

The Missing Link in Modern Spiritualism



A. Leah Underhill
of the Fox Family



Mrs. Margaret Fox

THE MISSING LINK

IN

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

BY

A. LEAH UNDERHILL,

OF THE FOX FAMILY.

REVISED AND ARRANGED BY A LITERARY FRIEND.

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Dedication.

TO MY HUSBAND,
DANIEL UNDERHILL,
WHO,
BEFORE I HAD OTHER CLAIMS THAN THOSE OF TRUTH AND RIGHT,
NOBLY SUSTAINED ME WHEN OLDER FRIENDS WAVERED,
THIS NARRATIVE IS DEDICATED,
NOT LESS GRATEFULLY THAN LOVINGLY.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

The author of this volume, having written it from time to time, from her recollections and documentary materials, which include bushels of letters—but unwilling to commit it to the press in the disjointed condition which was a natural consequence of her own want of much practice of the pen—did me the honor of requesting my aid in revising and arranging it for publication. Her honesty and sincerity of character have caused her to insist upon a preface to that effect. Though deeming this a superfluous scruple on her part, I am induced to comply with her wish for a different reason; and that is, the opportunity it affords of bearing my testimony to the remarkable accuracy of her memory and of her truthfulness, as those qualities have proved themselves throughout the intimate intercourse of many weeks, during which she has often had to repeat the same recollections of facts and incidents, under what was almost legal cross-examination, without ever the slightest variation in their details, and without ever allowing anything to pass which might be in the least degree tainted with inaccuracy or mistake. As she is so well known to so many friends, it is superfluous for me to express on this page, which will meet her eye for the first time in print, the high and affectionate esteem and respect with which that intimate intercourse, with all its opportunities for observation and judgment, have inspired the

EDITOR.

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NOTE.—The steel-engraved portraits of the Fox family are from paintings, of dates very different from those referred to on the pages which they face. With the exception of the parents (Mr. and Mrs. Fox), they represent the three “*Fox girls*” (as they were called) at ages more matured than would correspond to the text of the pages which they accompany. Photography was not so advanced and universal as at the present day.

INTRODUCTION.

It is not that the history of Spiritual Manifestations in this century and country has not again and again been written, nor that a library of the splendid literature of Spiritualism—narrative, philosophical, and religious—does not already exist, that I have deemed it a duty to give this history to the world.

It happens that nobody else possesses—both in vivid personal recollections and in stores of documentary material—the means and the data necessary for the task of giving a correct account of the initiation of the movement known as Modern Spiritualism; and the now hastening lapse of years gives warning that if to place it on record is a duty—as many friends have often urged—it is a duty not to be much longer delayed.

Many mistakes and material omissions have been made in former summary accounts from pens of friends, as well as misstatements from those of foes; nor could any one heretofore form any clear or complete idea of the early years of the epochal period which dates from March 31, 1848.

Since that day, starting from a small country village of Western New York, Spiritualism has made its way—against tremendous obstacles and resistances, but under an impulse and a guidance from higher spheres—round the civilized globe. Starting from three sisters, two of them children, and the eldest a little beyond that age, clustered round a matchless mother (whose revered portrait does honor to my title-page), its ranks of believers, private or publicly avowed, have grown within thirty-six years to millions whose number no man positively knows, but which, I think, cannot be less than as many as it counts of years. Beginning in a small house, temporarily occupied while another was building, it has established itself in sovereign palaces; and the latest reports from England represent it as fast growing, under the encouraging influence of the reigning royal family, even into social fashionableness. As in the story of the weary forty years' wandering of the children of Israel in the desert—fed by food and led by light, both

from heaven—so does Spiritualism seem to be now nearing the borders of its Promised Land. It is but a few years since it was a favorite topic for scoff or sneer by the press, while now it is but rarely that here and there is to be found some writer so far lagging behind the march of the age as still to yield, in that way, to the force of former foolish habit. How far and how deeply it has modified the old teachings of the pulpit is patent to all observant eyes; while among the priesthood in the divine temple of Science, the number and unsurpassed rank of those who, under its influence, have abandoned the materialism of their old philosophies, after exhaustive investigation of the facts and truths of Spiritualism, is such as to stamp with the disgrace of simple ignorance those who may still dare to deny and deride;—even as history has fixed the fate of those professors and priests who refused to take a look through Galileo’s telescope; or of those doctors who, being past the age of forty, could never, to their dying day, accept Harvey’s demonstrations of the circulation of the blood.

It will be seen in the following pages how a vein of that mysterious something which, in our generation of “the Fox family,” has come to be called “mediumship,” is perceptible, cropping out in old stories, running through ancestral generations, and how it reappears most marvellously in an infant in the next one succeeding to us. It will also appear how long and strenuously we resisted its influence and its manifestations, and struggled against the absolute persecutions which at last forced us into publicity.

I conclude this Introduction by a brief allusion to the reasonable question which has been so often asked, *Cui bono?*—or what is the use of the manifestations of Spiritualism?

It is that they *demonstrate* the reality of the survival of man’s spirit, or inner self, after that “death” which is but birth into another stage of progressed and progressive life, in unchanged personality and identity; or, in other words, that immortality of the soul (heretofore a mere dogma of unproved and unprovable “faith”), which is the foundation corner-stone of all religions and of all Religion. In the words of Paul, to “faith” they “add knowledge.” They thus not only console bereavement, snatch from death its sting, and from the grave its victory, but through the concurrent teachings of all good and advanced spirits they make us feel the *real reality* of the brotherhood of mankind, and the common fatherhood of that supreme,

unnamed, and unnamable Infinitude of Love, Wisdom, and Power, who is addressed in Pope's Universal Prayer, as—

“Father of all, in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.”

THE MISSING LINK

IN

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

CHAPTER I.

HYDESVILLE.

