The Chinese carve, with admirable skill, half a dozen ivory globes, one within the other, but what are

they to this forest-containing acorn? Folded within this shell is that life which makes the future tree, its leaves, its blossoms, its fruit, and the untold millions of its descendants; an artist lies sleeping here that may beautify a thousand worlds that are yet to be. So the truth spoken or written is a seed endowed with perpetual life, and the power to educe new truths and bless the world forever. Error is a stake driven into the ground; every drop that falls tends to rot it, every wind to blow it down. All nature conspires against it, and its destruction is certain.

How these trees struggle upward for the light! How they "shoulder each other for the sun's smile!" Why are these crowded trees so tall, so straight, and their trunks so small? Everything is sacrificed for light. The last words of the dying Goethe are their motto, "Light, more light!" Listen to that tongue, my brother, and learn. Let thy motto be, Up to the sunlight! What are riches, broad lands, magnificent houses, honor, fame, when they go with an ignorant, undeveloped soul? Men squat and spread like toad-stools under the dripping trees in the twilight, instead of soaring like pines to live in the sun's continual smile.

See on these trees the effect of surrounding conditions. Mark the one that has had light on every side; how symmetrical, how beautiful is that tree! It is as the poet says, "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." But mark that tree shaded on every side but one; uneven, warped, lopsided; toward the light it grew, toward the shade it refused to grow, and it would rather grow thus than not at all. Far from it is the beauty and grace that go with the proper conditions for development. Here is an eloquent tongue. Tupper says, "Scratch the rind of the sapling, and the knotted oak will tell of it for centuries to come." There is a distorted ash, whose ugliness makes the raven croak as it flies over it. The hoof of a flying deer tram-



pled it into the earth when it was a tender sapling, and it will bear the brand of it while life lasts. That criminal you clutch by the throat, policeman, and strike with your billy, he too was trampled upon in his infancy, nor is the hoof of society off him yet. Lift him up, give him a chance; room for him! air for him! sunshine for him! So much is assured; in the great hereafter he shall have the chance for development that he never had here. This crabbed old woman, gnarled as a knotty oak, slanderer, liar, thief; she, too, came to be so by causes. Once she was a smiling, prattling baby, the joy of her mother's heart, dearer to her than an angel from paradise. She grew, she was tempted, fell, was trampled under the feet of the scrambling crowd of onrushing humanity. Charity for her! light for her! heaven for her, too, where all wrongs are at last to be righted, and the crooked made straight!

There is another tongue in these trees, that discourses patience. The slower the growth, the firmer the tree, and the more enduring the wood. "See me grow!" said the squash to the oak; "I shall cover a rod while your feeble head is rising a single inch." So it was: the squash covered the ground for many a yard, while the oak seemed an idler; but there stood the oak in its majesty, when hundreds of generations of the squash had perished. The tree grows by steady, persistent effort. So can you. Do not hurry, do not idle; but steadily mount, and success, the highest success, is yours. Go into the woods now; how silent they are! put your ear to the trunks of the trees; can you hear anything? Not a whisper, they are still as death; yet engines are pumping and sap is rushing through a million pipes to accomplish a most important work. The mandate has gone forth, every tree must be clad in velvet green to greet the dawning spring, and there is but a month in which

to do it. All the trees of the forest are busy preparing their new dresses in honor of the coming queen. Suppose a thousand young ladies were to be furnished with new-dresses within the next month; what an excitement would there be! what a snipping of scissors, tearing of cloth, running of sewing-machines, yes, and of talking-machines, too, before all were provided! And yet, here are all the trees of the forest making their new dresses without contention, without noise, without the intervention of a French *artiste*, in the good old-fashioned style which can never be improved.

The storm goes howling by; what a noise! It rouses the world! "Here am I, listen to me, see what I can do!" But when it is over, there lie a few rotten trunks prostrated by its power. Without bluster, or even sound, the million columned woods arise, and God's first and best temples are reared.

It is not the most noisy that accomplish the most. The armies march, the music sounds, the cannons thunder. "These are they that do the world's work," says the crowd. Some thinker in his silent study does more than they all. Bonaparte bestrides Europe like a Colossus; his voice makes every throne tremble; all eyes are turned to him, and all ears are dinned with his name; but James Watt, obscurely laboring to perfect the steam-engine, has done infinitely more to change the face of the world, to revolutionize society, and, above all, to bless the human race.

Cut a tree down, and examine the rings of its growth, and you will find an eloquent tongue that gives the lie to many other tongues. The whole history of the tree, and of the times in which it flourished, is indelibly written in the grain of the trunk. Twenty years ago there was a cool, short, and dry summer: here is the narrow ring that answers to that summer: See that expanded circle! fifty

years ago there was a warm, moist season, and you see the result; not a day passed over this tree that has not left its record around its heart, never to be forgotten, never to be erased. I tell you, my brother, my sister, so is it with you. Thus we build up the inward man, day by day. There is not an hour in your history that is not inwoven, ingrown into the very constitution of your soul, that does not exercise an influence on your destiny; and there is nothing that can make it be as though it had never been. I know how common it is for men to believe and teach that Jesus can wipe out at one stroke, and in a moment, the consequences of their misdeeds; that five minutes of prayer can remove the dark stains of fifty years of crime; but nothing can be more false. Nature tells us this in the grand eloquence of these trees. Do you think that any amount of waving on the part of the green leaves this coming summer can remove the effect of the dry seasons long gone by, and expand those contracted rings of growth to full dimensions? When conditions are unfavorable for their proper development, where are the Christs for the trees, to remove the scars, straighten the bended trunk, and fill out the lean circumference? These very tree-tongues give the lie to this orthodox fable that man can do wrong, thus hindering his spiritual growth and cramping his soul, and then escape the legitimate consequences of that wrong-doing.

Mark, too, the tendency in all trees to symmetry and beauty, each of its own kind. Take that young tree and hew off its limbs, reduce it if you please to a naked, crooked stick. What does it do? It commences instantly to repair damages. The unsightly cuts are salved with new bark; to the right grows a branch, to the left a corresponding branch; a spirit of beauty presides over it and employs her agents to adorn it; blossoms expand in their loveliness, fruit is developed, and the tree stands at

last as perfect as its more favored neighbors. There is inherent in all nature this tendency to symmetry and beauty. The clay-stone, no less than the crystal, show it in the mineral kingdom; the vegetable kingdom displays it from the fucoid of the sea-bottom to the pine of the mountain-top; and is man destitute of it? He is, and is to be, its most glorious manifestation. Man, though king-curst, and priest-curst, and God-curst, —

“Though sin and the devil hath bound him,”

has yet within him that divine spirit, which, in spite of unfavorable conditions, shall push him onward eternally, to excellence, to perfection.

Were I to tell all that the trees have to teach, how long would my sermon last? By what possibility could it ever have an end? It seems to me, as I go into the woods and listen to their tongues, that all other words are needless. They are the most eloquent of preachers; and, listening to them, we can well afford to let all others be silent. Multitudes who throng the piles of superstition on Sundays, would be more blessed by attending the green temples of Nature, and entering into the spirit that breathes from every leaf.

I watch these trees, and see how they grow day by day, year by year, becoming larger, fairer, as the seasons pass. But I am told that when the tree arrives at its perfection, which all may attain in a few centuries, like the stars when they culminate, it begins to sink; and nothing can arrest its decay and death. It is resolved into its original components; it is gone as a tree, entered into the dust, from which it can never more emerge. And yet, out of the very dust of that tree, up springs a new one, fairer and brighter for the richness of the soil gained from the ashes of its predecessor. Nor is that all; extravagant as it may seem, I have learned that

there is a future life even for trees. There is room enough in an infinite universe for all the trees that ever blossomed: somewhere they are blossoming still. How much more shall there be room for the men. They are all living still. A brighter sky than we ever saw bends over them; a more glorious sun sheds his rays on their heads; the winds of beneficent conditions play around them. Development in the grand future is their inalienable destiny.

But Shakespeare says there are books in the running brooks, and we must not listen too long to these trees, or we shall lose the lessons that are contained in these running brooks. Strange places to find books! no less strange, and quite as interesting, are the books themselves that we find in this alcove of Nature's library, free for all. There is a book on chronology — and a wonderful book it is; our longest chronological lists are invisible when compared with this. At Niagara — one of our brooks — you see an ocean of water pouring over the solid limestone, into the foaming abyss beneath. At Queenstown, seven miles below, the cataract once was, and the deep channel between the two, shows what the water has accomplished, fretting the solid rock through the ages. Though fifty thousand years was probably spent in the work, yet that is but a day in the geologic calendar. But what is this compared with the record of other brooks? The Colorado has worn a cañon three hundred miles long, and in places more than a mile deep, and for a thousand feet through solid granite; thousands of centuries must have been employed in the work. These grand brooks are older than Britain and the Druids, Greece and Etruria; older than the mummies; aye, older than Egypt itself, for it is made of the mud that one of these brooks laid down; older than the old serpent and the Christians that made him; older than Noah and his wonderful box; older indeed

than the Jews and Jehovah, "the ancient of days," their handiwork. These brooks have been rolling for ages where they now are, doing the work of the world, as they have prepared it for the habitation of mankind.

There is a volume on perseverance in the brooks, that many might read with benefit. There was a time when the Gulf of Mexico extended to where Cairo in Illinois now is, and the Mississippi, by patient perseverance, has filled up the Gulf to New Orleans; and it is destined to annex Cuba to the United States, whether Spain favors the annexation or opposes it. They have carried to their graves in the ocean depths mountains innumerable, and are now engaged in ferrying down all that remain. Not a day but they lay down part of Mont Blanc and Mount Washington, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, and ere long, by their aid, the ocean shall roll over the heads of the loftiest peaks. They have made seven miles of fossiliferous rocks, and formed the grand continents on whose surface we dwell; and yet the process by which all this is accomplished is so gradual, that but few are aware of what is going on around them. There is a book on perseverance that it will do you good to read, young man, young woman. Never despair of accomplishing your soul's earnest wish. The very desire to be and to do, indicates the power to be and to do what you desire; a day may do but little, but you have an eternity to operate in; a drop a day would drain the ocean in time, and you need never be discouraged.

I saw a silvery rill descending from the mountain; clear as crystal were its waters, as it leaped down with tinkling feet on its mission of usefulness and love. "I will stop its bubbling," said the Frost, as he laid his cold hand upon it, icy as death, and it staggered and grew still. "I will bury it from sight," said the Snow, and down dropped its fleecy mantle and hid the rill from my

gaze. Alas! said I, for the beautiful stream! the envy of the Frost and Snow has destroyed it forever! But while I mourned, the south wind blew with genial breath, the sun looked through the craggy clouds, the bonds of the rill were broken, snow and ice did but increase its waters, and away they danced more merrily than before. On it sped, and, wherever it went, the trees arrayed themselves in their greenest dresses, they lifted up their heads and waved their banners in its praise; the birds sang to it in their leafy bowers, and the flowers kissed it with their sweet lips as it ran. But the hills saw it, and they were offended. "Why should we allow this vagrant to roam at large," said they, "this leveler, this underminer and destroyer of all things old and sacred? Why should we allow it to chafe our sides and set at defiance the limits set in the days gone by? Let us unite and crush it forever." So saying, they encircled the brook in their close embrace, and presented a seemingly impassable barrier to its further passage, and again it was lost to my sight. But though unseen, it was busy as ever, searching every crevice, flowing into every cranny, to find a passage through the frowning hills. "If I cannot get through, I must go over," said the brook. "Ah, ha!" laughed the hills; and they clapped their hands, and said, "Listen to the little fellow; we have stopped his mad career; no more shall he roam among the trees and disport himself with the flowers, no more shall he remove the moss-grown rocks, invade our sacred retreats, and undermine the foundations of ages; his work is done, his life is ended." But inch by inch, and foot by foot the water rose above the woody sides of the hills, and reaching a valley between two peaks, the hills saw to their astonishment the despised brook, now swollen to a river, go thundering down upon the plain with tenfold power. On it flowed, daily broader, deeper, receiving accessions from a

thousand flowing streams, blessing thirsty lands, and administering to man's welfare, till it poured at last its majestic torrent into the all-embracing sea. There is a lesson for thee, my toiling brother! Starting from the mountains of truth-loving endeavor and manly resolve, what though the world's cold scorn falls on thee, and the bitter winds of persecution blow around thee; toil on, live to thy soul's ideal! there are noble hearts beating for thee, glorious rewards awaiting thee; there are no obstacles too high for thee to surmount; the greatest success of which thy soul ever dreamed is guaranteed thee!

But Shakespeare says there are "sermons in stones," and, while there is time, we must look at some of these. You would never forgive me, if I did not give you some of these sermons. These "hard-heads," as the boulders have been called, are old-heads and wise-heads, and no less eloquent; they preach the longest, the truest, the wisest of sermons. These ministers of Nature are expounding continually, —

With magical eloquence day and night,  
Denouncing the wrong, upholding the right,

By the road-side, in the swamp, in the foaming stream, and the ploughed field. They preached to the Indian as he stealthily stole by to shoot the deer at the lick, as they had done to the dumb savages, their ancestors, who had not learned to form the rudest of implements for the chase. These preachers never stammer nor cough, they never rave nor rant, they never lie to please a congregation or for the glory of God, as I'm afraid some of our gospel preachers do; they never get drunk, nor blush for their record; they invariably tell the truth, and that is just what we need; and their bold, outspoken utterances have spoiled a thousand barrels of orthodox sermons in Massachusetts alone. Would that we were more awake to their glowing utterances!



When Shakespeare was living, geology was unknown. What wondrous sermons have been preached by the stones since his time, that have set the world a-thinking! Werner, Hutton, Bakewell, Buckland, Lyell, Mantell, Miller, and hosts of others listened to them, took notes of their discourses; and their rough notes, far from verbatim reports, have recreated the world and bid fair to recreate the next. How silly the Genesical fable of creation appears in the light which their utterances reveal! the six days' fatiguing labor of the almighty mechanic, dust-made grandfather Adam, and bone-made grandmother Eve, the chatting snake, and the cursing God! In these sermons that the stones preach, there is no God complacently congratulating himself on the success of his week's work, and in a few days cursing like a demon because his plans have been frustrated. What a story is this to be rehearsed in the nineteenth century, with the words of these stones ringing in our ears! There rolls the ruddy planet as it came from the glowing furnace of the sun, a spirit within its concentrated fire-mist, presiding over it, and able to produce, when conditions permit, plant and bird, beast and man. We see the solid rock as the world cools, bare, black, and flinty, and below the boiling, turbid waters; from the deep, where the first rude forms of life appear, island after island emerges; lichens cling to the rocks upon them, moss-like plants carpet them, ferns fringe them, beetles hum over them, and fishes go flashing along their shores, or feed upon the sea-weeds that spread over the waters their long, gelatinous arms. Tree ferns unroll their fronds, club-mosses upraise their columns out of the dense swamps, lepidodendrons rear their scaly trunks; frogs hop along the margins of the lakes, or vigorously swim in their waters; while above them dragon-flies flit on gauzy wings. Birds appear, rude, gross, stalking along the shores, fishing in the

waters; reptiles swimming, diving, crawling, basking on the rocks, roaming through the woods, soaring in the air. Mammals huge and whale-like follow them, living in the waters; thick-skinned monsters wading in the river, crashing through the reeds. Horses roam over the virgin prairies, deer feed on the newly developed grasses, monkeys, the forerunners of men, feed on the luscious figs; then comes savage man, low-browed, brutal, but human, within him the science, the art of the nineteenth century, and a million centuries yet to be born; and, at last, here are we, the freest congregation in the freest city, in spite of its fogyism, that our planet has yet seen, each one swearing that he will not rest till he has made this old world better than he found it.

This is one of the sermons the stones are preaching, and where it is heard, most other sermons are preached in vain. Man has been advancing from the start, as the world had been for so many ages before him; then man never fell, and Jesus was never sent to raise what the devil was never permitted to knock down. Good and evil flow from humanity by virtue of its nature; the devil is no longer needed, and his bottomless pit is filled to the brim. Jesus descends from the throne of his glory and takes his place on the platform occupied by his brothers, and we can say of a thousand living men and women, A better than Jesus is here.

Here too is a sermon on progress. From fluid fire to solid rock, from shapeless stone to symmetrical crystal, from crystal to polyp, from this sluggish stomach at the sea-bottom to the active fish, thence to the ground-treading reptile, first tenant of the soil; then life soars in the bird, advances toward man in the brute, and reaches him only to urge him on to higher and nobler positions. We are here with this infinite past beneath us, and an illimitable future above us, and ability within us to climb the

heights apparently forever. All this to drop at death back to the dust from which life has ascended only by slow steps for millions of years? We are, that we may be. All the past was, that we might be in the present; and the present is, that the future may be superior to it. Progress is not dead, nor God asleep; the ages have not sown that Death or the Devil might reap; neither hell nor the grave is the granary of humanity. The everlasting arms are round us; over the stream of death they shall bear us, and land us in a sunnier clime.

But I must not preach too long from such sermons as these, important as they are. Few geologists have dared to tell the truth — reveal to the world all that their science has taught them. Scientists, like theologians, are sad cowards. A great effort is made by many of them to make these old preachers talk orthodoxically, but the effort is a dead failure. Though many geologists seek with oblique vision to look upon old dogmas and new revelations at the same time, yet others are gaining courage to declare the whole counsel of nature.