“MYSTERIOUS NOISES” HEARD IN THE HOUSE OF JOHN D. FOX, IN HYDESVILLE (TOWN OF ARCADIA), NEAR NEWARK, WAYNE COUNTY, N. Y.—STATEMENTS OF WITNESSES.

The following statements were made by the different persons whose names are signed to them, and taken down in writing as they made them; after which they were carefully read, and signed by them. They comprise but a small number of those who heard these noises, or have been knowing to these transactions; but they are deemed sufficient to satisfy the public mind in regard to their truthfulness.

CERTIFICATE OF MRS. MARGARET FOX, WIFE OF JOHN D. FOX, THE OCCUPANT OF THE HOUSE.

“We moved into this house on December 11, 1847, and have resided here since that date. We formerly lived in the city of Rochester, N. Y. We were first *disturbed* by these noises about a fortnight ago. It sounded like some one knocking in the east bedroom, on the floor; we could hardly tell where to locate the sounds, as sometimes it sounded as if the furniture was moved, but on examination we found everything in order. The children had become so alarmed that I thought best to have them sleep in the room with us. There were four of us in family, and sometimes five.

“On the night of the first disturbance we all got up, lighted a candle and searched the entire house, the noises continuing during the time, and being heard near the same place. Although not very loud, it produced a jar of the bedsteads and chairs that could be felt when we were in bed. It was a tremulous motion, more than a sudden jar. We could feel the jar when standing on the floor. It continued on this night until we slept. I did not sleep until about twelve o’clock. On March 30th we were disturbed all night. The noises were heard in all parts of the house. My husband stationed himself outside of the door while I stood inside, and the knocks came on the door between us. We heard footsteps in the pantry, and walking down-

stairs; we could not rest, and I then concluded that the house must be haunted by some unhappy, restless spirit. I had often heard of such things, but had never witnessed anything of the kind that I could not account for before.

“On Friday night, March 31, 1848, we concluded to go to bed early and not permit ourselves to be disturbed by the noises, but try and get a night’s rest. My husband was here on all these occasions, heard the noises, and helped search. It was very early when we went to bed on this night; hardly dark. I had been so broken of my rest I was almost sick. My husband had not gone to bed when we first heard the noise on this evening. I had just lain down. It commenced as usual. I knew it from all other noises I had ever before heard. The children, who slept in the other bed in the room, heard the rapping, and tried to make similar sounds by snapping their fingers.

“My youngest child (Cathie) said: ‘Mr. Splitfoot, do as I do,’ clapping her hands. The sound instantly followed her with the same number of raps; when she stopped the sound ceased for a short time. Then Margaretta said, in sport: ‘Now do just as I do; count one, two, three, four,’ striking one hand against the other at the same time, and the raps came as before. She was afraid to repeat them. Then Cathie said, in her childish simplicity: ‘O mother, I know what it is; to-morrow is April-fool day, and it’s somebody trying to fool us.’ I then thought I could put a test that no one in the place could answer. I asked the noise to rap my different children’s ages, successively. Instantly each one of my children’s ages was given correctly, pausing between them sufficiently long to individualize them until the seventh, at which a longer pause was made, and then three more emphatic raps were given, corresponding to the age of the little one that died, which was my youngest child. I then asked: ‘Is this a human being that answers my questions so correctly?’ There was no rap. I asked: ‘Is it a spirit? If it is, make two raps?’ Two sounds were given as soon as the request was made. I then said: ‘If it was an injured spirit, make two raps,’ which were instantly made, causing the house to tremble. I asked, ‘Were you injured in this house?’ The answer was given as before. ‘Is the person living that injured you?’ Answered by raps in the same manner. I ascertained by the same method that it was a man, aged thirty one-years; that he had been murdered in this house, and his remains were buried in the cellar; that his family consisted of a wife and five children, two sons and three daughters, all

living at the time of his death, but that his wife had since died. I asked: 'Will you continue to rap if I call in my neighbors that they may hear it too?' The raps were loud in the affirmative. My husband went and called in Mrs. Redfield (our nearest neighbor). She is a very candid woman. The girls were sitting up in bed clinging to each other and trembling with terror. I think I was as calm as I am now. Mrs. Redfield came immediately (this was about half past seven), thinking she would have a laugh at the children; but when she saw them pale with fright and nearly speechless, she was amazed, and believed there was something more serious than she had supposed. I asked a few questions for her, and was answered as before. He told her age exactly. She then called her husband, and the same questions were asked and answered. Then Mr. Redfield called in Mr. Duesler and wife, and several others. Mr. Duesler then called in Mr. and Mrs. Hyde, also Mr. and Mrs. Jewell. Mr. Duesler asked many questions, and received answers. I then named all the neighbors I could think of, and asked if any of them had injured him, and received no answer. Mr. Duesler then asked questions and received answers. He asked, 'Were you murdered?' Raps affirmative. 'Can your murderer be brought to justice?' No sound. 'Can he be punished by the law?' No answer. He then said: 'If your murderer cannot be punished by the law, manifest it by raps,' and the raps were made clearly and distinctly. In the same way Mr. Duesler ascertained that he was murdered in the east bedroom about five years ago, and that the murder was committed by a Mr. —, on a Tuesday night, at twelve o'clock; that he was murdered by having his throat cut with a butcher knife; that the body was taken down cellar; that it was not buried until the next night; that it was taken through the buttery, down the stairway, and that it was buried ten feet below the surface of the ground. It was also ascertained that he was murdered for his money, by raps affirmative. 'How much was it, one hundred?' No rap. 'Was it two hundred?' etc.; and when he mentioned five hundred the raps replied in the affirmative. Many called in who were fishing in the creek, and all heard the same questions and answers. Many remained in the house all night. I and my children left the house. My husband remained in the house with Mr. Redfield all night. On the next Saturday the house was filled to overflowing. There were no sounds heard during the day, but they commenced again in the evening. It was said there were over three hundred persons present at the time. On Sunday morning the noises were heard throughout the day by all who came to the house. On Saturday night, April

1st, they commenced digging in the cellar; they dug until they came to water, and then gave it up. The noise was not heard on Sunday evening nor during the night. Stephen B. Smith and wife (my daughter Maria), and my son, David S. Fox and wife, slept in the room this night. I have heard nothing since that time until yesterday. In the forenoon of yesterday there were several questions answered in the usual way, by rapping. I have heard the noise several times to-day.



“I am not a believer in haunted houses or supernatural appearances. I am very sorry that there has been so much excitement about it. It has been a great deal of trouble to us. It was our misfortune to live here at this time;

but I am willing and anxious that the truth should be known, and that a true statement should be made. I cannot account for these noises; all that I know is, that they have been heard repeatedly, as I have stated. I have heard this rapping again this (Tuesday) morning, April 4th. My children also heard it. I certify that the foregoing statement has been read to me, and that the same is true; and that I should be willing to take my oath that it is so, if necessary.

(Signed) "MARGARET FOX.

"APRIL 11, 1848."

STATEMENT OF JOHN D. FOX.

"I have heard the above statement of my wife, Margaret Fox, read, and hereby certify that the same is true in all its particulars. I heard the same rappings which she has spoken of, in answer to the questions, as stated by her. There have been a great many questions besides those asked, and answered in the same way. Some have been asked a great many times, and they have always received the same answers. There has never been any contradiction whatever.

"I do not know of any way to account for these noises, as being caused by any natural means. We have searched every nook and corner in and about the house, at different times, to ascertain if possible whether anything or anybody was secreted there that could make the noise, and have not been able to find anything which would or could explain the mystery. It has caused a great deal of trouble and anxiety.

"Hundreds have visited the house, so that it is impossible for us to attend to our daily occupations; and I hope that, whether caused by natural or supernatural means, it will be ascertained soon. The digging in the cellar will be resumed as soon as the water settles; and then it can be ascertained whether there are any indications of a body ever having been buried there; and if there are, I shall have no doubt but that it is of supernatural origin.

(Signed) "JOHN D. FOX.

"APRIL 11, 1848."

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM DUESLER.

“I live in this place. I moved from Cayuga County here, last October. I live within a few rods of the house in which these sounds have been heard. The first I heard anything about them was a week ago last Friday evening (March 31st). Mrs. Redfield came over to my house, to get my wife to go over to Mr. Fox’s. Mrs. R. appeared to be very much agitated. My wife wanted me to go over with them, and I accordingly went. When she told us what she wanted us to go over there for, I laughed at her and ridiculed the idea of there being anything mysterious about it. I told her it was all nonsense, and that we would find out the cause of the noise, and that it could easily be accounted for. This was about nine o’clock in the evening. There were some twelve or fourteen persons present when I left them. Some were so frightened that they did not want to go into the room. I went into the room and sat down on the bed. Mr. Fox asked a question, and I heard the rapping, which they had spoken of, distinctly. I felt the bedstead jar when the sounds were produced. Mr. Fox then asked if it would answer my questions if I asked any; and it rapped three times. I then asked if it was an injured spirit, and it rapped. I asked if it had come to hurt any one who was then present. It did not rap. I then reversed the question, and it rapped. I asked if my father or I had injured it (as we had formerly lived in that house), and there was no noise. ‘If we have not injured you, manifest it by rapping,’ and we all heard three distinct raps. I then asked if such or such a one had injured it (meaning the several families who had formerly lived in the house), and there was no noise. Upon asking the negatives of those questions the rapping was heard. I then asked if Mr. —— (naming a person who had lived in the house at a former period) had injured it; and if so, to manifest it by rapping, and it made three raps louder than usual; and at the same time the bedstead jarred more than it had before. I then inquired if it was murdered for money, and the sounds were heard. Questions and answers as to different sums of money were then given as stated by Mr. Fox. All in the room said they heard the sounds distinctly.

“After that, I went over and got Artemus W. Hyde to come over. I then asked over nearly all the same questions, and got the same answers. Mr. Redfield went after David Jewell and wife, and Mr. and Mrs. Hyde also came in. After they came, I asked the same questions over again, and got the same answers. I asked if it was murdered by being struck on the head, and there were no sounds; I then reversed the question, and the rapping was

heard. I then asked if it was stabbed in the side, and there was no answer. Upon asking the negative of this the rapping was heard. It usually rapped three times in giving an affirmative answer to my questions. I then asked if it had its throat cut, and it rapped as usual. Then, if it was with a butcher knife, and the rapping was heard. In the same way it was ascertained that it was asleep at the time, but was awakened when the knife entered its throat; that it struggled and made some noise and resistance. Then I asked if there was any one in the house at the time but him, and it did not rap. I then asked if they two were alone, and the rapping was heard. I then asked if Lucretia Pulver was there at the time, and there was no rapping. If she had gone away that night, and if Mrs. —— was gone away also, and the rapping was heard each time. There was no rapping heard, only when we asked questions. I then asked if any one in Hydesville knew of the murder at the time except ——, and it rapped. Then I asked about a number of persons, if they knew it, and there was no rapping until I came to Mrs. ——, and when I came to her name the rapping was heard. Then if any one but —— and wife knew of it, and I got no rap. Then if they were all that knew of the murder, and it rapped. I asked if the body was put into the cellar, and it rapped. I then asked if it was buried in different points of the cellar, and to all my questions there was no rapping, until I asked if it was near the centre, and the rapping was heard. Charles Redfield then took a candle and went down cellar. I told him to place himself in different parts of the cellar, and as he did so I asked the question if a person was over the place where it was buried, and I got no answer until he stood over a certain place in the cellar, when it rapped. He then stepped one side, and when I asked the question there were no noises. This we repeated several times, and we found that whenever he stood over the one place the rapping was heard, and when he moved away from that one place, there was no rapping in answer.”