The stones are preaching their sermons in the streets of Boston to-day. Fort Hill is being cut down, and interested people gather to see the gradual disappearance of one of the interesting relics of historic times. Go and see the old "hard-heads" as they are scooped from the soil by the steam excavator, or lie exposed once more to the light of day along the lessening crest. They are covered with marks and scratches. Not a stone to which they were introduced but left its mark; they tell us of the grinding ice fields of the glacial period, when a Greenland winter locked the sea and buried the land; and you may learn from them that we have only fairly started to explore the past of our planet, on which our present stands, and eternity will be needed to read what the eternity of the past has done.

But, Shakespeare says there is "good in everything." What an extravagant statement is this! Right, William, right; you, too, were wiser than you knew. Good in earthquakes, ground-shaking, rock-cleaving, city-swallowing, life-destroying earthquakes? Certainly. By earthquake throes the continents have been uplifted, the mountains reared, and the world adorned. We should never have been here in the glory of this day, if our planet had not been swept by fiery storms and shaken millions of times by the earthquake's jar. Their curses are inseparable from their blessings.

Is there good in volcanoes, those fearful hells that spout out glowing torrents that scathe and destroy and with their clouds of ashes envelop cities in ruin? Yes; these are the safety-valves of the globe; weight them down, as engineers sometimes do the safety-valve of the steam engine, and but a short time would suffice to blow the crust of the globe to atoms.

Good in pain, that racks the nerves, that clouds the mind; pain, the companion of sorrow, and herald of death? Assuredly there is. If we never felt pain, long before we reached maturity our bodies would be wrecks; a boy's hands would be burned to cinders before he was ten years old. The stomach would be injured beyond recovery by our excesses, before we were aware of our departure from correct living. Pain is a guardian forever attending us. For the child it is better than a hundred nurses; the mother's eye may wander from her charge, but pain never sleeps on its post. The child, attracted by the glare, puts its finger in the flame — ha! it starts back with a sudden cry. It has learned a lesson that can never be forgotten. In a world without pain, not one human being in a hundred could ever arrive at maturity. Pain, often considered man's enemy, is but an angel in disguise.

But there is certainly nothing good in pestilences, that decimate cities and are the dread of nations. If no other good arose from them, they widen the streets of our cities, cause arrangements to be made for sewerage, and cleanse and beautify the close and otherwise filthy alleys. The general comfort arising from all these may be traced in considerable measure to the dread produced by these scourges of the human race.

The darkest features of some systems are often really the best portions of them, when properly understood. Ask a Protestant to name the darkest features of Catholicism, and he would probably say that portion of it which binds its members to life-long celibacy. Monk, nun, and priest must never marry, or if they do, they receive the Church's ban. "What a horrible system is this!" says the Protestant. Not so horrible as it looks. These monks, nuns, and priests are the most superstitious members of the Roman Church; and how fortunate it is that their superstition dies with them, if true to their vows, and the most superstitious are the most likely to be. Thus when superstition culminates in the Roman Catholic Church, it is cut off forever. If the heretics could pass a law, and make it binding, that the most superstitious people should never marry, lest their superstition should be inherited by their children, what an outrage it would be deemed. Yet, thanks to the blindness of the most intolerant of all Christian sects, this is just what the Church itself does; and there is good here, where we had least reason to expect. When a man becomes as fanatical as a Shaker, he ought not to transmit his fanaticism to posterity. How carefully the Shaker, by virtue of his faith, guards against the possibility of it.

"But is there any good in war?" There must be, if Shakespeare is right, and I certainly think he is. Where did we stand but ten years ago? The North a great

hunting-ground for slaves, and every man by law a kidnapper; forty thousand preachers and eighty thousand merchants on their knees, licking the dust at the foot of the slave power; the priests quoting Scripture in favor of, and apologizing for the vilest of all crimes, and the merchants defending the practices that they might obtain the custom of the women-whippers and baby-stealers. Where are they now? The red whirlwind of war has swept the whole brutal system from the face of the land it insulted so long. Where now are those godly Boston ministers who with pious faces read their Bible texts from the pulpit in favor of this stupendous crime? You can scarcely find a man from Maine to Mexico, who dares lift up his voice in defense of chattel slavery; and the ministers are now hastening to prove that they were always in favor of freedom, and that Christianity has conquered and gained the victory alone! That war converted more than Christianity has done for a thousand years, and at the same time converted the Bible.

The villains that applied the torch of rebellion to the temple of our liberty, expected to burn the fabric to the ground; but instead of that, away went rags and scraps, hay and stubble, that blind priests and crafty politicians had been gathering and piling for years around it; and, when the smoke rolled away, there stood the temple in its grandeur, and the golden statue of Liberty above all, unharmed by the transient fire and unblackened by the smoke; and now within that temple stands a redeemed people. This land has at length become in truth what it was only in name, —

“The land of the free, and the home of the brave.”

This grand stumbling-block out of our way, we take, and shall henceforth keep, the foremost place in all the world. When I find war assisting so materially to bring

about such a condition of things, I cannot but agree with Shakespeare that there is "good in everything."

"But the devil, you know, is all bad," says my orthodox brother. Bring him here, and we will dissect him, and I will show you that he has an angelic kernel in his heart. A king, who has ruled so long over the largest population that was ever governed by any one potentate, must have some redeeming traits. It is only imaginary beings that are destitute of good. A soul of good seems to be essential to a thing's existence, destitute of which it must die, or rather, it never could have lived. If there is a devil, there must be good in him; but since, as the orthodox inform us, there is no good in the devil, it is evident that he does not exist.

Good in death, the terrible curse pronounced by Jehovah on all? Certainly, and the greatest of good. Death, the sick man's solace, the old man's hope, the good man's friend, the slave's release, the great uniter, the twin of sleep, and the door of heaven! We, as Spiritualists, see the good there is in death as no other people ever did. We have come from the land of shadows, the gloomy wilderness peopled by devils and lit up by the fire of lurid hells; we have come to the "Delectable Mountains," fairer than those of which Bunyan dreamed, and we revel in the rays of a sun that never, never sets. The prospect is so wide that we can see beyond the swift flowing stream the loved ones who have gone before; nay, we can hear their cheerful voices, and know that it is well with them and must be well with us. In the light of this new morning, we can take Death by the hand and say: "Thou art our benefactor, our unchanging friend, sent by a higher life on the most beneficent of all missions; when our work is done on earth, we will greet thee with joy, and look into thine eyes with a smile, for thou shalt usher us into the company of the immortals."

Is there good, then, in all that happens to man? I doubt not that we shall rise in the hereafter to where, looking over all the checkered scene of earth's universal history, we shall exclaim from the fullest assurance of its truth, All is well, all is well.









## ANNIE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY EMMA HARDINGE BRITTON.

It will be remembered by those who have carefully perused the sketch of Dr. Cyrus Lord's experiences as detailed in our last issue, that the young lady who forms the subject of this notice was not recognized as a medium for the wonderful phenomena evolved in her father's circles, until some years after they had been in operation. It is quite probable that the combined force of the whole family was necessary to produce these extraordinary demonstrations in the first instance, but it would appear as if one of the chief aims of the invisible influences under which Dr. Lord acted was the ultimate unfoldment of his two gifted daughters, Jennie and Annie, into the fine mediumistic instruments they have since become. A slight allusion will be found in Dr. Lord's narrative to the first recognition of Annie's specialties as a medium, but in order to do full justice to this wonderful child's endowments, it is necessary to state that at the time when they were first apparent she was scarcely twelve years of age, and had sat in the family circles constantly for three years without giving any signs of the latent powers she afterwards displayed. Jennie, through whom the principal part of the phenomena occurred at Dr. Lord's séances, had been impressed to assure her little sister Annie that she was destined to perform a great work in Spiritualism, and the child, elated by this promise, awaited its fulfillment with a patience and constancy far beyond her years, sitting night after night, for hours together, in the family circles, without a sign of weariness or indifference.

At length her fidelity was rewarded by the premonitory symptoms which so often accompany the unfoldment of the mediumistic germ, and the little one realized, as she herself described, the same sensations in her hands and arms as would have been produced by a galvanic battery. The first exercise of Annie's mediumistic power was in the direction of written communications involving remarkable tests of identity, and *fac-similes* of the hand-writings and signatures of deceased persons, and all this was executed in so purely mechanical a fashion that the little hands employed in these wonderful transcriptions seemed not to belong to the child, or be guided by her volition, but to be used as mere instruments under the control of a powerful though invisible operator. Not long after the production of these writings, Dr. Lord was instructed to sit alone with his young daughter, three times a day for a fortnight, at the expiration of which period he was informed she would be developed through his influence into an extraordinary physical medium. The results of obedience to these directions were more than could have been anticipated. At the end of the tenth day's sésances they were desired to place a guitar under the table, when immediately and without the least diminution of the noonday light which filled the apartment, the instrument was played upon by invisible performers with an amount of taste and skill which had never before been evinced in their circles.

The sweet and graceful flow of the music was emphasized, too, by loud raps sounding on walls, floor, and ceiling, and that with a force and spontaneity which seemed to fill every corner of the room with intelligent though invisible operators. Those who regard the tokens of spiritual presence with skeptical sneers or cold indifference, can form but little conception of the reverent yet exalted emotions which swelled the young child's heart,

as she found herself the chosen instrument of a mighty and powerful world, the very existence of which had been the unsolved problem of science and religion for ages.

Annie had noted how the footsteps of angels had followed in the track of her highly privileged sisters, but that she, so young, and hitherto so undistinguished by these heavenly visitants, could be permitted to listen to their delicious strains of melody through her own instrumentality, was a boon which she then rejoiced in and ever since has cherished, as a direct token of angelic favor and acceptance.

It was not long before the child medium was requested to add to the guitar some bells, a tambourine, and other small instruments, and these, placed under the table, still in the light, furnished the controlling spirits with the means of making a complete and very agreeable concert.

In obedience to their invisible guides, they also procured a white porcelain slate with straps attached, and these being fastened with a pencil to little Annie's left hand, she was directed to hold it under the table whilst her right was laid in sight on its upper surface.

In this way long communications, test messages, *fac-similes* of handwritings, were executed by the spirits themselves, and that in a way which rendered collusion or deception impossible.

Sometimes satisfactory messages were written by simply placing paper and pencil under the table, but in both methods, the visitors who were introduced to Annie Lord's circles received communications from their friends "beyond the river," with a directness and indubitable proof of spiritual agency which has rarely been equaled and never surpassed.

After a time Annie was desired to take her place in the dark circle room, and here, whilst her manifestations con-

tinued in all their beauty, they gained immensely in force by the absence of light.

It was customary for the mediums to sit at the table whilst the musical instruments were arranged on supports behind and around them, and as they were frequently covered with a netting extending from the ceiling to the floor, cutting off the mediums from contact with the instruments, the production of music under such circumstances placed the manifestations beyond suspicion.

It may here be remarked that the most marvelous feats of power executed by the spirits, such as carrying large instruments about the room, placing the mediums, still seated, in the centre of the table, and piling up the instruments round them, etc., could not be effected whilst they were screened by the netting; this arrangement, therefore, was only resorted to as an experiment, or for the satisfaction of that obstinate character of skepticism which would not be convinced "though one rose from the dead." It often happened that light articles were carried from the room and conveyed to long distances during the progress of the séance; for example, a gentleman who was receiving communications from his deceased wife through Annie Lord's mediumship, had requested the spirits to use his pencil, which he placed on the ground with his own hands for that purpose. This wish was complied with, but when the séance was concluded, and the enraptured investigator proceeded to collect all the tokens which he had received of his beloved one's presence, he was equally grieved and surprised to find the pencil her spirit hand had employed was missing. At this juncture, Annie was controlled to write that he would find the lost article under a certain stone, carefully hid away from sight, close to his own residence. Although this statement was almost too marvelous for an inexperienced investigator to accept, he faithfully followed the directions given, and subse-

quently admitted that he had found his pencil in the exact spot and position which the medium had indicated. This act of physical transfer was but the commencement of a long series of similar performances, some of which we shall have occasion to describe in detail.

Annie Lord's first great trial at the hands of strangers took place when she had scarcely completed her twelfth year. Having been persuaded to spend a week in the family of Mr. Burnell, of Westbrook, Maine, the young girl held circles in the light, and here the most marvelous phenomena occurred throughout the house, and at all hours. The circles were at first conducted under stringent test conditions; but when the breakfast table was laid by spirits, when footsteps resounded through every part of the house, and thirty-seven communications were written by spirit hands in a locked drawer of which Mr. Burnell kept the key, and on paper which he purchased fresh for that purpose, test conditions ceased to be any longer in requisition; and every hour of the medium's visit brought fresh conviction to the mind of her entertainer. Here, as throughout Annie Lord's mediumship, the delightful phase of spirit music was repeatedly presented. At times sweet voices would be heard singing, and on more than one occasion a full band regaled the ears of the astonished listeners, when none but spirits could have been the performers. For several months after these investigations, Annie Lord sat as a medium for the spirits in her father's house in Portland. At last her fragile constitution threatened to give way under the heavy tax made upon it, and she was removed for the sake of rest and recuperation to Auburn, Maine. The fame of her remarkable gifts, however, followed the young medium wherever she went, and so far from cessation from the fatigues of the séance, they increased upon her constantly, until her



visitors of all classes might be numbered by hundreds, and her converts began to multiply on every side.

In addition to the production of spirit music, direct writing, the movement of ponderable bodies, and a great variety of tests rendered through rapping, writing, etc., Annie Lord was not unfrequently controlled to diagnose diseases, prescribe for the sick, or heal them by the laying on of hands. It was in this way that many an one afflicted with chronic complaints, pronounced by the medical faculty incurable, received health and renewed life from the magical touch of this young and gifted child.

We are permitted to mention, as an example of this beneficent power, the case of Miss Agnes Walker, of East Portland, Maine, who had suffered from a spine complaint of long standing, pronounced hopeless, and utterly incapacitating her even from walking. In the short space of a single fortnight, the treatment received at the hands of the young medium enabled the sufferer to move about with ease, and finally to subdue the complaint entirely.

It is also a curious and noteworthy fact, that Annie Lord in her mediumistic capacity exercised a remarkably soothing effect upon the insane; and that in several instances, patients treated by the physicians as hopeless lunatics (but in all probability obsessed by undeveloped spirits) became, under her influence and the treatment prescribed through her spirit guides, perfectly restored to health and mental balance.

We find the following little narrative in Mrs. Chamberlain's diary; and as the incident illustrates how closely allied humanity is to the spirit world, and how naturally this truth becomes exemplified in the experiences of spirit mediums, we shall give the extract in Mrs. Chamberlain's own frank and simple words.

“One rainy day, in the autumn of 1859, as I was journeying from Portland to Boston, my attention was attracted to a very prepossessing looking gentleman, who, as I supposed, came aboard the cars at Biddeford, Me. He occupied the seat directly in front of me, having first moved from it my guitar, which I had placed there but a short time previous. It seemed strange to me that he should select that seat, when there were several others near vacant. Very soon he began to address me, speaking of my past life, of my becoming a medium, etc. He spoke of the present, and even looked into my future, prophesying many things which I am not now at liberty to relate. Up to this point of the interview I supposed the stranger was a dweller of this mundane sphere, though a good clairvoyant. But suddenly, in the midst of an interesting prophecy, he gradually disappeared, leaving me considerably frightened by the discovery of his spiritual nature. On another occasion he came again: at this time we had a friendly shake of the hand; and that with a hand as tangible to me as any mortal's. I questioned him twice to learn his name, but could get no answer. He appeared to be much interested in my welfare, and before he left me, called me by name and said, ‘This is the second time that I have presented myself to you; I shall do so once more only, which will be while you are travelling from Lewiston to Portland.’ I told him when I intended to visit L——. He replied, ‘You will not go then; remember my words.’ At the time when I had resolved to go to Lewiston, sickness detained me; but I did not think of my spirit friend and his prophecy, until I did actually meet him again on the cars, and that at the exact time that he had predicted.”

Two striking changes occurred in the young medium's career, both of which colored to a very considerable extent her subsequent fortunes.

The first of these was her union in marriage with Mr. Chamberlain, a gentleman considerably older than herself, now deceased; and the second, her adoption into the family of Colonel and Mrs. Cushman, of Ottawa, Illinois, a lady and gentleman whose high social position, great wealth, and extended influence threw around the fair and fragile flower, bandied about in the hard, rough school of a tempestuous life, the mantle of their strong and honorable protection.

Poor Annie Lord Chamberlain, a young, inexperienced

child-wife, with a warm, loving heart, generous, impulsive disposition, but a physical form so frail and unbalanced that a breath of wind or streak of sunshine seemed sufficient to unnerve her, was yet called upon to endure the harsh sneers of the skeptic, the rude and sometimes inhuman conditions forced upon her by the so-called scientific, the tone of insulting doubt and insolent criticism so commonly adopted by those who investigate with the determination of finding falsehood rather than truth, and all the toil, suffering, and discomfort of a homeless, wandering, itinerant life. None can realize, except by personal experience, the career of hardship and endurance implied in the terms, "a public medium," or "Spiritual lecturer."