NOTE.—The remainder of Mr. Duesler’s statement does not vary from that of my mother and others, and, for want of room, is omitted. It was dated April 12, 1848.

STATEMENT OF MISS LUCRETIA PULVER.

“I lived in this house all one winter, in the family of Mr. —— . I worked for them a part of the time, and a part of the time I boarded and went to school. I lived there about three months. During the latter part of the time I was

there I heard these knockings frequently: in the bedroom, under the foot of the bed. I heard it a number of nights, as I slept in the bedroom nearly all the time that I stayed there. One night I thought I heard a man walking in the buttery. This buttery is near the bedroom, with a stairway between the two. Miss Amelia Losey stayed with me that night. She also heard the noise, and we were both much frightened, and got up and fastened down the windows, and fastened the door. It sounded as if a person walked through the buttery, down cellar, and part way across the cellar bottom, and then the noise ceased. There was no one else in the house at the time except my little brother, who was asleep in the same room with us. This was about twelve o'clock I should think. We did not go to bed until after eleven, but had not been asleep when we heard it striking. Mr. and Mrs. —— had gone to Loch Berlin, to be gone till the next day. One morning about a week after this Mrs. —— sent me down cellar to shut the outside door (which fastens on the inside). In going across the cellar I sank knee deep in the centre of the cellar. It appeared to be uneven and very loose. After I got up-stairs Mrs. —— asked me what I screamed for. When I told her, she laughed at me for being frightened, and said it was only where rats had been at work in the ground.

“A day or two after this, Mr. —— carried a lot of dirt into the cellar, just at night, and was at work there some time. Mrs. —— told me that he was filling up the rat-holes.

“A few days before I first heard the noises, or anything of the kind had ever occurred, a foot-pedlar called there about two o'clock in the afternoon. Mrs. —— then told me that Mr. —— thought they would not want me any longer, and that I might go home; but, if they wanted me again they would send for me. Mrs. —— was going to Loch Berlin, to stay that night. This was the first I had heard of it. I wanted to buy some things of the pedlar, but had no money with me, and he said he would call at our house the next morning and sell them to me. *I never saw him after that.* Three days after this they sent for me to come and board with them, and go to school. I accordingly came, and went to school about one week, when she wanted I should stay out of school and do house-work, as she had a couple of coats to make over for her husband. She said they were too large for her husband, and out of fashion, and she must alter them. They were ripped to pieces when I first saw them. I should think the pedlar was about thirty years old. I

heard him conversing with Mrs. —— about his family. He told her how many children he had, in answer to her inquiry. I do not recollect how many he said he had. Mrs. —— told me that he (the pedlar) was an old acquaintance of theirs. A short time after this Mrs. —— gave me a thimble, which she said she had bought of the pedlar, and paid him fifty cents for. Some time after I had left her I visited her again; and she said the pedlar had been there again, and showed me another thimble, which, she said, she had bought of the same pedlar. She said he had cheated her; that he had sold it to her for pure silver, but it was only German silver. She also showed me some other things which she said she had bought of him.

“I did not (and do not now) know what to think of the noises I have heard. The dog would sit under the bedroom window and howl all night long. Mr. and Mrs. —— appeared to be very good folks, only they were rather quick-tempered.

“This pedlar carried a trunk and a basket, I think, with vials of essence in it. He wore a black coat and light-colored pants.

“I am willing to swear to the above statement, if necessary.

“LUCRETIA PULVER.

“APRIL 11, 1848.”

MRS. ANNA PULVER.

“I was acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. —— . I called on them frequently. My warping bars were in their chamber, and I used to go there to do my work. One morning when I went there Mrs. —— told me that she felt very badly; that she had not slept much, if any, the night before. When I asked her what the matter was, she said she didn't know but it was the fidgets; but she thought she heard something walking about from one room to another, and that she and Mr. —— got up and fastened the windows down. She felt safe after that. I heard her speak about hearing sounds after that, which she could not account for.

“ANNA PULVER.

“APRIL 11, 1848.”

It will be sufficient to sum up the important bearings of this subject by quoting a few more extracts from the numerous certificates contained in the little pamphlet published by E. E. Lewis, Esq., of Canandaigua, N. Y.

“Mr. and Mrs. Weekman lived in this house for a year and a half, and were frequently startled by the rappings, walking, etc. On several occasions they sought diligently to discover the cause. He stood with his hand on the latch, and when the knockings were repeated, suddenly opened the door and ran into the yard and entirely around the house; but nothing was ascertained by him.”

Mrs. Weekman says: “We heard great noises during the night; sometimes a sound as if a person was walking in the cellar. (There was nothing but a single board floor, between the cellar and the upper room, so that the sound made in one was easily heard in the other.) One night one of our little girls, who slept in the room where the noises were heard, awoke us all by her screaming very loudly. My husband and myself, and our hired girl, all went to the room to see what was the matter with her. The child sat up in bed, crying and screaming, and it was some time before we could quiet her enough to get answers to our questions. She said ‘something had been moving around her and over her head and face: that it was cold, and that she felt it all over her.’ This was between twelve and one o’clock. We took her into bed with us, and it was a long time before we could get her to sleep in that bed again. At one time Mr. Weekman heard his name called. (I was away that night, sitting up with a sick person.) He was awakened, and supposed some one wanted him. He sat up in bed for some time, but heard no more. We never found out what or who called him. So many have heard these noises that it seems there must be something unusual.”

Mrs. Jane C. Lape “lived in the family of Mrs. Weekman at the time she states. There was but one door in the bedroom. When I was doing my work, I saw a man in the bedroom joining the kitchen. I saw the man distinctly. I was frightened. I had been in the kitchen a long time, and knew that nobody could have gone into that room. The man stood facing me when I saw him. He did not speak, nor did I hear any noise at any time. He had on light pants, black frock-coat, and cloth cap. He was of medium size. I knew of no person in that vicinity who would answer that description. Mrs. Weekman was in another part of the house at that time. I left the room, and when I

that no deception might be practised by any one. These committees were composed of neighbors and friends, whom we knew to be strictly honest. I remained in the house until about one o'clock in the morning. The noises had ceased a little before twelve. After some of the crowd had left, we commenced digging in the cellar. Before digging I asked the question: 'In what part of the cellar was your body buried?' naming the different corners of the cellar. No response was made. 'Was it in the centre?' The rapping answered affirmatively. Mr. Carlos Hyde went down in the cellar, walked over the bottom, asking at every point if he was over the right place, but no rappings were heard until he stood in the centre of the cellar. It then rapped so that those in the cellar as well as those in the room above could hear it. We dug about three feet deep, when the water came in so fast we had to stop. I was here again on Monday, April 3d, and we commenced digging again in the cellar, and baling out the water; but we found it impossible to make any headway.

“On Tuesday evening they began digging again. I got a pump, and we took up the floor and put it in the hole, and began to pump and bale out the water at the same time. We could not lower the water much and had to give it up. The water is in the hole, although it is lowering gradually. I thought, from there being so many respectable people present, and they having heard the same sounds that I did, that there must be something in it. I never believed in haunted houses or anything of that kind. I have heard of such things, but never saw or heard anything but what I could account for on reasonable grounds. I cannot account for this noise as being produced by any human agency. I am perfectly willing to take my oath as to the truth of the statements which I have here made, if it is thought necessary.

“(Signed) DAVID S. FOX.

“TUESDAY, April 11, 1848.”

CHAPTER II.

HYDESVILLE (*Continued*).

THE LAST DIGGING IN THE CELLAR—MOB ANTAGONISM—NOBLE FRIENDS—EXPERIENCES AND THEORIES
—ANTECEDENTS OF THE HOUSE—FRANKLIN.

It was late in July, 1848. The old house at Hydesville was not occupied by any one, save the “murdered man.” Many went there alone, or in small parties; and often the rappings were heard.

We, too, visited the old house, went down into the cellar, and called on the spirits to answer our questions and direct us aright.

Notwithstanding all the bitter conflicts we had passed through in Rochester, we had come to the conclusion that good spirits (as well as bad ones) could manifest themselves to us. We were greatly favored in our early associations with a class of progressive philanthropic people among our neighbors, whose highest aim was to benefit the world, and who urged us to go forth and do our duty. We learned from them to take a more liberal view, as they had taught us many valuable lessons of forbearance and perseverance. When I saw my dear good brother bow with the others, and ask questions of the Spirits, my soul and all within me was lifted beyond the scoffs and ridicule which I knew we must submit to if we performed the heavy duties incumbent upon us. There had been great excitement for a time, but little now was said in that vicinity about it, as there had been so much ridicule attached to the occurrences of the past, that the leaders shrank from further publicity. But, during this time, we were having our experiences in Rochester, where I resided.

It was now directed by the Spirits that the digging should be resumed. (It was the dry season of the year, and the water in the Ganargua^[1] was low.) My brother declared that he could not again enter upon so hazardous an undertaking. He believed himself capable of acting on his own judgment in the matter. But for once he found, to his utter discomfiture, that the mighty powers that seemed to rule our destiny were not to be defeated. The Spirits

directed that he should invite certain gentlemen to assist in the digging. They spelled out the names of many Rochester friends, viz., Henry Bush, Lyman Granger, Mr. Post, Dr. Faulkner, and Rev. A. H. Jervis. The above-named were old and tried friends, and we felt no hesitation in calling upon them; but when David was requested to invite gentlemen living in the vicinity of Hydesville, with whom he had little or no acquaintance, he positively refused to do their bidding. The friends in Rochester received this announcement with apparent satisfaction. All came at the appointed time. Mr. and Mrs. Granger and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Bush, Mrs. Jervis, Dr. Faulkner and his little son, etc. I doubt if either of these gentlemen had ever used the pickaxe and spade before; but they came willing to perform their duty. Brother David still declared that he could not, and would not, make himself so ridiculous as to invite men who would laugh at him for entertaining such an idea; but still the Spirits commanded him to obey instructions, and nightly they would go through the performance of representing the murder scene. (This occurrence was in my brother's house.) Gurgling, strangling, sawing, planing, and boring; representing the enactment of the horrid crime said to have been committed in the Hydesville house.

Our friends urged David to act in accordance with the request of the "Spirits," but he could not make up his mind to do so. He walked from room to room, and in secret prayed that this terrible injunction might be removed. He cried, with uplifted hands, to God, to have compassion on our family; and then, in despair, would say: "Better to die together, than to live so disgraced." The sight of his grief and despair was heart-rending; but the Spirits were inexorable. The day appointed for the digging arrived. During the previous, night all was in an uproar. The sounds as of broken crockery were heard, and as if heavy weights were dragged across the floor. Sawing, planing, digging, boring, groaning, and whispering close to our ears. This continued until the bright, beautiful dawn of the morning warned us that it was time to prepare for the labors of the day. We were commanded by the Spirits thus—"Go forth and do your duty, and good will come of it." Chauncy Culver, my brother's wife's brother, called in, and David said: "Chauncy, you are politely invited to join us in the digging to-day." He answered, "I am willing to do so, Dave." Others who had been named, but not invited, dropped in by chance, and all united with us; but the great

burden fell upon David's shoulders. Chickens were cooked, puddings, pies, cakes, and sweet-meats were prepared by my brother's wife, Elizabeth, and my sister Maria. Our living was sumptuous, and we had very little opposition during the first day's work. The earth was hard and dry, and the digging tiresome; but the party worked diligently until near noon, when they came to a quantity of charcoal and traces of lime (this was between four and five feet below the cellar bottom), some hair of a reddish or sandy hue, and some teeth, which showed, beyond all question, that the earth had at some time, and for some purpose, been disturbed. The party worked on until it began to grow dark, and the first day's work was ended. We returned to David's home, about two miles from the Hydesville house, well satisfied with our day's work, and the friends felt that they had done all in their power to get at the truth of the Spirits' declaration.