To have one's self-respect continually wounded by press criticisms that are not unfrequently brutal in their rudeness and falsehood; to be subjected to constant suspicion even from professed friends, and that for mysterious failures over which mortals have no control; in short, to be in the hands of an unknown power, the full extent or deficiency of which no human being can gauge, on the one hand, and on the other to be obliged to procure the favor of strangers by successes which the hapless medium can never command; these are but parts of the bitter dregs which fill the cup the modern sibyl is called upon to quaff. Ill or well, weak or strong, willing or otherwise, the work must be done, the life forces drained, and fresh journeys undertaken; the new station gained, the new friends propitiated, the weary spirit readjusted to new scenes, new habits, and new influences; whilst heat and cold, long fasting, and excessive fatigue too often form the conditions under which the Spiritual itinerant is called upon to exhibit.

The very power which of all others seems most dependent upon favorable surroundings, is continually demanded

under the violation of every condition essential for its successful production. The petty martyrdoms thus inflicted upon wandering spirit mediums may result from ignorance, apathy, or carelessness on the part of those who surround them, but the fact that they are thus too frequently called upon to suffer, proves conclusively that the exercise of their gifts must be controlled by a strength not their own, and influences powerful enough to surmount merely mundane obstacles.

From this thankless and weary state of existence the loving care and guardianship of Annie's new protectors at length happily rescued her, and from this point in her career we commence a fresh detail of her experiences.

Before entering upon this portion of our narrative, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to peruse an account of the impression produced by Mrs. Chamberlain upon the mind of Mr. Benjamin Coleman, an English gentleman of high standing, and a well-known supporter of the Spiritual cause in Great Britain. After a sojourn of some months in America, during which Mr. Coleman brought to bear upon his Spiritualistic investigations all the energy, acumen, and perseverance of his character and nation, he wrote to the *London Spiritual Magazine*, giving a long and detailed account of the 'wonderful manifestations with which he had been favored through Mrs. Chamberlain's mediumship, concluding in the following words:—

"Mrs. Chamberlain is well known to New England Spiritualists, and throughout the States, as a most estimable lady of the highest character. . . . A gentle, intelligent, unassuming lady, probably but little more than twenty years of age, with fair complexion, regular features, and cheerful expression of face, there is no indication of any peculiar organization, special capacity, or idiosyncrasy. I observed her for some time previous to each sitting in familiar intercourse with her visitors, and I feel convinced that the most ordinary as well as the most experienced judge of character, would unhesitatingly declare that intentional decep-

tion was quite foreign to her nature — was, indeed, with her an impossibility: The slightest hint of it sadly disconcerted her — as it never does a trained impostor — and she gives to the skeptical every facility for detection and scrutiny.”

And here we may call the reader's attention to the spirited and beautifully executed mezzotint engraving of Mrs. Chamberlain with which this number is graced. We desire to add, that the shadowy hand which appears on the strings of the guitar, together with the drumsticks, harmonicons, and different small instruments faintly indicated round the head, are faithfully delineated by the engraver from the original photograph taken by Mr. William Mumler, through whose mediumship Mrs. Chamberlain's spirit band were enabled to impress upon the plate these significant tokens of their peculiar control.

When Annie Lord Chamberlain first entered the family of Colonel Cushman, her constitution, naturally frail and delicate, had been so fearfully overtaxed that it seemed impossible under any merely mundane influences that her earth life could long be extended. How far in this, as in many other instances, spirits succeeded in baffling the insidious action of disease, and transcending all known forms of human medical skill, may be gathered from a perusal of the following letter written to the *Banner of Light* in March, 1868.

March 4th, 1868.

DEAR BANNER,— Reading an account in your valuable paper of spirit voices being heard at séances in London, it occurred to me that you might feel interested in the very remarkable phase of the same power which it has been our happiness to witness constantly for several weeks, the past season.

It has been our good fortune to have in our family the well known musical medium, Annie Lord Chamberlain. She is, as you are aware, an invalid, and at times requires the greatest care and watchfulness; yet we know we should not have been able to keep her in our midst had it not been for the loving and constant attention bestowed upon her by the

powerful band of spirits who guide and control her. It has been daily our great pleasure and relief to receive directions and advice from a physician in spirit life, and these directions, let me assure you, are given wholly independent of the medium; they are delivered in a clear voice, every intonation of which betrays the cultivated gentleman. Not only has this beloved attendant been constantly in our midst when the lady has been suffering, but often when all was quiet, and before retiring, has the doctor suddenly made himself known by addressing us in his friendly voice: "Good evening, ladies. I want to have a chat with you;" and has often prolonged his visits for a considerable length of time. Not only is he remarkable for speaking, but *water* has been converted into medicine, *wine*, and aromatic liniments, through his power; and wonderful as it may seem, it is a fact upon which we can bring any amount of testimony.

Not alone, however, is the doctor's voice heard. Belle Wide-Awake, a very laughter-loving, bright spirit, is a constant visitor to the family circle, and with her we have passed very many pleasant hours. A few days ago Mrs. Chamberlain lost an opal ring; Belle came to us and said she had found the ring — would bring it to the circle; which she did, and placed it on Mrs. Chamberlain's finger.

Dear little Mayflower — so well known to those who have attended the musical séances — with many others, frequently and repeatedly speaks; and we have also, on several occasions, heard voices singing in our midst, while an accompaniment with a harp was distinctly heard, although no instrument of music was in our room but a very indifferent harmonicon.

Flowers have also been received, in circles as well as after the ladies had retired; bouquets of lilies, roses, rose-buds, mignonnette, etc., all bright, fresh, and sweet, received at night through an open window on the second story, with the thermometer at a low point.

Spirit hands, tangible as your own, Messrs. Editors, have handled us all, and continually, when Mrs. Chamberlain was so ill that she could not move without great exertion, the doctor's hands have been heard rubbing her lungs energetically — and this not in the dark alone, but with light sufficient to prove to all present the utter impossibility of deception. The hands of several spirits have been around her and raised her up in bed, when such an exertion could not have been thought of for a moment.

Could we have kept a record of the transactions at these medical circles, I assure you the earnest investigators after facts would have had a large accumulation of valuable evidence; but time fails us, and we can

send you no more to-day. If, however, you wish to hear from us again, gladly will we send you still more interesting matter.

Joy be with you all.

MRS. WM. H. W. CUSHMAN.

MRS. F. O. ELDRIDGE.

The manifestations peculiar to the dark circle have been so often described in the public prints, that it would be unnecessary to quote the enthusiastic reports of Mrs. Chamberlain's large circle of friends and admirers, did they not illustrate the special excellence, delicacy, and variety of the wonderful phenomena for which her mediumship has become so remarkable and exceptional.

How delightful must have been the home life sweetened by incessant tokens of spiritual presence and angelic ministry, eliminated through Mrs. Chamberlain's mediumship, we may gather from a letter addressed to the *Banner of Light*, by N. B. Starr, the renowned spirit artist who had been engaged by Colonel Cushman to spend some time at his residence in Ottawa, for the purpose of delineating on canvas the features of the radiant beings who hovered around the atmosphere of their favorite medium.

Mr. Starr has fortunately been inspired to execute the portraits of several of these angelic visitants, and besides the remarkable tests of personal identity which they afford, their performance is in a style of art not only superior to anything of this kind which has yet been exhibited, but they so far transcend any of the artist's former productions, that there is no doubt his labors were aided and inspired by the exalted influences that pervaded the scene where they were executed. Besides a most excellent and refined portrait of Mrs. Chamberlain, her beloved and loving spirit-guides "Mayflower," "Red Jacket," and others are exquisitely delineated; also several family portraits of deep interest to Colonel Cushman. These pictures are painted in oil, and executed with a grace and delicacy

of finish rarely to be found in the works of the most celebrated masters. It is impossible to describe in words the interest inspired by these fascinating pictures. The spell deepens as the beholder gazes, and none can come away from their examination without some recognition of the high and holy source from which their unearthly beauty is derived.

Mr. Starr writes as follows:—

You perceive that I have been domiciled some six weeks or more in the truly beautiful home of Colonel Cushman, Ottawa, Ill. This is also the permanent residence of the medium, Mrs. Annie Lord Chamberlain, who for years has sustained the reputation of being both an excellent woman and a very superior medium for physical manifestations.

During the past six weeks, I have attended circles, sometimes daily, and always two or three times per week, and I claim to have investigated critically and philosophically, and withal I have the interior or clairvoyant sight, enabling me to investigate from two standpoints. Colonel Cushman is a man substantial and practical; one who seems to value his great wealth only for the good he can do with it. He would be the last man on earth who would suffer himself or permit others to be deceived. These circles are not held for *money*, nor the gratification of idle curiosity. Strangers are occasionally admitted through courtesy.

The circle room is dark, containing an oval extension table, around which sit the family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Cushman, four children, a lady visitor who attends to have her eyes manipulated by spirit hands, the medium, and myself; all hands are joined, including the medium's. Soon as the medium is entranced, the violinist playing outside, the concert commences, several instruments being played upon at the same time, all of which have been detailed many times in the *Banner of Light*. The spirits stand before us, bodily, tangibly, and apparently with as solid flesh and bones as your own. They handle you, wet your hair with water, smooth it with tenderness, speak to you in audible voices, imprint the kiss upon your lips, write communications with their spirit hands, dotting the *r's*, crossing the *l's*, following the lines, underacoring sympathetic words, and all this in perfect darkness. They also sing beautifully. All the above and much more I witnessed while my hand was in contact with the medium's, and Mrs. Cushman holding the other. I never heard the little instrument called the French harp so sweetly played as by a little sprightly spirit calling herself Mayflower. After painting the portrait of this beautiful spirit, some visitors remarking upon the beauty of the



hair, I expressed a wish to possess a lock of the same. There was no more said of it at the time. In fact, it was quite forgotten, till the evening of the 5th of July.

To one acquainted with the medium, it could be clearly seen that something unusual was to occur that evening, for she had been kept in a condition of entrancement nearly all day, and seemed more feeble in health than usual.

The circle convened at the usual time, ten present, every one of whom I knew. After some audible conversation with one of the spirits relative to tuning the guitar, they commenced playing a waltz, when suddenly there appeared an illumined hand, presently another, and another, until several were produced, when they commenced going through the mazes of the waltz, quick almost as lightning. A hand and an arm would be projected from the medium about five and six feet, when it would seem to break near the middle, the ends collapsing each way. I could well understand why, if a dark lantern were sprung at this stage, it would seem to be the medium's hand and arm; also how blacking upon the instruments would leave an effect upon the medium, for in all cases the manifestational elements seem to come from the medium as a focus or centre of force.

After the waltz, two hands were laid on my head, exhibiting great strength and power, which were passed down my neck and shoulders with a force I shall not soon forget. Then there was put into my pocket what seemed to be a paper. The circle closed, and opening the paper, it proved to be a communication written by a spirit hand and enclosing the much-coveted lock of hair, which the spirit declares was taken from her head, and with a spiritual chemistry materialized for my benefit. I have examined it carefully through a microscope. It resembles human hair, only is more fine and silky. Colonel Cushman also received a lock of hair at the same time, accompanied with a communication from a former wife. She declared that the glistening hair belonged to her; and the communication was a *fac-simile* of her handwriting while on earth."

Besides the numerous phases of power which we have already noticed as occurring in Mrs. Chamberlain's mediumship, the specialties which have distinguished her above her compeers have been the exquisite character of the music, the tangibility of the spirit voices and forms, and the spontaneity with which rare bouquets of freshly gathered flowers have been produced in her presence. These phenomena, combined with the exceeding fragility

of the petite instrument through which they are evolved, render this lady's case one which calls for peculiar notice and circumstantiality of detail.

In regard to the music performed in her presence, it is of the most *recherché* as well as varied kind. The piano-forte, guitar, bells, harmonicon, drums, and several other instruments have been used, but the sweetest performances are given on the guitar and harmonicon. At a circle held under carefully guarded conditions, the writer (herself a musician) heard the invisibles execute several pieces on both these instruments in magnificent and masterly style.

The imitations of military music, a fire alarm, the tolling of bells, the prolonged *sostenuto* of a church organ, together with a great variety of grave and gay music played in rapid alternation in the dark, and on the strings of a simple guitar, was as marvelous to the listener as it has been to scores of others less instructed in the limited capacity of that instrument.

Still more astonishing was the execution of several airs with elaborate variations, given with ravishing sweetness and expression, on the petty toy dignified by the name of an harmonicon, but in reality a childish instrument which in mortal hands is only susceptible of producing a few tones of the humblest kind, and most limited range.

The singing and whistling of airs, the imitation of birds, and the performance, on the poorest instruments, of the most florid and difficult variations, are feats in which Mrs. Chamberlain's musical band have indeed manifested their super-excellent powers.

To add to the charm of these musical marvels, it has not unfrequently happened that the spirit lights accompanying the performers have been bright enough to enable a whole room full of persons to see the hands, large and small, engaged in manipulating the instruments.

A pile of correspondence, both printed and in MSS., is now upon the author's desk, offering the testimony of hundreds of respectable witnesses to these and still more astounding facts. From these testimonials, however, our space will only allow us to make a few more brief notices.

A lady long and intimately associated with Mrs. Chamberlain, writing to the author says:—

“We have heard voices speaking to us in the familiar tones of long remembered friends.

“At night, when Mrs. Chamberlain and myself occupied the same bed, two spirits would often converse with us in audible tones at the same time. They frequently addressed us in the daytime, giving us wise directions, prescriptions for the sick, information concerning absent friends, and predictions for the future, on all of which we could invariably rely:

“During our circles, they would frequently sing to us the songs of our childhood, and on more than one occasion they have written their names and messages on the ceiling, high above the reach of any mortal present.”

H. K. Washburn, of Middleboro, Mass., writing to the *Spiritual papers* in 1866, says:—

Several of our spirit friends gave their names, and spoke quite long sentences, in an audible voice, through the trumpet.

My mother, whose voice I had not heard for more than three years, spoke long sentences with the same tones and accents that belonged to her while living in a body of flesh. Warm hands were put about our heads and shoulders. One spirit friend, after talking through the trumpet, played whole tunes upon the piano, several parts at once. She was a relation of our family, and used to play upon that instrument before she left the earth sphere. Another friend, to identify herself, snapped her thumb and finger all around the circle.

As regards the production of flowers so often mentioned in connection with Annie Lord Chamberlain's mediumship, we need only detail one or two striking incidents in illustration of the rest.

Mrs. Chamberlain was residing at Roxbury with her friends, when, during a cold, snowy night in March, 1868, a circle was convened, consisting of the medium, her hostess, Mrs. Foster of Chelsea, Mrs. Eldridge of Lexington, and Messrs. H. G. Wilson and Frank Goring of Boston.

During the progress of the circle, the voice of a spirit recognized as "Belle Wide-Awake," cried, "Open the window, quick!" The request was complied with, when instantly a magnificent bouquet was brought in by invisible hands, and laid in the lap of the lady of the house.

This manifestation was given in the presence of several witnesses. It was repeated the same night in the following manner. Mrs. Chamberlain says:—

"We retired to bed between ten and eleven, in the second story chamber, and our conversation naturally turned on the beautiful floral gift we had received from the spirits. Presently we heard the voice of 'Belle Wide-Awake' crying, 'Get up quickly! open the window!'

"Both Mrs. C—— and myself were invalids, and as I was but just slowly recovering from a severe illness, I felt unable to obey the command. Mrs. C—— was also too unwell to comply, but the spirit solved our difficulty by adding, 'Call Mrs. Foster,' a lady who slept in the adjoining room, and who immediately came at our summons. Mrs. C—— and I joined hands, Mrs. Foster opened the window, when immediately a lovely bouquet came whizzing past us, and dropped in Mrs. C——'s arms."

On a subsequent occasion, and in the presence of a large circle of persons, a number of small and elegantly arranged bouquets were brought through the second story window, opened by request of the spirits, and distributed to different members of the circle. At this time, snow was on the ground, and some of the gentlemen

present carefully examined the house, especially the vicinity of the window, but as no traces of footprints could be found, nor the slightest disturbance of the newly fallen snow, no shadow of doubt was left for carping skepticism to question the source of the demonstrations. The crowning effect of this beautiful series of manifestations was produced when the loving and grateful spirits who acted through Mrs. Chamberlain's willing mediumship, placed upon her head a gorgeously beautiful wreath of natural flowers, the texture of which has been carefully preserved by art, and is now, together with the bouquet first received, occasionally exhibited to some of Mrs. Chamberlain's privileged acquaintances.

The circumstances attending the reception of the wreath were as follows: Mrs. Chamberlain and her friend Mrs. C—— had retired for the night, in the month of April, 1868, when about eleven o'clock they were both called by name, and desired to open the window-blinds and take their stand on either side. This they did, when immediately a wreath, composed of the rarest and freshest of newly gathered flowers, was placed tastefully on Mrs. Chamberlain's head.

One of the chief difficulties which attends the narration of these wonderful and extra-mundane experiences, is the fact that they have occurred during the last few years in the circles convened in the privacy of the home, or the ordinary routine of domestic life; both conditions necessarily involving tests, incidents, and communications of too personal a character to belong to the public. Thus many far more remarkable phenomena than those above related are necessarily withheld.