We made two large beds on opposite sides of the parlor; the women and children rested upon one of them, and the men on the other; Dr. Faulkner and his little son being in the parlor bedroom. All heard the manifestations that night; and they were most wonderful in character. This arrangement of the beds was directed by the Spirits, that they might gratify all by making manifestations during the night.

The next day we resumed our labor. The ladies accompanied their husbands and friends. We had started as early as possible. Mr. S. B. Smith, my sisters husband, my brother David, and some of the neighbors turned out five or six wagons to convey us to our destination, forming quite a procession of our own; but as we came to the turn of the hill, from whence we could see in all directions, there were vehicles of every description wending their way to the "haunted house." Shouts of ribaldry and roars of laughter fell upon our ears like the death-knell of some poor soul—who might almost begin to feel himself guilty of crimes he had never committed.

We entered the cellar. On came the noisy rabble. Our noble, pale-faced, honorable men stood firm in their duty. Mark the contrast, dear readers: many of those noble souls now stand in the higher ranks in glory. They have passed through the fiery furnace, entered the "golden gate" of the new Jerusalem; and to them offer your praises and admiration. Such men and women as those dared to stand before the world and battle for the right. It was *such as they* who fought and won the great battle against slavery and

contributed to its overthrow. May they continue to live in the memories of the children of earth.

Through the second day the digging was frequently interrupted by the rude entrance of some of the outside crowd. We (the women) formed a guard around the place where the work was in progress, to protect the men thus engaged. We had candles in our hands, with which to light the laborers, when suddenly one of the workers cried out, "Great God! here are the pieces of a broken bowl!" (The Spirit always said that the bowl which caught his blood was buried; and he represented nightly the sound of pouring blood into a vessel or bowl, dropping slower and slower, until at last it ceased entirely; and then the sound would come as if the bowl were thrown and broken in pieces.) Several bones were found which doctors pronounced human bones, stating to what parts of the body they belonged. One, I remember, was said to be from the ankle, two from the hands, and some from the skull, etc. (Some persons, who never saw these bones, argued that they were not human bones, hair, and teeth which were there found. But I ask, in the name of common sense, how did they happen to be there, nearly six feet beneath the cellar bottom?)

In the afternoon the crowd outside grew more bold, and among them were sympathizers with the man who was accused by the general public opinion. We pitied him, and regretted that he had been named; but we never knew that such a man had lived, until the neighbors had brought out the fact by putting questions which were answered by the rappings.

These spectators were becoming more and more excited, and crowded into the cellar. Some called us crazy. They reached over the heads of the women and spat upon and dropped sticks and stones on those who were digging. We still stood firm in the defence of our friends, the laboring party; and they worked on until they struck what seemed to be a board. This sounded hollow, and its location was beneath the sand and gravel. They procured an augur and bored through the obstruction, when the augur dropped to the handle. They then obtained bits, and attached them to long sticks, and with them bored several inches, when the bit would drop to the depth of a foot or more. In this way they lost two of the bits, which dropped through and were not recovered. By this time the excitement was overwhelming. The cellar was filled with people. Some cried, "Drag out the women! drag them out!"

Others said, "Don't hurt the women, drag out the men!" The floor over our heads creaked with the weight of the multitude. It grew dark. Our friends could work no longer, and reluctantly retired. How we all reached the outside, amid the shouts and the roar of the excited crowd, I cannot explain; but at length we stood together in the door-yard, awaiting our conveyances, and no word of disrespect was spoken to any of us. The Spirits said: "Dear faithful friends, your work here is done. God will reward you."

"Yes," said that noble-looking man, Henry Bush, with the acquiescence of all, "our work is done."

We all returned to David's (the old homestead). That night and the following day our friends returned to Rochester. We remained a few days with our family.

I must pass over many interesting circumstances, or it will be wholly impossible to put our story in one volume: but I deem it due to my family that some facts should be stated in this history.

After the public parts we had been forced to perform at Hydesville, the news spread far and wide. The crowd of people came in wagons from every direction before the harvest had been gathered. Some drove through the gate, but others took down the fences, and drove through the grain fields, and peppermint beds, regardless of the destruction they were perpetrating. Against all this destruction of his property, David was defenceless. He saw and felt how utterly useless it was for him to attempt to remonstrate with such an element.

It was late in the afternoon when a tired horseman came galloping up the carriage road, to inform my brother that a party consisting of several wagon-loads were on their way to mob us. At this announcement we were much frightened, and knew not what to do. Intimations of such a design had reached us previously, and powder and shot had been provided for our defence. The boys and hired men had gathered piles of stones behind the house, and at first it was considered to be our wisest way to defend ourselves as best we could.

The sun was low and we dreaded the night coming on. What could we do? Mother called us all into the parlor bedroom, and there we knelt, with fear,

and prayed to God for protection. The Spirits spelled out to us, "You will not be harmed. God will protect you." We stood for a moment and counselled together. The package of powder flew from the top of the bureau and hit Cathie on the forehead, and that of the shot came and struck me on the shoulder. My brother took the guns and fired them off, and threw the powder and shot into the peppermint patch, saying, "I will not raise a hand against them. If God has sent this upon us, for the good of mankind, he is able to protect us. I will trust him."