At one time a pearl ring of considerable value was presented by a spirit to an earthly friend, and its price actually paid. A memento gold ring was procured for another beloved one on earth by a spirit, through a series

of most remarkable circumstances; and several other articles of jewelry were obtained and distributed by spirits, in modes as strange and ingenious as they have hitherto been unprecedented in human experience. We shall conclude this sketch of the most interesting and highly gifted of our modern sibyls by a few extracts from the home diary kept during Mrs. Chamberlain's stay at the house of Colonel and Mrs. Cushman at Ottawa, Ill.

*November 13, 1866.*—The manifestations at our family circle this evening were pleasant and powerful.

Mayflower played "Departed Days" on her pet instrument, the harmonicon, and as usual she addressed each one by name, giving many sweet words in her graceful, sunny way. . . .

Several airs were beautifully whistled by a spirit; amongst others, that very difficult piece "The Mocking Bird" with variations.

*November 26.*— . . . Mrs. Church, a lady not heretofore acquainted with the Spiritual theory, was fully made to realize the presence of her companion, who had passed into spirit life some years before. Warm kisses were pressed upon her brow, while an arm was thrown with protecting love around her. After the circle closed, and the gas was lighted, these words were found written:—

"Good night. Your husband,

HARMON."

Harmon was indeed the name of Mrs. Church's husband, though unknown to any one present but herself.

*November 27.*— . . . Mabel, our little girl, eight years old, was taken from her chair by the spirit Red Jacket, placed on her feet, and put on the table. The child did not evince the slightest fear; on the contrary, expressed her pleasure by laughing during the operation. Our daughter Susie, fourteen years of age, sitting outside the circle, remarked, "I should like to have a spirit lift me." The words had scarcely passed her lips when she felt an arm thrown round her waist, and she was gently lifted over the heads of the circle; and placed upon the table by her sister's side.

It is not unusual for Mrs. Chamberlain to be lifted, chair and all, and put upon the table, but it surprised us not a little to have the children lifted so easily.

The piano was played by an acquaintance in spirit life, and we could distinctly see the hands as they pressed the keyboard.

A strange spirit made his advent in our midst, this evening, announcing himself as "the Highland Piper" and playing a Scotch air familiar to a musician present from "the land of Burns."

Volumes might be added, full of incidents sweet and graceful, in their tokens of love and kindness, and familiar enough when performed through the agency of mortal beings like ourselves; but when we reflect that such evidences of an ever-living presence come from those the world calls dead, and testify of powers, forces, scientific knowledge, and chemical combinations unknown to mortals, and all new and unprecedented in mortal experience, then our interest is turned into astonishment, and our regard for the instrument of such performances deepened by reverential awe at the mysterious power involved in their production.

When in addition to all this, we take into consideration the patience, forbearance, and fidelity of the human instrument through whom this tale of magic and marvel has been evolved, our aim, in its transcription, and the amount of space we have allotted to this biography, will be fully understood and appreciated.

The subject of this sketch still dwells amongst us. Her gifts continue, and though they are at present less frequently and less publicly called into action, her warmth of heart and beneficent nature are expressed in a life of kindness, helpfulness, and activity to a large circle of loving friends wherever she goes; hence the world loses nothing by the change of direction which her energies have taken. Besides, the end is not yet. One thing is certain; as long as Annie Lord Chamberlain is permitted to stay with us, her future, like her present and past, must be one of usefulness and blessing to her fellow-creatures, and whenever her work is done, and she gains the shores of the hereafter, for which she has been laboring, the fragrant memories implanted in many a loving

and grateful heart will fill the sails of her boat, and help to waft her enfranchised spirit across the "beautiful river," whilst many a professing saint, and all who have ever traduced, persecuted, or unwittingly placed a thorn in her path, may envy the glad anthem of acclamation which will welcome home this true and faithful spirit to the land of eternal love, light, and compensation.





## LINES ON A SKELETON.

SOME sixty years ago, the following poem appeared in the London *Morning Chronicle*. Every effort was vainly made to discover the author, even to the offering of a reward of fifty guineas. All that ever transpired was, that the poem, written in a fair, clerky hand, was found near a skeleton of remarkable symmetry of form in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn, London, and that the curator of the museum sent them to the *Morning Chronicle*:—

Behold this ruin! 'twas a skull,  
Once, of ethereal spirit full:  
This narrow cell was life's retreat,  
This space was Thought's mysterious seat.  
What beauteous visions filled this spot!  
What dreams of pleasure, long forgot!  
Nor hope, nor joy, nor love, nor fear,  
Have left one trace of record here.

Beneath this mouldering canopy  
Once shone the bright and busy eye;  
But start not at the dismal void:  
If social love that eye employed,  
If with no lawless fire it gleamed,  
But through the dews of kindness beamed,  
That eye shall be forever bright  
When stars and sun are sunk in night.

Within this hollow cavern hung  
The ready, swift, and tuneful tongue.  
If falsehood's honey it disdained,  
And, when it could not praise, was chained;  
If bold in virtue's cause it spoke,  
Yet gentle concord never broke;

*Lines on a Skeleton.*

This silent tongue shall plead for thee  
When time unveils eternity.

Say, did these fingers delve the mine,  
Or with the envied rubies shine ?  
To hew the rock, or wear the gem,  
Can little now avail to them ;  
But if the page of truth they sought,  
Or comfort to the mourner brought,  
These hands a richer meed shall claim  
Than all that wait on wealth or fame.

**MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM;**

**OR,**

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

**BY**

**EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.**

**VOL. II. — CHAPTER VI.**



## VI

### VISIONS.

#### CHAPTER VI

*Definition of Visions. — Spiritual Visions and Human Clairvoyance, etc., Contrasted. — Somnambulism, Electro-Biology, and Mediumship. — Vision of "The Homes of the Rich Dead." — Vision of the Green Tea Serpent. — The Red Hand. — Vision of the Carpet.*

" Away with weary cares and themes !  
Swing wide the moonlit gate of dreams ;  
Leave free once more the land which teems  
With wonders and romances !  
Where thou with clear-discerning eyes  
Shalt rightly read the truth which lies  
Beneath the quaintly marked guise  
Of wild and wizard fancies."

WHITTIER.

Of all the methods by which the world of the occult and invisible make manifest their watch and ward over this mundane sphere, none is more interesting or more frequently resorted to than the presentation of visions.

With all peoples, and in the case of every individual subject to influence from the spiritual side of our being, visions have been made the means of revealing the future, conveying instruction in seasons of trial, warning against impending danger, and prophetically disclosing future events. It seems as if nature was but one vast system of hidden harmony, of which forms, colors, sounds, and perfumes were the several notes ! In this view of creative order, Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences is

the only clue that man can possess, whereby to interpret nature and her laws; and thus, through allegorical visions or pictorial representations presented to the spiritual eye, we correspondentially read the succession of events, or the meaning of hidden things.

Certain objects become significant of certain ideas; a form, a color, or a sound reveals a whole history, and under the illumination of spiritual sight discloses a world of meaning and realms of interior sense, never apprehended by the dull eyes of mortality.

In the most limited sense of the term, that is, assuming that a vision is a spiritual representation made by the inhabitant of a higher world to the spiritual eye of a mortal, a vision must be either an objective scene existing somewhere in the realms of space, or a psychological impression produced on the mind by the will of a spiritual psychologist.

In the more general definition of the phenomenon, we may include under the generic term of visions a perception of any scene, object, place, or person which can only be observed by the spiritual eye.

Visionary representations are most commonly procured through the psychological impressions of a disembodied spirit upon the mind of an embodied one, but they may also be objects observed by a seer, when the spiritual eye is opened in sleep, or the magnetic condition.

There are four mental states so closely analogous to each other that they are constantly confounded, and though each is productive of the phenomena of visions, their origin and operation are totally at variance, and they will be found by close analysis to proceed from wholly different mental and physical conditions.

The first, and perhaps the least understood of these states is

## SOMNAMBULISM.

In this condition the slumber is far more profound than ordinary sleep, yet it differs from that procured by animal magnetism because, in the latter case, the sleep results from the magnetic passes of an operator, whilst in somnambulism it is self-induced, and results from causes peculiar to the subject's own temperament or physical condition. In some respects somnambulism exhibits the same phenomena as that proceeding from the magnetic sleep, for whilst the external senses are sealed in profound unconsciousness, the spirit appears to be endowed with functions and faculties of preternatural exaltation, and to have entered upon a higher state of being; still it seems to be independent of its material surroundings, and carries the body along with it as if unaware of its nature.

Somnambulism appears to be a sort of "trance" state, and one into which young and mediumistic persons are liable to fall when the magnetic currents of the body are disturbed or unduly stimulated. In the mean time it does not necessarily infer the agency or control of spirits, although spirits may take advantage of the state when in operation, to influence its subject.

Somnambulism differs from the true mediumistic or magnetic trance, in the fact that it does not originate in the agency of foreign influence, and hence the somnambulist is not necessarily controlled by another mind, during the continuance of the sleep. The second subdivision of our subject is

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE.

And this is one in which the will of a strong positive mind so effectually controls that of another of a negative quality, that the senses of the latter are for the time being held in abeyance, and only take shape and form from the will of the operator.



In this state, the operator's magnetism is projected by will upon the subject, who, without becoming actually unconscious, loses all power of volition, and finds his sensuous perception entirely merged in that of his operator.

A skillful operator can in this way compel his subject to see, feel, taste, and even think, whatsoever he wills, and for the time the influence lasts, such a subject is a mere piece of mechanism, in which all the attributes of self-hood are lost, or replaced by those of the operator. The purely psychological state is, in fact, the entire subjugation of one mind to the influence of another.

As a wonderful exhibition of mental phenomena, psychological influence, or, as it has been termed, "Electro-Biology," is curious and suggestive; but in view of the temporary imbecility which it produces in the subject, and its liability to be abused by unprincipled experimenters, its exercise (except by way of scientific research) is equally pernicious and inexpedient.

We call especial attention to the phenomena of electro-biology in this connection, however, because it explains some of the methods by which spirits place visionary representations before the eyes of their mediums.

Thus, when the electro-biologist has, by animal magnetism and the projection of his will, obtained full control over his subject, he has but to desire him to see any picture, form, or image his own mind can create, and instantly that image becomes as palpable to the eye of the subject, as if it had a really objective existence, and were then present before him.

Let the reader carry his inference from the sphere of human to that of spiritual operations, and he will understand how a spiritual biologist, though unseen, may impress upon the mind of a human subject such objects as he desires him to behold, and the subject (unconscious perhaps of the source of the influence, but realizing its

effects) calls the images presented to his spiritual eye, "visions."

Visions they undoubtedly are, but the word alone is no explanation of their source, and we may as well expect that a human being shall exhibit all the phenomena of electro-biology without the control of a biologist, as that a spirit medium shall behold "visions" without either an objective source for their appearance, or a spiritual psychologist to project them from his will.

#### CLAIRVOYANCE.

Clairvoyance is the third state in which visions are procured, and is either an independent power resident in the organism of the seer, or a spiritual perception induced by the magnetism of another. Clairvoyance is spiritual sight, and takes cognizance of the spiritual part of things rather than of their exterior nature. As there is neither time nor space in spiritual existence, so there are no obstacles of either with the clairvoyant, who sees objects a thousand miles distant as well as those immediately present, and can trace events back in the past and forward in the future, with the same lucidity as those which are transpiring in the passing moment. There are three kinds of clairvoyance. The one may be called independent clairvoyance, and proceeds from an occasional opening of the spiritual eye, in which state the subject perceives the spiritual part or "soul of things." This state is like somnambulism, normal to some organisms, and occurs both in sleep in the form of dreams, or in waking moments, presenting visions of distant persons or scenes, prophetic or allegorical pictures, sometimes called "second sight," or the interior of things; as in diagnosing disease, or reading character. The subjects of this interior sight, or waking somnambulism, can never give any other description of their condition than that it seems to be an interior impression produced upon their minds.

The truth is, in wholly independent clairvoyance it is a temporary subjugation of the outer sense of vision, and an awakening of the inner or spiritual sight, and the objects or scenes beheld depend for their nature on some peculiar links of association which attract the spiritual sight in that direction.

The second phase of clear sight is that induced by animal magnetism. In this state the body is put to sleep, and the spirit is liberated into complete wakefulness, when its perceptions become like independent clairvoyance, superior to all the obstacles interposed by time, space, or dense matter.

An independent clairvoyant can sometimes induce the magnetic state by will and a condition of passivity, and the results of this self-magnetizing process are often higher and more luminous than those procured through mesmerism, the spiritual perception of such subjects being free from the influence of a magnetizer, and less likely to be colored by his will, or limited by his knowledge.

The last of these conditions which we shall notice is

#### SPIRITUAL MEDIUMSHIP.

This state is to some extent analogous to all the others referred to, for the medium, like the somnambulist, may be in a profound sleep as far as external perception is concerned; yet the spirit can exhibit evidences of more lucidity and exaltation than in any condition of exterior wakefulness. In the "trance," induced by a spiritual magnetizer, the medium beholds the past, present, or future, takes cognizance of distant scenes on earth, or soars away into the realms of a still higher existence. It is doubtless this state which is so often referred to as being "in the spirit," by the prophets of Israel, and in which the most vivid representations are beheld of spirits and spiritual existence; it is one also in which guardian spirits

most commonly present allegorical pictures, and those significant modes of instruction which are called "visions."

There are conditions, however, in which mediums may be perfectly awake to the external world, yet become so impressed by invisible psychologists, that they may hear, taste, feel, and even act out the will of spirits, as well as see such images as they desire to impress on the subjects' minds. Also a spiritual magnetizer may so operate upon his subject as to enable him to examine and prescribe for diseases, and exhibit all the powers of clairvoyance procured by mesmeric passes or independent clairvoyance.

The human side of this question is defined in the three states called somnambulism, electro-biology, and independent clairvoyance, or that procured by animal magnetism. Each of these conditions opens the spiritual eye, and more or less closes up the avenues of natural or material sight, without the aid of a foreign spirit. Each enables the seer to behold the spiritual part of things, but the objects, persons, or scenes observed are generally limited to the sphere of earth, and originate in earthly causes. On the contrary, the psychological and magnetic conditions which distinguish the spirit medium, though they often include all the above cited phenomena, transcend its limits, and carry the clairvoyant vision into the realm of spiritual existences. Thus, the powers of the medium being unfolded by the influence of spirits, perception sweeps through wider and grander vistas, and the images presented to view, whether merely psychological representations, or objective realities of spirit life, may with peculiar significance be denominated "visions."

We shall now give a few illustrations of the various modes in which visions are presented to the eye of the seer. The first of these are allegorical scenes, or pictorial representations projected psychologically from the mind

of a guardian spirit, and designed to symbolize some spiritual idea, which derives additional force from the significance of the imagery.

Such were the visions presented to the Jewish prophets, on whose eyes the strange and mystic images they beheld doubtless appeared with an interpretive meaning, that the mists of eighteen centuries have obscured beyond our comprehension.

Such was the gorgeous symbolism of the mysterious Apocalypse, and such, with a change of character and imagery wisely adapted to the mentality of a different age, may be considered an immense mass of the visionary symbolism arrayed before the eyes of modern seers. Most commonly the interpretation accompanies the vision, and wonderfully wise and ingenious appear the correspondences involved in these mystic and emblematical pictures.

The following striking vision was given to the author under circumstances which will be best understood by quoting the narrative, as it was published in several of the Spiritual journals.

#### A VISION,

PRESENTED TO, AND RECORDED BY, EMMA HARDINGE.

It was sunset on Lake Ontario: I lay on a couch to which indisposition had confined me for several hours, watching dreamily the fitful, changing hues of the sky, and the gorgeous reflection of its gold and purple glories on the tossing waters of the shining lake. Painter's canvas never yet displayed the wealth of coloring that the artist sun then cast like a mantle over the enchanting scene. Each moment changing its glorious pageantry, it seemed as if the the dying day called up from the world of infinite ideas, this phantasmagoria of beauty, to teach me the loveliness of death, when nature reigns supreme, and the strong, the good, and beautiful are passing away. Passing away! yes, though the scene I looked upon was motion, life, in its fairest garb of loveliness, 'twas life going out; the lamp of day soon to be quenched in the solemn mystery of darkness, and that day's death.

Suddenly my wandering thoughts were fixed on one, whom for years I had not seen or scarcely thought upon. He was a man whom no de-

scription can fully represent to the inhabitants of this western continent; for he was of a class unknown in American experiences,—a peer of the British realms; the elder brother of a wealthy, noble, and far-descended house, and a marked actor in that peculiar drama which is only played amongst the members of the British aristocracy.

You cannot follow me, my American friends, were I to attempt for you a description of the stately earl and his peculiar sphere of action; happy for you, you cannot; for the sum of all is told when I translate his life in this: his birth, position, the law of primogeniture, and other specialties had manufactured a rich nobleman and a capacious mind into a bad man, notorious for his enormous gallantries in public life, and his equally enormous tyranny in private life. This man had lived for self, and used time, talents, wealth, and station for no other purpose than the gratification of self and selfish passions.

I presume he had never committed any act that could bring upon him the penalty of the law; but in Great Britain our courts of honor, chastity, and equity exist only in public opinion; and this pronounces verdict against the poor, never the rich; otherwise this great earl would scarcely have escaped a felon's fate.