The windows were fastened down as best we could. The dog began to bark fearfully. We heard the distant shouts and snatches of songs, and knew they would soon be upon us. They drove up the road, into the yard, and one woman jumped through the window of the kitchen, *hoops and all*. She was in the kitchen before any of us knew they had entered the door-yard. David left us alone in the parlor, walked into the kitchen, and said to the woman, "If you had knocked I would have opened the door for you; it was not locked." He then opened all the doors, walked out to the crowd, and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, walk in. You are welcome to search the house from garret to cellar, if you will do so respectfully." One man, the leader of the crowd, exclaimed, in a manner of the utmost surprise: "My God! Dave Fox, is it you they have said so much about? No, we won't come in now. We'll go home and dress ourselves and come another time."

Thus ended this mob against the Spiritualists, as all others subsequently have ended. The Spirits, therefore, fulfilled their promise and protected us from all harm.

I might fill many a page with the experiences of the family in that house at Hydesville, during the period of about three months and three weeks preceding that March 31, 1848, on which the neighbors were first called in. From the very first night of their taking possession of it, they were disturbed and puzzled with the strange knockings and other noises. They had gone into it only as a temporary home, while my father was building the new house on the homestead farm, and the carpenter had estimated a couple of months as sufficient time for his work. All sorts of natural theories were imagined as to the cause of the sounds, nor did they, for some time, think of Spirits or of anything supernatural, or even important. Father insisted, at one time, that they proceeded from a cobbler in the

neighborhood, hammering leather, and working late in the night. Then it was “some boards that must be loose and shaken by the wind.” Then it appeared that “there must be dancing going on at Mr. Duesler’s, or some other house within hearing;” then “the house must be full of rats”—though mother declared she had never seen a rat in it. Again, when the knocks would break out suddenly, close to some of the family, or at the table, one of the girls would charge the other with having caused them, saying, “Now you did that,” etc., etc. Father had always been a regular Methodist, in good standing, and was invariable in his practice of morning prayers; and when he would be kneeling upon his chair, it would sometimes amuse the children to see him open wide his eyes, as knocks would sound and vibrate on his chair itself. He expressed it graphically to mother: “When I am done praying, that jiggling stops.” My daughter Lizzie used to declare that when she was writing, there would sometimes come a strong ticking on the paper. One night loud screams were heard from the children, Maggie and Cathie, in bed. “O mother, come quick. Somebody has lain down across the bed.” They were often so frightened that mother would have to take them to lie on both sides of her in her bed, and sometimes they would go, one to father’s bed and the other to mother’s. But these frights were attributed to bad dreams. Indeed, it now seems strange that so little serious impression was made on their minds for so long a time by these strange things, so persistent, so varied, and so inexplicable, which they instinctively abstained from talking about to the neighbors.

It was not till March 31st that they seemed to have culminated to the point which exhausted their patience, and which at last drove them to do so. On the preceding night they had been kept awake nearly all night by the knocking and heavy poundings about the house; and up to three o’clock in the morning they were occupied pursuing the sounds about from place to place, puzzling over them, and baffled in every attempt to discover a cause. The door would be pounded upon from the outside, and father would take hold of the handle, and on the return of the knocking would suddenly fling the door open, only to discover nothing. He and mother stood on the opposite sides of it, and each would hear the knocking on the side opposite to themselves, as though made by powerful muffled knuckles. Yet on neither side could be found traces of any person or thing to have produced them, while both would *feel* the strong vibrations of the wooden door.

It was afterward learned that, for several years back, strange noises had been heard by successive occupants of that house, none of whom had remained long as its tenants. Prior to its occupation by a certain family there had been no such disturbances; subsequently to then, they had been experienced by all their successors. It would be easy for me to name families of the highest respectability, and who are still my good friends, who would attest this.^[2]

[1] The old Indian name of the creek.

[2] It would seem that none of the families who, in the course of several years, had preceded the Fox family in the occupancy of this haunted house, combined the highly mediumistic nature with the other characteristics specially qualifying them for the great work for which the time was ripe, so that the manifestations, which appealed for attention, had knocked in vain at doors which could not open to them. Dr. Franklin, great philosopher and inventor of his time, was also, in the Spirit life, one of the inventors of this mode of communication between the two worlds, through knockings given in correspondence with the letters of the alphabet. Through another medium, besides the author of this volume, he has told me that out of “millions” he at last found in the Fox family the instruments he wanted for its practical application and introduction. This narrative curiously shows how hard and long they too struggled against the mission to which the Spirits were leading and at last forcing them, as will be seen below. I asked him if Spirits had influenced them to take the Hydesville house. His reply was a curious one. Instead of three consecutive and decided raps, which would have expressed assent, he on two occasions answered with only two raps, followed after a moment’s pause with a third, completing a qualified affirmative. “You mean that it was partially so?” I said; which was immediately answered with an unqualified assent; and he added, “It was many, not one alone,” thus disclaiming the credit of its sole and individual authorship.—ED.

CHAPTER III.

ROCHESTER

MY FIRST KNOWLEDGE OF THE MATTER—HASTEN TO HYDESVILLE—RAPPING ON A CANAL BOAT—EXPERIENCES—MOTHER COMES TO ROCHESTER—CALVIN BROWN—DEVIOUS ROUTE OF PROJECTILES UP-STAIRS FROM CELLAR TO GARRET—A DEATH-KNELL SOUNDED ALL NIGHT ON THE KEYS OF A LOCKED PIANO.

This volume is not meant to be an autobiography, though I regret to be compelled to speak so much of myself in giving an account of the inauguration of the movement known as “Modern Spiritualism,” through the three sisters of the Fox family, of whom I was the eldest, and already married when my two sisters, Margaretta and Catharine, were children. I was not with the family, but at my own house in Rochester, during most of the events related above.

I was myself also at that time but little more than a child, for when I was married at Rochester, N. Y., I could count but fourteen years and five months. It will be seen below how I was twice widowed before the age of twenty-four, though my second marriage was on the supposed death-bed of one who had been a brother to us all from childhood, and who merely desired to bequeath me his name.

Mr. Fish discovered when too late that he had married a child, and soon became indifferent to his home and family. He left Rochester under a pretence of going on business to the West. The next I heard of him was that he had married a rich widow in the State of Illinois.