In my youth I had known this man. I had often read Shakespeare to him, sang and played for him; and, despite some awe with which his singularly stately presence inspired me, I returned his regard for me with perhaps more of interest than the young and innocent generally yielded to him. My full understanding of his character was the revelation of after years. Since I have been in America, the journals of home have brought the intelligence of the great man's transit into "the land of rest."

I had become a believer in Spiritualism about a year; and then, as often since, had wondered why that spirit never sought communion with the girl who remembered him kindly, and with whom the dark shadows of wrong had never been associated. Still he came not. Sometimes I wondered whether "the great gulf" of Scripture was not a truth, and the rich, bad man could not cross it.

This night my mind was full of him; and the spirit earl was the last normal thought I can recall, ere I entered that strange, dreamlike state, baffling all description, which we so vaguely call the "trance."

I passed through what seemed many spheres of mist and gloom. They occupied much space, but gave me no other idea but that of traversing vast distances. At length I stood in a city of buildings, connected with each other, which seemed to be the destination to which my spirit's flight had been tending.

The experiences of the spirit can never be fully translated into human speech; hence I cannot attempt to describe, in the language of matter, the inconceivable spaces through which I seemed to travel, nor the

splendor with which I was surrounded. Eye hath not seen, nor heart conceived of the beauty wrought by the spirit, or of distances where infinity offers no horizon; but the character of the buildings I traversed I can at least describe.

They consisted of chambers, galleries, staircases, halls, and corridors; furnished with all the gorgeous magnificence of Oriental luxury.

Three points in my journey, however, were most remarkable. The first was the amazing and palpable darkness that filled these palaces revealing clearly every color and shape, yet thick with an atmosphere of such dense blackness that I could taste it, suffocate in it, almost cut it; 'twas awful, overwhelming, stifling. 'Twas darkness visible, night incarnate.

The next point of interest was the total absence of inhabitants; not a living thing was visible; and though in process of my wanderings I seemed to traverse worlds, and to have occupied ages since my entrance, so deathlike was the stillness, so terrible the awful quiet, that I felt as if an eternity of pain would be cheaply purchased by the sight of even an insect or a reptile; but the crowning fact of my strange experience was the effect of the scene on my own spirits. At first I was affected by a profound melancholy; but as I proceeded, this deepened into a despair so hopeless that memory and even the sense of pain at last fled. At certain stages of my pilgrimage the gloom and solitude produced in my mind the most agonizing longing for light, air, and companionship; but even the energy to frame a wish at length abandoned me, and though sensible of a dim possibility, by powerful exercise of will, of summoning aid to my side, I lost at last the faculty even of suffering, and wandered on, seemingly for years, centuries, ages, a living annihilation, an incarnation of hopeless woe.

God, angels, life, worlds; all were nothing to me: I was in eternity and endless death!

The most distinct memory I can now retain was a vague wonder as to whether I was thus suffering for expiation of my own sins, or learning by horrible experience the condition of others.

I think that this amount of energy expended even in this effort at reflection opened up a new phase in my dreadful pilgrimage, for it was answered by the tones of a sweet, bell-like voice, whose low but clear intonations seemed wafted from the immeasurable distance of some far-off world. It said, "You are now in the spirit homes of earth's rich dead, Emma; here dwell the Dives of earth, whom men say, die so very rich; here they live in the splendors they loved, the wealth they adored, and surrounded by the idols they made and worshipped.

"Your sufferings, Emma, are theirs in the realization of the life for

which they sold themselves; and now you may judge the value of the coin for which the cold-hearted and selfish rich man sells his soul.

“How like you the exchange?”

I shuddered and wept bitterly for the insane rich of earth. “Where are they?” I murmured.

“Everywhere,” replied the voice. “Myriads move around you, and wander and feel as you do, but none see the others, or you; it is the condition of entrance to the spheres of self-love, that the eye shall behold naught but self, realize no other existence. They toiled in earth life to attain this state; here they reap the harvest they have sown.”

“But this darkness,” I cried; “O, for the light, for but one ray of the blessed sunlight! Why cannot the sun of heaven penetrate these awful abodes?”

“And so it does, child. Here, as everywhere else, is heaven, and light, and sun; but where are the eyes that can behold it? If heaven be not within us, in vain we seek it elsewhere. If our eyes are forever turned in upon self, they are blind to all besides. From the soul's centre goes forth the true light or darkness of the land of souls.”

“O that I could see but one of the inhabitants of this doleful region,” I thought, and with the wish came its instant gratification, for, raising my eyes, I beheld the form of a living being approaching me. At first, the delight of seeing a thing of life again, impelled me to rush toward it, but the singularity of the figure, and its evident incapacity to perceive me, arrested my steps, and I stood watching with curious interest my new companion. The figure was that of a very, very old man; indeed, to judge by his wrinkled face and withered aspect, he might have been the sole surviving wreck of centuries.

His height could not have exceeded that of a child of four years, and the garments that hung in threadbare folds around his shrunken form, were a world too wide for the poor anatomy they covered, and yet I knew this pitiful little figure bore the evidence of decrease rather than natural deformity, and that his present childish dimensions had come from the shrinking of a once mighty form of manhood.

Yes, I knew this, not only from the revelation of his past, which each spirit bears about, engraved on the unmasked soul, but because I could trace in those withered features, and that diminished shape, the wreck of the once proud, stately earl, whom in former days I had looked upon as the beau ideal of aristocratic manhood!

O, how terrible it was to behold him thus! His face wore an expression of unutterable grief, but withal a look of mild resignation and hopeless regret, that pierced my very soul. Slowly and feebly he passed on without regarding me, but as he neared me, and ere he finally disappeared, I heard him sigh. O, Heaven! how he sighed, and what a



world of bitter memories, useless regrets, and wasting sorrow came sobbing on the air, laden with the sigh of that suffering soul!

Ah, me! It was indeed the breath of a wailing spirit; the gnashing of teeth; and "outer darkness."

With his departure, even the interminable solitudes of his home seemed more tolerable; but again I heard the sweet cadence of my invisible angel's voice chiming in my ear:—

"Yes, Emma, it is he, even Lord——. You wonder at the strange transfiguration which death has wrought on the splendid peer; but ask yourself the size of his soul when its earthly mask was rent off, and his spirit appeared with its one grain of ideality, and that, all self. Emma, you pigmy has grown by suffering since his entrance here, from an almost invisible monad to the size you just beheld. Yes, Emma, self was all that existed in the great man's soul, and self is but one spark in the divine unity of illimitable fires that must all burn in perfection and harmony, ere the central sun of soul is fully unfolded.

"Until then, true life does not even begin. Judge then of the size of you embryotic spirit, when first it shook off the clods of earth to stand revealed, not for name, lineage, wealth, or station, but just for its worth, no more."

"Alas!" I cried, "teach us, angelic guide, though suffering be the road, and blood and tears the baptism, teach us how to live so that at last we may cast off our earthly burdens, and enter upon our spiritual inheritance, full-grown spirits, men and women souls."

"Hard is the path of riches, strong the pleadings of self, ruinous the crushing weight of uncurbed passion," replied my guide. "These with the sophistic lull of custom, and overweening devotion to the things of earth that minister only to earthly loves, have dwarfed many such souls as his, and shrunk up the blossoms of genius and intellect, until these doleful spheres are thick with worlds of people of whom you man is a type."

"Their destiny," I murmured; "O, send me not away comfortless."

"Despair, remorse, regret; then penitence, submission, such deep humility as shone upon that old man's piteous face are theirs. Then becoming once again as little children, the morning of a new life shall dawn for them, and glorious will be the evening that shall close their day of labor and see them as they should be, full-grown spirits, and heirs of the everlasting kingdom, where earth with its baser nature never enters."

The pale moon was full and high, and the vault of heaven thick with world flowers, when I again, with natural vision, looked on the face of earth.

Perhaps, after so solemn a lesson as that of the past hour, the action may appear grotesque and unworthy, but it was nevertheless irresistible,

and consisted in springing from my couch, opening my porte-monnaie and (though its contents would never, I think, in its most plethoric condition prove a temptation to any one) pouring them upon the floor, trampling them beneath my feet, and crying aloud to the mighty power in whose hands poor, tempted souls are passion-tossed, or "stayed in perfect peace," to "lead me not into temptation," and deliver me from the evil of my own soul.

For many and many a day after this, I esteemed my poverty a privilege; it was long before I could dare to speculate even with necessary foresight upon any arrangements that required me to calculate upon the possession of money; dreadful, awful, tyrannical, soul-corrupting money. Though I believe I shall never, in this respect, be tempted beyond the need of the bare day's provision, yet still do I remember my vision of warning with an awe that forever comments on the fatal truth, "How hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven!"

I do not love to think or speak of this vision; my soul is pained to be assured of its truth; to know that about me are the dreadful "homes of the selfish rich;" that in the invisible world of which earth, sky, suns, and systems are full, are eternally pacing the unresting feet of the solitary worshippers of self, in their hideous loneliness, their frightful penance for gratification of their souls' idolatries.

At one period of her life, and during many of its most toilsome and perilous years, the author was constantly instructed, guided, and cheered by the presentation of visions whose significance was as striking as the one above narrated, but whose immediate application to the passing events of the time would make their recital personal and inexpedient. Amongst those of a more general character, the reader may remember the vision of the cross-handled sword seen in Canada, and the prognostics of war foreshadowed in Alabama, both of which are narrated in the first volume of this work.

Sometimes the visionary revelation assumed the form of a warning; thus, when starting on a journey, certain individuals were represented surrounded by snakes, to signify treachery. Lizards, toads, or venomous reptiles would be seen in an extended hand, or issuing from the lips. A half-masked face would be presented to typify deceit; beautiful garments soiled or patched with unsuitable rags, to show inequalities of character; and an almost infinite variety of devices were presented, typical of mental qualities in various parties.

Exquisite flowers or noisome weeds, luxuriant or stunted trees, all things in nature were worked into representative images, and all carried with them the most profound and truthful delineation of scenes to be visited, events and persons to be encountered, and characters to be dealt with.

On one occasion the author, being prostrate with a violent constitutional headache, was soliciting advice from her spirit friends how to regulate her life so as to avoid such suffering in future. Instantly a vision of herself was presented to her eyes, in which she saw her head encircled by a most gorgeous and radiantly colored snake, whose scaly folds were wound around her forehead in the shape of an Oriental turban.

The head of the snake was upreared, and suddenly made a dart with its forked tongue into the visionary brow; at the same moment the seeress realized one of those agonizing spasms which had of late accompanied these headaches.

On one part of the snake was engraved in letters of jeweled light the words, "Green Tea," and thus was rebuked the author's habit at that time of indulging in green tea to an injurious extent.

Following out the hint thus ingeniously suggested, green tea was from that time dispensed with, and the worst form of the spasmodic headaches ceased.

At another time the author was about to set out for a long journey in the northern part of California, where the route was wild and haunted by broken tribes of hostile Indians. Many of her friends besought the lecturer to give up her perilous undertaking, but whilst they were remonstrating with her, a vision was presented, representing her own apparition travelling in a rude farm wagon, with a young lad of about eighteen for a driver, two horses of the rough Mexican type, and a visionary red hand brandishing a torch aloft in the air, guiding the vehicle.

With this piece of imagery came the impression that so long as the hand was there to guide the way with that lighted torch, no harm could befall her.

Acting on this belief, the seeress prepared for her journey on the succeeding day, and when the vehicle was brought to convey her away, it was found that its appearance, as well as that of the driver and horses, exactly corresponded with the objects of the vision.

During the ensuing journey many seeming perils threatened the way, but ever as the moment of danger approached, the red hand flashing its burning torch flitted before her eyes, inspiring the most tranquilizing impression of perfect safety.

Towards the close of the second day's travel another vision was presented, representing a pleasant home, a well furnished apartment, and a tall lady of commanding appearance and striking countenance, who had but recently risen from a sick-bed, coming forward to welcome her visitor.

There were no children in the apartment; only a youth of about fifteen years old, who carried a drum slung round his neck.

Over the lady's head shone the red hand and blazing torch, but at that

moment the torch was turned downwards on the ground, and extinguished. As they were approaching the end of their pilgrimage, the author questioned the driver concerning the household of the friends with whom she was to stay, and to her infinite disappointment found none of his descriptions tally with the scene of her vision.

On arriving at her place of destination, she was introduced into a rude log house of one bare room, swarms of half-dressed children crowded round her, and a petite female figure, the very antithesis of the tall lady of the vision, came forward to receive her.

Before she had accepted of a proffered seat, however, a gentleman advanced, who informed her she was to proceed still farther, some five miles, to his home, it having been considered that she could be there better accommodated.

In another hour she stood within the chamber of the vision.

A lady who had just risen from a sick-couch, with a tall, commanding form, came forward to greet her, and the youth she had seen (who afterwards turned out to be quite a celebrated drummer in that district) stood by his mother's side and joined in her welcome.

Ere she could reciprocate these words of good cheer, the red hand flashed in the air, the blazing torch was turned downwards, and quenched on the ground, and by this sign the seeress knew that the dear hand that had protected her through her perilous pilgrimage, had fulfilled the promise of its apparition, and had now completed its work.

Sometimes a warning of danger was presented by the vision of a lighthouse, a storm at sea, swords, clouds, weeping or mocking faces.

Sometimes the entire series of events about to ensue, or a single portion of them would be shown.

The scenery through which she was to pass, the house to which she was proceeding, the persons she was to meet with, or some peculiar imagery that revealed their character, such pictures as these accompanied the author during all her long years of itinerancy in the cause of Spiritualism.

The chief part of these visions are of a prophetic nature; occasionally, however, they are mingled with pictures of instruction, or such forms as disclose the hidden character or motives of others. As an illustration of the methods by which instruction is conveyed in these allegorical pictures, we will cite the following, given to a company of Spiritualists who were complaining to the author with much bitterness of the large amount of worthless matter, or, as they called it, "trash," which was either received from the spirit world or palmed off as originating there.

Upon this a vision was presented of an immense heap or cairn, which was made up of colored rags and tatters, scraps of ribbon, cloth, paper, pieces of broken glass, china, stones, wood, and old metal; rusty nails,

tarnished finery, new and old ends of carpet, wool, and some few flowers, handfuls of leaves, and here and there a piece of some really rich or useful material.

For some time this vast heap kept growing larger and higher, being supplied continually with contributions from all sorts, kinds, and conditions of persons, who came to cast in their gift or refuse to the heap.

Lawyers brought piles of torn papers; grocers, fishmongers, and every description of trade threw in a bit of their produce, whilst old and young, rich and poor, cast in something characteristic of their special calling, age, or state.

At length the mass appeared to have grown so large that it could receive no more contributions, and then by a process of internal fermentation it exhaled from every part vast volumes of steam, which for a while completely enveloped it. Then there appeared through the rolling clouds of vapor, multitudes of little creatures like fairies busily engaged at the top and sides of the heap, trampling it under their tiny feet until its height began to diminish.

Pressed into an indistinguishable pulp, the fairy creatures continued to trample down the mass until it became an enormous flat carpet which spread out over the whole earth. Then it was apparent that the imprint of the fairies' own beautiful forms were being stamped into this carpet, until from an unsightly, shapeless heap, it became a radiant, many colored, and exquisitely wrought tapestry in which every image that the earth had ever known was magnificently portrayed. And yet, wonderful to behold, the original shreds and patches which had contributed to form the cairn, though now exquisitely transfigured and combined in marvelous beauty in the pattern, were still distinguishable for what they had originally been.

It was evident this glorious carpet was to represent the whole earth and all humanity upon it, and so the pieces of iron, brass, and other rusty scraps of metal were now combined into lovely mosaic work; even the broken bits of glass were used up as glittering gems, and the old junk, cordage, hemp, refuse, and shreds of coarsest material were neatly woven together to form the ground work of the tapestry.

All was treasured up; all was put to finest use, and elaborated into matchless beauty, and this the seeress was instructed to tell her friends were the shreds and patches of life they had so scorned. Piled up into a vast heap representative of all the various gradations and classes of humanity, the cairn reached the heavens. Fermented together in one common destiny, the labors of the kind angels transformed the whole corrupting mass into the splendid mosaic work which forms the floor of a new earth, and soars away into a new heaven. In a word, all the waste

trash and rubbish of past ages is thus gathered up and transfigured into use and beauty in the new dispensation of modern Spiritualism.

In conclusion the guardian spirit said: "The fairy laborers are spirits. The carpet which shall cover the whole earth with its beauty is Spiritualism, and the destiny of this race is to weave this divine flooring out of the faults, failings, good, and evil of the present generation, that the next may tread thereon, and read in its wonderful woof the meaning, good, and use of every atom in creation."

As the subject under discussion is one of such universal interest and world-wide experience, we shall resume its consideration in the ensuing chapter, concluding with the assurance that those who have been favored with the unfoldment of this interior sight, consider it to be one of the most sublime and significant methods of instruction that has ever yet been vouchsafed to man from the Source of all light and the Fountain of all wisdom.



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

PART IV.

BY ASMODEUS.

STILL IN GOTHAM.

ON Sunday morning, in the month, no matter what, about the year, no consequence when, but in the palmy days of New York Spiritualism, that is to say, just when the spirits had begun knocking at the doors of the worthy Knickerbockers, and wakened them up to the consciousness that they had immortal souls; just, I say, as this singular piece of intelligence had begun to dawn upon them, and the said Knickerbockers were not a little astonished at the fact, I stood at the door of Dodworth's Hall, Broadway, waiting for my newly formed and interesting acquaintance "Go-ahead" to join me, according to promise made on the previous night, with a view of introducing me to the Spiritualists' religious services. Dodworth's, the *pro tem.* Church of Spiritualism, was then situated, and is so still (unless it has moved itself away), within three or four doors of Grace Church, the headquarters of those whose religious faith may be measured by the quality of their garments, and the curious fact that their souls are generally carried in their side pockets.

As my friend Go-ahead was then, as ever after, somewhat delinquent on the question of time, in his appointments, I had an excellent opportunity of judging what were the external characteristics of those who attended



upon the Church of the Spirit and the Church of "Grace," sometimes irreverently styled the valley of dry bones, and "dry goods." As the dry goods were on this occasion undoubtedly in high force, I can pledge my veracity, for the fact that neither outcast, beggar, wanderer, vagrant, nor anything in the shape of a Nazarene, Galilean, or fisherman made its way into that highly respectable fane. Sinners there might have been (and to judge by the number of Common Councilmen and city officials who poured in there, I should think there were not a few), but Publicans of the old Jewish type, who really went to pray to God, I can take my oath I saw none. Scribes, Pharisees, Lawyers, and all and sundry who are supposed to be great on tithes, pew-rents, and "loud amens," flocked in by hundreds, but the farthest-sighted pair of glasses I could put on, failed to discover a single satin kirtle or broadcloth coat that covered the faintest semblance of a "Mary Magdalene" or a "man of sorrows," amongst all that Christian throng. After watching splendid carriages setting down their democratic occupants for the space of over half an hour, and daintily attired republicans picking their way through throngs of gaping common people with anything but an air of universal equality; I came to the conclusion that it was well for my seedy coat, threadbare pants, and rusty beaver, that Go-ahead had not invited me to "come to Jesus" in that splendid repository of the newest fashions, as my half-hour's survey convinced me that the highly genteel and aristocratic sexton, who swept by me waving his scented cambric in the air, would not have put the Lord himself into a seat, unless he had just been to Stewart's to get Him a new mantle; whilst as to the Apostles, in their ragged fishermen's gaberdines! heavens and earth! their elegant successor in the pulpit would have fainted at the sight of them; the pious worshippers would have risen to a man and woman,

vacated the vulgar place, and next day advertised their seats to let; whilst beadle, sexton, and all the other respectable officials of the sanctuary would have rushed off frantically in search of twelve competent officers to incarcerate the twelve vulgar apostolics, in twelve appropriate lock-ups. Yes, on the whole, I'm glad Go-ahead did not propose to take me to Grace Church in search of spirits and spiritual gifts. I am quite sure I should have ended by being turned out, or, if I had mentioned my errand to the minister, by being sent to the house of correction or a lunatic asylum.

I wish it to be understood, however, that I did not spend all my half-hour of tryst in staring at fashionable piety. I stood at the door of Dodworth's, and through that entrance, and up a flight of stairs beyond, went the congregation who, like myself, were in search of the spirits. As to describing or attempting to classify them, I must beg to be excused; the task would be far beyond my feeble powers, but where my language fails, that of a celebrated old Jewish writer supplies the deficiency. Let my readers therefore picture to themselves the scene of the parable of the "Marriage Supper."

Let them locate the guest chamber of the bridegroom in that part of the visible heavens just above Grace Church in Broadway, New York. Let them picture to themselves the congregated legions of immortal souls who have attained unto the joys of the kingdom, and they will have a faint embodiment of the bridegroom. If they permit their vision to follow, as I did, the fashionable, purse-proud, and simpering throng who are trooping into Grace Church, they will see not a few of the guests that were invited, and would not come; and if they will suffer their glances to wander three or four doors lower down the street, they will perceive, filing into Dodworth's dingy portal, and up Dodworth's dingy stairs, the tributaries

from the highways and byways (and we might enumerate a good many still more exceptional quarters), whom the functionaries of the bridegroom laid violent hands upon, and compelled to come in, until the guest-chamber was full.

Fancy all this, my readers, and you have the Church of the Spirit and the Church of Grace, alias "Dry bones," with both their respective congregations, on the particular Sunday morning of which I speak, mapped out in complete detail before you.

When Go-ahead finally made his appearance, and marshaled me into the chief sanctuary of the spirits, I found a congregation of not less than eight hundred people assembled.

There were young and old of both sexes, rich and poor, homely and handsome; and the whole crowd was as party-colored in their appearance, as their rank in the social and intellectual scale. There were no pews, slips, or reserved seats.

A fat alderman might be seen squeezed in between two lean brethren of the peddler type. A gay damsel of no very dubious profession was sandwiched between a sweet-looking Quakeress and a tidy old body from whom I had bought boot-laces the day before, at the street corner.

A group of dashing young fellows might be seen conversing in earnest whispers with two celebrated actors, and a plentiful sprinkling of lawyers and doctors hobnobbed with an equal number of pretty young girls and queer-looking lads, all well known as mediums. Bloomers were there in all the hideousness of their hermaphrodite costumes. Old ladies, and antique gentlemen once famous as Methodist class-leaders and Presbyterian elders, swelled the ranks. Shrewd-looking, quizzical materialists sat cheek by jowl with sour-visaged Puritans. The rank and file of hard and soft shelled Baptist and other sectarian

societies ; broad-brimmed Shakers, and collarless Quakers ; dainty dames from Fifth Avenue, and Oriental looking maidens from Chatham Street ; Californians in all the lustre of bullion ornaments, and "colored pussions" of all shades between yellow and black ; Indian chiefs in semi-savage costumes, and Turks in the garbs of their native land ; all these, and divers other representations of "poor humanity" in all its variousness, might be seen heterogeneously mixed up in this modern cave of Adullam.

There was something touching in contemplating such a multitude gathered together from the ends of the earth, and all fraternizing in a common form of worship, and united beneath the shadow of a divine republicanism which acknowledges all people equal in the sight of God.

One group in this curious assemblage particularly interested me ; and this consisted of about twenty bright-looking young people, male and female, who formed the volunteer choir. They were led and accompanied on the melodeon by a young English girl, who taught them and composed their music, and whom I have often since "sat under" as one of the great lights of the Spiritual rostrum. The music performed by this little band of choristers was of the most inspiring and elevated character I have ever listened to.

As before stated, it was composed expressly for these services, and was at once devotional and exciting. With none of the monotonous drawl of the old Watts' hymn style, and still less of the vague, distracting meanderings of ritualistic "Te Deums," these songs of the spirit seemed better calculated to lift our thoughts to heaven in triumph, or subdue our souls with tender pity by their sympathetic sweetness, than anything I have ever heard before or since in the shape of "sacred" music.

On the occasion of my first visit to "Dodworth's;" I had the satisfaction of listening to one who had long been

my beau ideal of mediumistic excellence as a poet, and this was the Rev. Theophilus Lord Heartless, the gifted author of "A Lyric of the Eastern Land," "An Epic of the Western Heavens," etc., etc.

Having anticipated the most unmeasured delight in hearing the "orator, scholar, and poet" on whose perfections my imagination had fondly reveled, my disappointment was proportionably great when I found my idol employing his time and his hearers' patience by pouring out first a diatribe of laudation on himself and his own particular views of Spiritualism, which he informed his hearers were the only true and Christlike doctrines that were taught in the ranks; next, he gave the committee on those meetings a sound rating because they did not engage their present Christlike teacher (to wit himself) as their permanent pastor; and finally, he walked into the character and doctrines of his intended successor, who he informed his hearers would lead them from the bosom of Christian Spiritualism, of which he, the said T. L. H., had been chosen the expounder, by a circle of apostles and patriarchs resident in the third heavens, into the depths of materialistic pantheism, of which his intended successor was the instrument chosen by a party of demons, whose peculiar characteristics and place of residence it is not polite to mention.

In listening to this discourse, so singularly unlike what I had expected to hear from one of that fraternity, whose motto is the "Fatherhood of God" and the "Brotherhood of man," the thought struck me that perhaps the preacher had mistaken the place he had got into, and, psychologized by the proximity of the Christian edifice that upreared its stately head so near his present rostrum, he actually fancied he was addressing the followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene. Whilst I was whispering these misgivings in the ear of my friend Go-ahead,

one of the committee on the Dodworth Hall meetings, a gentleman of singularly prepossessing appearance and polished manners arose, and emphatically rebuked the speaker for perverting the uses of that platform from the doctrines of Spiritualism to the acrimonious indulgence of his own selfish views, and the expression of his disappointed ambition. Hereupon Mr. Heartless, assuming the look of a martyr at the stake, and the tone of a John Knox pitching into a Mary Stuart, immediately retorted; the audience interfered, whilst the gentleman-like official held his own, and insisted that the rostrum he helped to sustain should not be thus desecrated. As the controversy began to wax warm and assume a character as unspiritual as it was to me astonishing, Go-ahead undertook to explain it in the following very lucid way.

“T. L. Heartless still hangs on to the skirts of Christianity, you see; hence the present exhibition of Christian spirit. Fact is, he wants to be a bishop. Tries it on in different kinds of gospel shops; gravitates to the spirits at last. Spirits won't have bishops. Heartless gets kicked out, flares up, gets mad, and presently he'll try on the bishop dodge in some other community. Wish he may get it, but our folks don't seem to see it.”

“But, my dear sir,” I replied, “this is not at all what I expected to find in Spiritualism. I thought Spiritualism endured no bishops, and that Spiritualists were all full of brotherly love and kindness.”

“Then I suppose you also thought Spiritualists and Spiritualism were one and the same thing,” replied Go-ahead. “You'll find your mistake, my friend when you've seen a little more of the cause in Gotham. Look around you, and consider the variety which exists in character, mind, air, purpose, and capacity, stamped upon every face in this heterogeneous assembly. They have all cut loose

from some church creed, or sectarian authority; and they think, for the most part of them, that freedom from ecclesiastical bondage implies license in everything else, and total subversion of every other kind of restraint; hence they all come ambling into Spiritualism, mounted on their own peculiar little hobbies; and if they cannot succeed in harnessing them to the great car of progress, and compelling every one to ride under their leadership, they either renounce Spiritualism as unworthy of them, or, like yon preacher, denounce Spiritualists as unworthy of the cause."

"The fact is, friend Go-ahead," chimed in a dapper little medical gentleman who sat close enough behind us to have heard our conversation, "our people, and their ancestors before them, have been for so many centuries accustomed to the good old Christian method of cramming their opinions down each other's throats by fire and sword, or knocking a man down to convince him that God is love, that we must not expect them to give up all their Christian practices with the adoption of their new faith; but come, the discussion is ended, the meeting is about to close; let us hear the young singer's bright hymn, and then adjourn with me to Mrs. St. L——'s; we are going to have a circle there this afternoon."

Mrs. St. L——, the lady to whose house I was thus unceremoniously invited, was a celebrated clairvoyant and an excellent physical force and trance speaking medium; indeed, during many subsequent years of experience amongst the spirits, I have rarely seen one individual so highly endowed with a great variety of gifts, as this lady.

At the dinner-table, to which we were all kindly welcomed by the hospitable hostess, I found on a small scale a not unapt representation of the assemblage we had just left at Dodworth's. Besides the lady and her family, there were several who, like Go-ahead and the doctor, were

privileged friends and ordinary diners there, and still others who, like myself, were strangers until introduced as I had been.

The meal was rendered highly attractive by the incessant demonstrations of spiritual presence, which were given in the shape of loud rappings and frequent movements of the long, heavy dining-table. As these tokens of invisible sympathy were produced without any solicitation, and continued despite the gastronomic employments to which we were devoted, their spontaneity was equally refreshing and convincing.

Sometimes the well known signal of five knocks caused the company to pause and call the alphabet, when messages of greeting and recognition were spelled out from spirits to their friends present, and merry jokes and pleasant words were exchanged between the visible and invisible worlds with the most perfect freedom and directness of intercourse.

I could not help feeling it was a rare and glorious privilege to be present at such a scene, and I may truly say I never realized in my life a more vivid sense of the nearness of the two worlds, or the beatitude of communion with the loved no longer lost, under circumstances which rendered deception or mistake as unnecessary as it was impossible. There was but one cloud which darkened the horizon of that earthly paradise to my mind, and this was the awkward fact that my kind hostess was evidently in a position of dependence on her profession for support; and yet her bountiful hospitality partook of the character and abundance of hotel life, without, as far as I could see, any of its remunerations.

This thought struck me still more unpleasantly at the supper-table, to which I was again kindly invited; and where I only remained for the purposes of silent observation. On this occasion some of the dining brethren with-



drew, and their place was supplied by a still larger installment of others, who dropped in for tea and spiritual manifestations in such strong numerical force, that I was fain to conclude a large portion of the Spiritual brotherhood were in the habit of rampaging in this fashion on their neighbors, and that to be a popular spirit medium in Gotham was about equivalent to keeping a free hotel for the brothers and sisters.

In the evening we all turned out in a body to hear one of the female apostles of the new gospel, a young lady who, like many of her compeers, spoke in the trance condition, and attracted a very large attendance upon her ministrations.

Most of the Spiritualists of this generation must have had the pleasure of listening to Mrs. Emma Jay Bullene; I can only say on this the first opportunity I enjoyed of hearing her eloquent utterances, I was so profoundly impressed with the wonderful flow of language she employed, the beauty of her similes, the subtlety of her logic, and the felicity with which her fine discourse was delivered, that the only marvel to me was, how any one in that smart, go-ahead city could ever choose between such a captivating pleader and the ecclesiastical peddlers who droned out metaphysical platitudes which neither themselves nor their hearers could understand, in the popular "dry bones" shops of the day.

Mrs. Bullene concluded her services by an exquisite Spiritual song, in which both words and music were improvised on the spot, and both served to fill me with a holy calm, and sentiments of the most exalted character. At subsequent times during my stay in New York, I heard Cbra Hatch, Emma Hardinge, Miss Sprague, Charlotte Tuttle, Harriet Huntley, A. B. Whiting, Rosa Amedey, and many other of the finest and most popular trance speakers in the ranks. With very few exceptions, all

these great lights of the cause have passed over to the land whose glories they so eloquently depicted; but judging of the effect which their magnificent orations and resistless oratory exerted upon myself, I should think they have done more to move public opinion and make the world better in their generation, than all the parsons that have ever sermonized since the days when King Solomon displayed his superior wisdom and godliness by keeping three hundred wives and seven hundred concubines. Some of the Spiritual lecturers of the present day rather incline, so I am told, to the doctrine of old Solomon, varying, however, from him in the belief that what is good for the gander is good for the goose also. I cannot speak from actual knowledge of things now. I am no longer "amongst the spirits," and only judge from the reports I read of conventions, speeches, etc., in which I find the Solomon theory has quite an extensive share of Spiritualistic advocacy.

At the period of which I write, and from the lips of every speaker I have mentioned, or whom I then heard preach Spiritualism at Dodworth's, I can confidently affirm, a higher or nobler tone of religion and morality never fell from mortals.

To return to my first Sunday evening amongst the spirits in Gotham. After coming away from Dodworth's, with my head ringing with the delicious tones of Mrs. Emma Jay Bullene's improvised hymn, I found myself, by that force of attraction which seemed to knit up the Spiritual folks in such pleasant and harmonious little bands, borne along with my friend Go-ahead and about half-a-dozen of the Dodworth's Hall choristers, to another *rendezvous* at which the more musically inclined of the brethren were in the habit of assembling. The house to which I was now somehow introduced was in Great Jones Street, a large and handsome residence, occupied by a rich

widow lady, the special friend of the young English girl who led the choir at Dodworth's.

Our fair choir mistress was, it seems, an excellent test medium, and being a very enthusiastic devotee of the cause, took delight in giving her services free to all who sought to commune with their spirit friends.

Charmed with the prospect of closing up the night with a good circle, I gladly moved with the gay throng, and on the strength of Go-ahead's not very flattering assurance in presenting me, that I was no skeptic, but on the contrary "would believe anything, and was perfectly harmless," I was cordially received, and soon found myself one of a circle of about twenty-one persons, assembled in the splendid parlors of Mrs. W—— of Great Jones Street. The first act of the evening's drama was the performance of some fine music by the choir mistress and a club of four gentlemen, who, under the cognomen of the "Accidentals," formed an amateur quartette of rare excellence.

The character of the music performed on this occasion was gay and inspiring enough to convince me there were some pretty jolly fellows amongst the spirits, and the showers of loud raps which emphasized the quaint melody "Few Days," sung with immense gusto by the club, gave sufficient testimony that "beyond the grave" was rather a cheerful sort of place.

Amongst the company present were two press men, both eminent for the spiteful and ill-natured articles wherewith they fed the public prejudice against Spiritualism, and several members of the theatrical profession, all of whom I found to be more or less tinctured with belief in the new heresy. Our medium's faculty of giving tests by striking personations, seeing and describing spirits, writing messages, and answering mental questions, was very remarkable, and in some instances rather more

graphic than was agreeable to the sitters: for example, a spirit, purporting to be an intimate friend of a celebrated vocalist present, professed himself greatly puzzled to account for the fact that his said friend's hair had turned black since the day when they parted on earth, on which occasion he declared he could have sworn it was a "fine French gray." The actor joined good-humoredly in the laugh against himself, but begged to inquire of the spirit how the inhabitants of the summer land managed to preserve their juvenile appearance without the use of hair-dye. The spirit replied that in his country, spirits were often known to turn from black to white, but he had never yet heard of a case where they turned from white to black, and as to *dying*, that was an institution which no rational spirit believed in.

Another spirit betrayed the awkward fact that a very elaborate and admirably arranged head of hair, worn by a certain member of the company, had once graced his, the spirit's, own head, and when pressed to explain himself, he avowed that he had owed the gentleman a sum of money, and being unable to pay it, he had cut off his own shining locks and turned up his debt in the shape of a wig. This circumstance was also acknowledged as a good test by the somewhat mortified owner of the wig.

One of the press gentlemen being appealed to, and solicited to acknowledge some tests offered by a communicating spirit, that knight of the quill instantly declared he did not believe in such stuff; hereupon the medium immediately became influenced to act out a pantomimic representation of a shrewish vixen and a henpecked man. The characters of each were sustained with the greatest spirit; and sentences were spoken, and recriminative charges bandied between the two impersonations, until the scornful skeptic turned pale, and moved uneasily in his seat. At length, as if unable longer to endure the

goad under which he was suffering, he abruptly rose and left the room. The pantomimic dialogue ceased, and the absentee's companion, laughing heartily, declared that the scene just acted had transpired in his presence only the day before, and had occurred, words, action, and all, between his friend and a lady with whom, as the spirit hinted, he was carrying on an intrigue of no creditable kind. "The only part of the mystery I cannot understand," added the candid reporter, "is that the parties thus represented are still living. Can it be possible, then, that the dead really see all our actions, and overhear even the words spoken in the seclusion of private life?"

Later in the evening, several of the mediums present were influenced to improvise a charming operatic scene, full of dramatic interest and spontaneous harmony. They sang and acted each as if, instead of an improvisation, they were rehearsing a well-studied and familiar piece. The audience were delighted; I was in the seventh heaven, and should infallibly have added an encore to my enthusiastic cheering, if I had not found myself suddenly seated on the ground, in a distant part of the room to where I had been planted a minute ago. Of course the first hypothesis was that this remarkable transfer had been effected by "the spirits," but when my eye happened to light upon certain long strings fastened to the legs of certain chairs, mine for one, and I saw, moreover, a sly twinkle on the demure face of a gentleman who did the funny business in a city theatre, and a severe, frowning wink administered to the wag by the good-natured hostess, I concluded that very striking manifestation had been effected by a spirit in the form. I was angry, and no doubt should have proceeded to make myself ridiculous by hurling high tragedy at the head of low comedy, when, in a moment, a heavy marble table stepped out, without any human hands coming in contact with it, and

began to balance and capricole itself about, evidently to the rhythm of an imaginary polka.

"Hallea! N——! is that you, old fellow!" cried one of the actors present; "glad to have you here, my boy. Comē, give us a dance." Hereupon a lively dance tune was played, and the table, without any human contact, kept time to the air with all the grace of a professed *maitre de ballet*. There is an old saying that "It is easier to raise the devil than to lay him;" the scene on the present occasion illustrated the proverb. I afterwards learned that the mediumistic force through which these physical manifestations were given, proceeded from an actor of remarkable power in that direction, whilst the spirit who had been hailed as N—— was a young man who had but recently departed for another stage of existence under the influence of delirium tremens.

This spirit in its earth life had been a great dancer; and for a while the heavy table and several chairs in the vicinity of the medium waltzed and swayed in orderly dance measure; pretty soon, however, the old, earthly habit, or perhaps its overmastering influence, returned. It might have been that the unfortunate victim of his own bad passions was unable to conquer its effects even in spirit life; it might have been that he was spiritually compelled to revive the memory of the loathsome and degrading vice, through which he had perished; certain it is that the table, chairs, and all the movable objects near Mr. S——, began to rock, reel, and tumble over with the action of a drunken man. One table ran furiously against a lady, who spoke in disrespectful terms of the spirit, and pinned her up in a corner of the room, whilst another rolled over on the ground, and lay prostrate in the shocking semblance of intoxication.

The scene was a strange mixture of the horrible and grotesque; and whilst the fright and consternation of the

company would have impressed an uninterested spectator with the strongest sense of the ridiculous, the consciousness that this fiendish display actually symbolized the condition of a self-wrecked human soul could not fail to inspire us all with feelings akin to sorrow and humiliation.

"John, come away from that mantel-piece!" screamed Mrs. S——, the wife of the medium, who was leaning against a marble chimney-piece; "you'll have it up by the roots if you stay there! Everything moves for him, sir," the lady added, addressing herself to me; "the other day he stood leaning against a lamp-post, waiting for a street car, when, would you believe it, the post quivered, and no doubt would have fallen, or set off dancing a polka, if I had not dragged him away from it!"

"A most convenient man," drawled one of our press visitors. "'Pon my soul, I wish he'd lean against me just now, and cause me to be transported to the other end of Eighth Avenue!"

"Lights out!" shouted a voice strange to us all, when in a moment all the gas lights were turned off, and the whole company was left in total darkness. For a short time, and whilst our hostess was groping her way to procure matches and a light, a scene of confusion ensued equally impossible to describe or imagine.

Every one stood transfixed, for none dared to move; but all began to exclaim and jabber at once, making a perfect Babel of human tongues.

In the midst of this clatter, strange whisperings seemed to arise in different parts of the room, now hissing something in our ears that we could not make out, anon uttering growls like a wild animal. Some of us were pushed and slapped as if by hands of iron; and when we struck out in the effort to grasp our assailants, we found we were striking at empty air. Every minute, too,

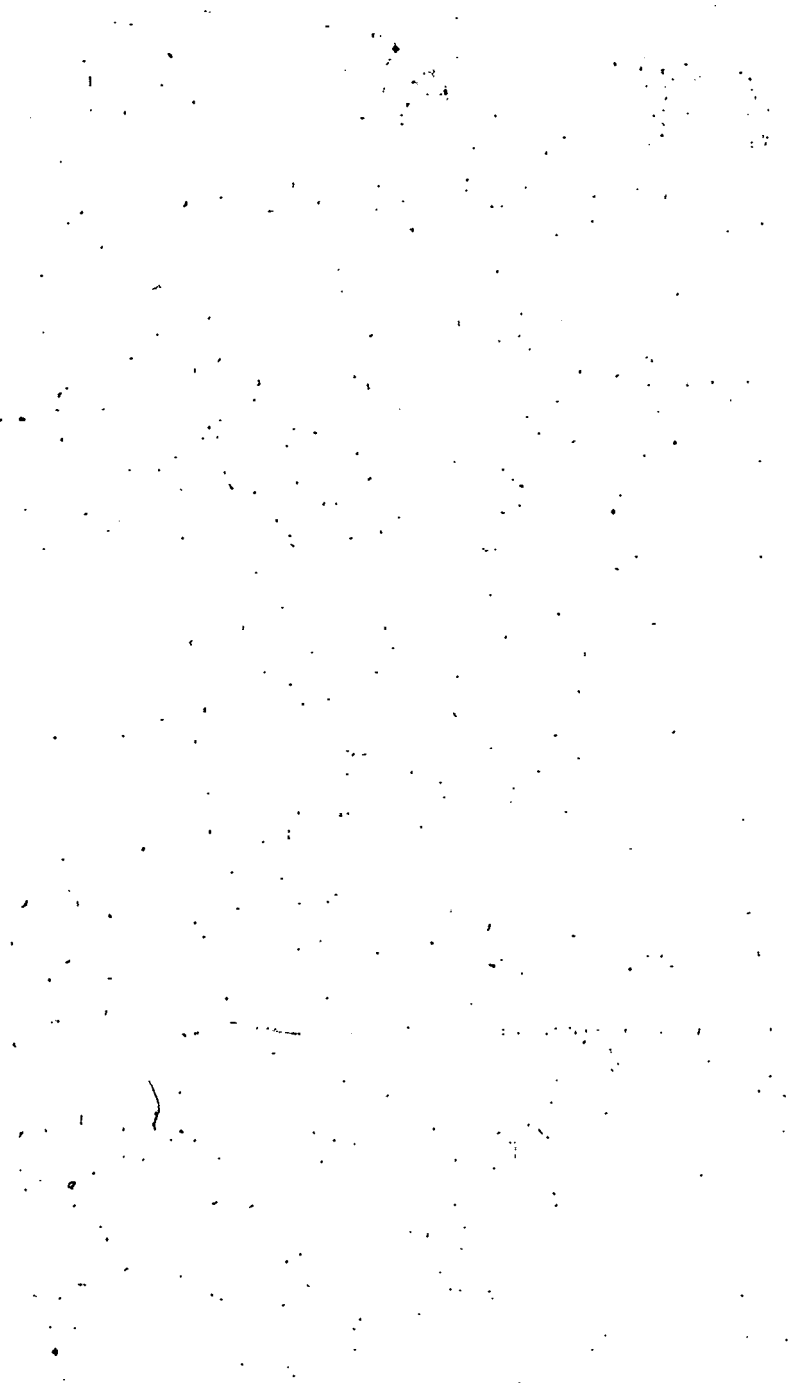
the sounds as of a new and unknown presence grew louder, and more and more indescribable.

They were harsh, discordant, unmeaning, and terribly confusing.

We could not disentangle them one from another, so as to say what they were; and they seemed to proceed from every quarter, and to envelop us in their distracting resonance.

In reflecting upon this singular manifestation, I have never been able to determine, even to myself, what was its true character. I only know that it was an appalling clamor, and that it hushed us all into awe-struck silence. It partook something of the nature of distant thunder, rumbling above, beneath, and around us, like the last echoes of a passing storm; then again it seemed close to us; and, moreover, it was mingled with a chorus of harsh voices, sobs, wailings, and meaningless noises of the most indescribable kind. At length our brave and self-possessed hostess succeeded in relighting the gas, when instantly the tumult subsided, and nothing remained of the phenomenon but its effects depicted upon our pale and haggard countenances. Then it was that in the midst of our pause of consternation the first medium of the circle became entranced, and, offering up a beautiful and touching prayer, soothed our spirits, restored our equanimity, and sent us all on our way rejoicing, after a cordial exchange of kind good-nights, much hand-shaking, and a mutual promise to meet with each other again in that place next Sunday night.





## THE GARLAND.

### SUMMARY OF RECENT SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES.

BY OSIRIS.

THE past two months have been rife with items of marked interest in the history of American Spiritualism.

Foremost amongst these are the announcements contained in the *Banner of Light* and *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, that the month of September last marks for the one the opening of the thirty-second volume, and for the other the commencement of the thirteenth.

If the careless and apathetic, who too often peruse the periodicals devoted to the exposition of their faith as a mere matter of amusement, or the means of beguiling an idle hour, could but apprehend the care, ill-requited toil, pecuniary loss, sacrifice of time, health, personal and domestic comfort; in a word, the career of martyrdom through which the editors of either of these journals have been enabled to struggle up to the triumphant positions indicated in these announcements, they would regard them as intelligence of paramount importance. Perhaps no human record can ever do justice to the amount of missionary good, consolation, instruction, and religious faith which results from the distribution of a well-written Spiritual journal:

However the world may fail to recognize this truth, the editors of the *Banner of Light* must have felt its potency whilst issuing their thirty-two volumes of glad tidings from the realms of immortality. Whilst we know that the first-born of these messengers of light were wrung out from the heart's blood of struggle and self-

sacrifice, the position of permanence and wide-spread popularity that the *Banner* has achieved gives us the right to hope that the compensations of her faithful editors are not all merely prospective, and that here, as well as hereafter, some share of substantial return may be yielded by an appreciative community, for such long and faithful service.

The *Banner of Light* is now a household friend all over the civilized world, and the increasing popularity and interest of her sparkling younger sister, the *Religio-Philosophical*, gives us the confident assurance that her thirteenth summer needs but the action of time to add the years which her more mature contemporary has reached.

The *Banner of Light*, in its brief, apropos announcement, makes the following remarks:—

“We feel more than ever that it is a high mission which we seek to perform, and it is for that reason we appeal with all possible freedom and earnestness to the Spiritual host of the United States to stand firm by the Banner of their faith, to strengthen our hands in the great work we seek to do through its columns, and to rally with us in upholding and advancing the undying truth of Spiritualism as a religion and a philosophy. We are sure our appeal will not be in vain. Sustain the Banner as the oldest exponent of the Spiritual philosophy in the world, and as the voice of all who renew their lives daily in the very act of believing.”

To all this and far more than our space will permit us to add, we emphatically say, Amen! And that in favor of both these excellent periodicals. They are the right and left hands of the cause of Spiritualism, and we feel in duty bound to urge upon every true Spiritualist a firm and consistent support of their several claims; in fact, the Spiritualists should do more than approve of them in *idea*, or read them when they find them lying on a friend's table, or in a position where they can borrow them; they should pay for them, and, in helping to support them, help on the cause they believe in, the cause entrusted to them to maintain, and the cause which these periodicals have

steadily upheld; not for themselves alone, but for the sake of that humanity which would be poor indeed without them.

We learn also with great interest, that S. S. Jones (the *Religio-Philosophical* in person), the man whom the storms of fortune cannot drown, nor the fires of the mighty West burn, is about to publish a new monthly, entitled, *The Little Bouquet*, a work to be finely illustrated, finely written, and especially adapted to lead our young people into the faith which their elders have demonstrated to be the truth and the way.

With such a momentous object in view, with Mr. Jones for its well-skilled and enterprising editor, and a subscription price which can scarcely tax the poorest amongst us, we have the right to expect that this paper will command the patronage of every parent and guardian in our ranks.

The Boston Music Hall free meetings were inaugurated the first Sunday in October, by a lecture from Miss Lizzie Doten, whose high reputation as a poetess and inspirational speaker must have gained more in this one splendid discourse than by any of her previous fine efforts.

Her subject was the "Celestial Alphabet," or a description of the immutable fidelity with which nature's language is represented in creation, and the laws which underlie all her forms and forces.

Miss Doten's contribution to the new Bible, and the new text-book which Spiritualism is writing, seems to have been equally remarkable and felicitous, and we must hope to see her admirable essay put in such a form that it may be read and preserved as a fresh chapter in the living gospel of the nineteenth century.

Physical manifestations seem to be gaining in force and power with each returning day. Mrs. Britten's chapter on physical force demonstrations in her second volume of "Modern American Spiritualism" (see the October number

of this magazine) makes mention of a Mrs. Libby White, formerly of Sodus Point, N. Y. In the narrative of that lady's mediumship several novel and highly interesting phenomena are described, but these pale before the marvels that are now being enacted in her presence, as will be seen by a perusal of their description in the late issues of the Spiritual journals.

Not only are spirit faces and forms seen, and that in a lighted room (the medium alone being isolated in the cabinet), but visitors have the delightful privilege of shaking hands with their beloved spiritual visitants, whilst warm kisses are pressed on their brows, and kind words of greeting are interchanged as in the days of mortal communion.

The circumstances under which these wonderful interviews transpire are free, it would seem, from all suspicious or even equivocal surroundings, and, with the exception of the spiritual visitations recently chronicled in England, constitute the most startling and unexceptionable proofs of the presence and power of the immortals, that have as yet been vouchsafed to humanity. Several private letters, as well as the reports of the public prints, attribute to Mrs. Hollis at Cincinnati, manifestations of an equally astounding and even more varied character than those above noticed. Not only do spirits appear, sing, play, converse, float their medium in the air, write and speak in different languages, and perform all the other feats of wonder peculiar to other media, but they hold long and interesting colloquies with the spectators, and undertake to explain lucidly the use and even the philosophy of the demonstrations they perform. To ask where will this end, and what next feat of astonishment will be vouchsafed to us, seems to be almost the sole comment we can offer upon the ocean of testimony that is rolling in upon our mundane shores.

Perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon of the age is the existence of the blind and bigoted conservatism that either cannot or will not realize the truth of these marvels, and, whilst it sets itself up as the leader of public opinion in matters of science, suffers public knowledge to rush in advance of it in matters of fact.

At this very time we have in our midst a great *savant*, the report of whose learning and wisdom attracts around him the *élite* of the wealth and position of which the country can boast. This profound authority can discourse upon all the properties, functions, and forces of matter, but question him concerning those of the very mind by which alone he can discourse, and he is more profoundly ignorant than the humblest spirit medium that ever graduated from the blacksmith's forge to the Spiritual rostrum. This great light in science, like many more of his illustrious *confrères*, either will not or cannot see the facts which are patent to millions of his fellow-creatures, and, whilst he brings to bear all the resources of mind, intellect, and education upon the action of a single beam of light and the quality of a prism, a new world, with new powers, forces, arts, sciences, revelations, and possibilities, rolls by him unnoticed.

We cannot take note of even a tithe of the phenomenal people whose witness is crowding in upon us from all quarters of this immense country. From Moravia, New York, Boston, Chicago, and every section of the land, media like Dr. Slade, Bastian, Mrs. Andrews, the Bangs family, Annie Lord Chamberlain, Jennie Webb, Maud Lord, Libby White, Sawyer, the Shermans, Mesdames Hollis and Keigwin, Mr. Charles Foster, and hosts of others, are accessible, and amenable to thorough investigation, and all capable of eliminating through their mediumship more marvels in ten minutes than scientists could explain in ten years; and yet one of the most

esteemed and representative men of the "scientific" ranks complains that for his part he never can see anything in Spiritualism worthy of investigation or notice.

This great transatlantic luminary seems to be well up in the nature and properties of metals. We wonder how he would classify and explain the action of iron under the following circumstances.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, giving a description of Captain Winslow, a new physical medium, writes as follows:—

"We had the pleasure, a few evenings since, of attending a séance, at which Captain Winslow was the medium. The manifestations were very fine.

"*One very remarkable feat is the union of two solid iron rings, leaving them thus interlinked, and yet the metal perfectly sound.*"

If the grave professor, cornered as other grave savants have been before him, should be compelled to acknowledge the fact here recorded, but strive to undervalue what he cannot explain, with the oft repeated platitude, "Well! granted it is all true—what is the use of it?" let him go on to read the end of the *Journal's* notice of Captain Winslow, in the following words:—

"Prairie Flower, an Indian maiden who controls him, says she has had him in training since he was fourteen years old. Fourteen years Captain Winslow was a successful Methodist preacher; not a whit behind the best of them at camp and other revival meetings. He was converted to Spiritualism on the battle-field at Shiloh. Then and there his spirit friends showed themselves to him, and sheltered him from the deadly bullets, while hundreds were falling around him. His relations of experience on that occasion are of deep interest."

"There are none so blind as those that won't see;" so says the old proverb, and so think, if they do not say, many another great professor besides our renowned visitor from England. If the Royal Societies of Europe and the Scientific Associations of America cannot explain how the thing is done, they doubtless think they cannot

do better than hide their ignorance beneath a mantle of scorn. Perhaps they might improve upon this puerile way of solving the difficulty, by sitting at the feet of the invisible professors of a new science, and acknowledging that there are some things in heaven that they still have to learn, however much they may claim to know about earth.

Something of a scene occurred in Chicago a few days ago, when Mrs. Sawyer, the celebrated physical force medium, of that city, was summoned to appear before Mayor Medill, to show cause why she should not be taxed and compelled to pay a license, like other "exhibitors and venders of wares;" indeed, the mayor seemed to think the payment of a one hundred and twenty dollar license was only due to the city authorities for the privilege of allowing mourners to converse with their "dead," or the exercise of the gifts which the founder of the Christian religion charged upon Mayor Medill, in common with all his other followers. How the Spiritualists resisted and acted upon this demand may be gathered from a report in the *Chicago Times*, of which the following is an extract.

"As to the mediums, their arguments run thus wise:—

"Spiritualism is a religion, and séances are to its devotees as prayer-meetings, sewing-circles, and church services to the believers in orthodoxy. Other denominations are allowed to erect churches, collect pews-rents, and take up collections. By this means they carry on the distinctive work of their organizations. Spiritualists are less in number, have no churches, and in order to keep their or the mediums' heads above water, must take up collections from those who attend séances. That these collections should take a definite price is only carrying out the rule that churches adopt of putting a certain cash value on pews. The one, they contend, is not more liable to taxation than the other.

"A day or two since a medium named Mrs. Sawyer was brought before the mayor, and warned by that gentleman that if she did not take out a license she would be arrested. Mr. J. E. Hoyt, of No. 841 West Madison Street, was present, and declared he would continue his séances, his sweet communings with angel land, despite the mayor or his staff, even



officer Silver. Last night was the first occasion on which a stated séance has taken place since the mayor gave his warning. There was considerable excitement over the question whether the mayor would seek to carry out his threat, but the séance proceeded as usual, and no blue coat made his appearance. The spirits that manifested themselves were in great good humor, and seemed to be as little afraid of Mr. Medill as the temperance committee or the Spiritualists are of his logic."

The Massachusetts Supreme Court has given the ignorant and unprogressive officials of Chicago a splendid illustration of the advanced condition of public opinion on the subject of Spiritualism arrived at in the "Athens of America," as the following excerpt from the *Banner of Light* will show.

#### A RIGHT DECISION.

The Supreme Court of Massachusetts has reached a just decision in the case of Mrs. A. J. Feital, who had recovered five thousand dollars damages from the Middlesex Horse Railroad Company, in requital of injuries received while on the cars of that company on a certain Sunday, returning from a Spiritualist open-air meeting at Malden. The company contested her claim on the ground that they were not responsible for damages received at their hands on Sunday, the contract on that day with passengers being illegal. It further maintained that a Spiritualist meeting was in no sense religious, and therefore that the plaintiff had no good ground for even a Sunday case.

It was bold, if not worse, ground for a public corporation to assume in its defense; and having been assessed in five thousand dollars damages, the Middlesex Company thought they would resist to the last rather than pay the amount. Hence the hearing before the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth. But justice was not to be thus baffled. An appeal to its highest seat only brought out its voice with the utmost possible authority. The Supreme Court has decided that the company was obligated to carry the plaintiff, and indeed all other passengers, with as much care on Sunday as on any other day; and also that a meeting of Spiritualists is as much a religious meeting for such as subscribe to Spiritualism, as any called orthodox.

Amongst the most interesting features presented by the new volume of the *Banner of Light*, just inaugurated, are the first "sheaves" of Spiritual wheat to be garnered up in the form of an "Harmonial Encyclopædia" by the

admired and indefatigable Poughkeepsie seer, A. J. Davis.

This inimitable thinker and writer proposes to issue a work something in the nature of Voltaire's celebrated "Philosophical Dictionary." To its character and pretensions no mere written description can do justice.

It must be read to be appreciated, and as several columns of the *Banner* are each week devoted to its publication, we need but call attention to its appearance as another gem of light from an inexhaustible treasury.

So many other items of interest, so many buds of promise, and blossoms freshly gathered by the hands of angels waft their fragrance before our senses, that in these our moments of temporary separation from our readers, we can only refer to them with a promise of future treatment and more elaborate notice.

We propose to speak with all the fervent hope and earnest good will which stirs our hearts, and should animate every soul amongst us; of Dr. Edward Mead's noble undertaking called the "Psychopathic Institution."

We have received a sweet and touching account of the silver wedding of the veteran medium and lecturer, E. V. Wilson, and the nuptials of his fair young daughter at the same time.

Several volumes of rare interest lie open on the desk, demanding justice even from the humble record which these pages afford; and sweet voices are calling on every side of us, and chorusing songs of angelic beauty and pathos to attract our attention. To all and each we can but answer: The time is up, the day is done, the page closes with the fading beams of light; but if another day dawns upon the busy scribe, the relaxed ends of each golden thread shall be gathered up anew, and we will weave from their yet unwrought texture still another garland for THE WESTERN STAR.



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## READ THE EVIDENCE.

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[Read over next page.]

## EMMA HARDINGE ON OPIUM EATING.

THE following unsolicited and extraordinary testimony to the priceless value of Dr. COLLINS' REMEDY FOR THE HABIT OF OPIUM EATING, is republished from a Georgia paper as an apropos addendum to Dr. Collins' advertisement on another leaf:—

"MESSRS. EDITORS:

"Although the circumstances I am about to detail will sufficiently explain why I withhold the names of the parties chiefly concerned, they are of such an important nature to a large class of afflicted persons, that I feel justified in soliciting space in your columns for their insertion.

"It is now some months since I made the acquaintance of the learned and brilliant scientific Professor W—. This gentleman, a graduate of Yale College, and Professor of Languages in several of the first seats of learning in America, enjoys a world-wide reputation for his literary and scientific attainments, no less than for the eloquence and logic of his public lectures. Shortly after spending a delightful and profitable evening in this gentleman's company, Mrs. W—, the Professor's wife, called upon me to inquire whether in the (to her) mysterious and occult realms of Spiritualistic lore, I could assist her in the following way:—

"Speaking in the sacred confidence of my religious capacity, Mrs. W— imparted to me the terrible secret that her adored and admitted husband was being destroyed 'body, soul, and intellect,' by the fatal and unquarable habit of opium eating. She said that the Professor had been induced at first to try the effect of this fatal drug on being unexpectedly called upon to deliver a lecture before the American Association of Science, just as he was recovering from a severe illness. The excessive prostration under which he was then laboring, and the trying character of the address expected from him, induced a nervous condition which rendered him fearful that he could not perform his task without the assistance of some foreign stimulus.

"Unhappily for the Professor, a scientific friend in whom he had great confidence happened to be visiting him at the time, and by his advice the pernicious dose was administered, and, still more unfortunately, proved successful. Prof. W— never lectured more brilliantly, or with more astonishing effect. Encouraged by this remarkable and novel experiment, the unfortunate gentleman was again and yet again induced to resort to the same stimulus, until he became so dependent on it that he could neither attend his classes, speak, write, or at last think clearly without it. The doses must be increased in size and frequency until the culminating point of their efficacy was reached, and the unhappy victim found that the demon upon which he had leaned began to fall and miserably to betray him. The effect of opium, like that of all narcotics, is uncertain, and eventually ruinous to the balance of mind or the integrity of health. All the horrors of *ecstasy* delirium and insanity, of which the wretched sufferer was *fully* aware, beset him. He did, said, and thought the wildest, most grotesque, and deplorably mad things, and that without the remotest consciousness, or the least capacity of self-control.

"A life of suffering the most dreadful and harrowing was pointed out to me by the unhappy lady, and as yet no remedy or earthly alleviation could be found. It was, she said, raising madness to inevitable death to leave it off—insanity, frenzy, ruin, and disgrace to continue it as us.

"The unfortunate gentleman, under the pain of ill-health, and necessity for change of air, had temporarily withdrawn from his collegial duties, and managed to conceal his appalling condition from his associates; but the time had arrived when he must return or recede from the honors and emoluments which had crowned a long and indefatigable line of scientific research. With effort and exertion, he shared him in the face. In the desperate hope of alleviating his miserable condition, his faithful wife had sought out and forced upon him various nostrums and alleged remedies, but up to this time they had all failed.

"During the few hours which this lady and her accomplished husband had spent in my society, I had spoken of the phenomenon of 'psychometry,' and although but a poor and reluctant practitioner myself, I had given them some evidence of the power to read character and test the virtues of objects by touch. It was with the hope that I would yield to her almost agonizing entreaty and test by this singular psychometrical power the virtue of Dr. Collins' remedy for opium eating that the poor lady had called on me. . . . The result of the experiment was, that a spiritual impression pronounced the remedy MOST EXCELLENT,—in the present instance infallible,—provided it was adopted instantly and followed out faithfully.

"Six weeks later I heard Professor W— deliver to an immense audience one of the most brilliant, calm, and logical orations I ever listened to, and six weeks after that his happy and grateful wife wrote me: 'My beloved husband is entirely cured; his health, peace of mind, life, reason, dignity, and profession are all given back to him, and the hundredth part of a grain of opium has never passed his lips since he commenced taking Dr. COLLINS' REMEDY! I know I ought to give this cure to the world. Dr. Collins deserves the blessings of thousands, for thousands might be saved by him from a fate worse than death! but as you know, my friend, my dear husband's place, name, and fame, no less than the welfare of the many dependent on him, would all be sacrificed should this sad history become public, at least in connection with his well known name. Give the case in mercy to the world, but in mercy also suppress the name.'

"My dear Editors, I beg leave to add, I am personally unacquainted with Dr. Collins. The parties whose histories have saved 'I from worse than death' are the same. They purchased his medicine secretly; and he neither knows of the work he has wrought in their case, nor of me and my intention of writing about him.

"Attracted by seeing the advertisement of this great boon to mankind in your paper—aware that by Prof. W—'s recommendation it has cured many others besides himself, and too well aware also that there are many more who in miserable silence and unknown suffering are perishing for lack of it, I ask you, not by way of advertisement, but on the good faith of one who has nothing to gain by the act but the blessing of her fellow creatures, to make my unsolicited statement public, for which act I believe you will receive many a blessing, besides the thanks of

"Yours faithfully,

EMMA HARDINGE

"LONDON, ENGLAND, Jan., 1870."





# SPECIAL NOTICE!

## THE BOSTON FIRES.

AND THE

Nov. 9, 10, 11, 1872

### Inevitable Suspension of "The Western Star."

It is with the deepest regret that I am compelled to announce to the friends and patrons of this magazine the urgent necessity of suspending its publication, — at least for the present, — in consequence of the heavy losses incurred by its financial supporters in the late calamitous Boston fires.

As it could not be expected that a new and wholly experimental work could secure a subscription list adequate to its support for the first few months, the actual expenses were guaranteed by the payment of certain sum as shares, with a promise that any deficit which might remain at the end of the year should be provided for by parties interested in the enterprise.

As it has been my earnest endeavor to make the work self-sustaining, and to economize the means of the Company, I have as yet only called upon two of the shareholders for assistance; and though the expenses of commencing and issuing the first two numbers were very much in excess of what followed, the burden of the whole past six months' publication has been hitherto met by the payment of the above-named two shares, the subscriptions, and my own outlay.

As the principal number of the subscriptions have only been paid for six months, I depended wholly on the collection of funds from the shareholders and guarantees for the maintenance of the work during the ensuing portion of the trial year.

Although I have refrained from publishing any of the highly laudatory letters I have received in commendation of this magazine, they have been so numerous and flattering that I could not question but a steady increase in the subscription list, would have left it at the end of the year on a firm and well established foundation, but pending a climax which I could only hope to arrive at as a process of growth, all my resources and those of my friends and supporters are swept away by the overwhelming losses accruing from the Boston fires.

My shareholders' and guarantees' property have alike been destroyed.

I cannot add to their heavy losses by pressing my claims, small though they seem in comparison. — A large number of my books have also been destroyed.

Considerable sums due on the sale of magazines cannot now be collected from creditors more distressed than myself. The superior claims of "The Banner of Light," for so many years the justly esteemed standard of the Spiritualists' faith, and now crushed into overwhelming ruin, render all minor claims on the Spiritualists for aid, insignificant and almost unworthy.

My own resources have been drained to support this (to me) noble labor of love until nothing more is left to give. I have bestowed all my time, night and day, health, rest, ceaseless energy, and every available dollar on the work; and though I deem the high eulogies that have been passed upon it a meed worth laboring for, these have been the sole recompense I have derived. I can scarcely deem that any one will read this frank and straightforward statement and yet attribute blame, incompetency, or lack of faith to me when I say the work must now — for the present at least — suspend.

To the few who have generously paid the whole of the year's subscription, I can only say, be merciful in your judgment, — a like calamity may befall yourselves, and paralyze you as it has me; but beyond this I will add should the way yet be open to me to resurrect my "Star" from the darkness in which it has gone out, my indebtedness shall be faithfully remembered and acquitted.

To the many who have promised, but failed to pay, for their magazines, I ask in common justice and honesty that they will in this hour of great need at once remit me the price of what they have received; and to all who have taken an interest in the progress and success of this undertaking, I respectfully submit that it has redeemed every pledge with which it started *save one*, and the power to fulfill *that* has been torn from me by a hand mightier than my own. — a calamitous fate against which the energy and good will of one frail mortal contends in vain.

I have only to add that I still have in my possession a continuation of the splendid and much admired papers entitled "Ghost Land", and "Amongst the Spirits," also many unpublished chapters of the second volume of "Modern American Spiritualism," and that if I can receive from the sympathizers with these writings sufficient encouragement, I propose printing these and binding them up in a volume with the six numbers of the magazine already published.

Should I succeed in raising the necessary funds for this purpose, copies will be sent to all my annual subscribers without farther charge; and now, in deep sorrow of heart, modified only by the duty of patient submission to the overruling wisdom of Him whose I am, I take my leave in the words of the "Salutatory" which six months since bearded in my "Western Star" to its friends and supporters.

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN,

NO. 251 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

## SALUTATORY. FOR JULY. 1872.

"How long the beams of this new luminary may continue to shed light upon the paths of Spiritualistic research, or how much of intrinsic worth may be evolved from its appearance, are problems the solution of which remains with the invisible world from whence its birth has been derived.

Eighteen centuries ago tradition affirms that a star, undiscovered till then, appeared in the Oriental firmament as a messenger to proclaim on earth the advent of a high and holy Teacher. The sifting processes of history now prove to us that few were the mortal eyes that recognized the radiance of that star, fewer still the prophetic minds which could compass its deep significance. If a similar fate should befall the Star that now arises in the Occidental firmament, those who can and do feel its significance, and reverence the source of its apparition, will know from time-honored precedent how to bear the world's coldness and man's lack of sympathy. Even the transient meteor is not lost out of the laboratory of creation. Its light and life is only quenched to the eyes of men, but somewhere in the realm of infinity every atomic particle of the fallen Star will be outworking its special mission of use.

Time, the touchstone of truth, has unfolded the lone star of Bethlehem into the sun of ages, before whose light countless millions bow down in worship. Science, the unwritten bible of creation, has tracked the existence of the vanished meteor into the laboratories of the imperishable.

In some point of space midway, perchance, between the steady lustre of the Eastern luminary, and the transient glory of the flying meteor, our "Western Star" will accomplish whatever destiny the wise Disposer of events may see fit to assign to it. Perchance it may be a permanent human success; *au contraire*. — and the history of humanity has fully prepared us for such a result. — "The Western Star" will close its brief period of existence on earth, but continue to shine in the firmament which is overarched with good intentions forever."

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