As he had left little means for the support of myself and child, I turned my attention to teaching music. I had many friends who assisted me in getting pupils, and I was delighted to find myself entirely independent. One day (early in May, 1848), I was at the house of Mr. Little, enjoying myself with the young ladies, when Mrs. Little came in with the proof-sheet of a pamphlet issued by E. E. Lewis, Esq., of Canandaigua, N. Y. Mrs. Little knew my maiden name was Fox; that my parents (at the time) were in Arcadia, Wayne County, N. Y., and concluded I must be the daughter of

John D. Fox. She then introduced the printer, and he commenced questioning me about my family relations. He said, "Is your mother's name Margaret? Have you a brother David?" I replied, yes. I began to be startled by his questions, and said, "For mercy's sake, what has happened?" He answered by placing the proof-sheet in my hands, which gave me the first idea I ever had of the manifestations which had been taking place at the dwelling of our family in Hydesville. I read it, and cried over it. I knew not what to think, but I said to them all, "If my father, mother, and brother David have certified to such a statement, *it is true.*" All who heard me thus declare believed it, and never wavered for a moment. As soon as I could collect my thoughts, I called on Mrs. Granger and Mrs. Grover, old friends of mine and of our family, and related to them the account which I had read in the proof-sheet.

I told them I should take the night boat for Newark, Wayne County. I would visit my family, and learn for myself about the mysterious affair. They concluded to go with me. We were, at that time, obliged to travel by the Erie Canal packet-boat, as the direct railroad between Syracuse and Rochester had not yet been built. It took a few hours longer than now to make that journey. When we arrived at Hydesville, which is about two miles from our old homestead, we found the house deserted. My brother had persuaded the family to leave the old "haunted house," and live with him until their new house was finished.

We drove to brother David's, where we found mother completely broken down by the recent events. She never smiled; but her sighs and tears were heart-rending. We begged her to hope for the best, and try to think differently; but she could not. She wished we could all die; and it was, at the time, impossible to cheer her by anything we could say or do. She was only about middle age, and her health had always been good; and she was, by nature, very cheerful.

I with the ladies who accompanied me remained about two weeks, when we concluded to take Katie and Lizzie (my daughter) with us and return home to Rochester, as mother thought the former to be the one followed mostly by the sounds; and we hoped, by separating the two children (Maggie and Katie), that we could put a stop to the disturbance.

We had not gone many miles on the canal, however, when we became aware that the rapping had accompanied us. Perfect consternation came upon us. I knew not what to do. We did not wish our friends to know that the rapping had followed us; and we remained, as much as possible, by ourselves.

When we went to the dinner-table with the other passengers, the Spirits became quite bold and rapped loudly; and occasionally one end of the table would jump up and nearly spill the water out of our glasses; but there was so much noise on the boat going through the locks and other disturbances, that only we, who recognized the special sounds, knew of them. We arrived at home about 5 P.M. I sat down to think over the occurrences of the day and of other days during my visit.

The two girls had gone into the garden. All at once came a dreadful sound, as if a pail of bonnyclabber had been poured from the ceiling and fallen upon the floor near the window. The sound was horrible enough, but, in addition, came the jarring of the windows and of the whole house, as if a heavy piece of artillery had been discharged in the immediate vicinity. I was so paralyzed by fear that I could not move, and sat stupefied; again came the same terrible sound, with all the jarring, as at first; and yet again it came; when I sprang from the sofa on which I had been seated and rushed out into the garden where the children were. They immediately cried out, "Why, what is the matter with you, Leah? how pale you look!" I made some evasive reply, as I did not wish to alarm them.

We went to bed at an early hour, being tired and much excited. The children had expressed great fear, and I went to bed with them. No sooner had I extinguished the light, than the children screamed, and Lizzie said she felt a cold hand passing over her face, and another over her shoulder down her back. She screamed fearfully, and I feared she would go into spasms. Katie was also much frightened. For my part I was equally terror-stricken. I arose from my bed and sought the Bible, from which I read a chapter. But while I was reading the girls felt some touches. I had never felt them; and I could not realize that they were not in some way mistaken.

It was now late in the night and all was silent. We thought we would try to sleep, as we were tired and excited. But the instant we extinguished our

light the Bible flew from under my pillow—where I had placed it, supposing that the sacred volume would be respected. The box of matches was shaken in our faces, and such a variety of performances ensued that we gave up in despair to our fate, whatever it might be. We called on each other, if either was silent a few moments, that we might know that we were all alive. Finally, when the night was nearly spent, the disturbance ceased, and we fell asleep. We did not awake until very late in the morning. The sun shone brightly, and the birds sang sweetly in the trees of the public square. (Our residence then was on Mechanics' Square.) The June roses were just out, and all nature was in her loveliest hues. We could not make the disturbances of the past night seem real to us. I doubted everything, but kept my own counsel; and as the shades of evening fell upon the scene, which had been a day of such brightness and beauty, I made up my mind that I would go on as usual and try to forget, as far as possible, the frightful occurrences of the previous night. In the evening my friend Jane Little and two or three other friends called in to spend an hour or so with us. We sang, and I played on the piano; but even then, while the lamp was burning brightly, I felt the deep throbbing of the dull accompaniment of the invisibles, keeping time to the music as I played; but I did not wish to have my visitors know it, and the Spirits seemed kind enough not to make themselves heard so that others would observe what was so apparent to me.

All seemed quiet when we retired for the night, at about ten o'clock. We slept quietly for about two hours, when we were awakened by the most frightful manifestations. The house was in a perfect uproar. Tables and everything in the room below us were being moved about. Doors were opened and shut, making the greatest possible noises. *They then walked upstairs* and into the room next to us (our bedroom was an open recess off from this room). There seemed to be many actors engaged in the performance, and a large audience in attendance.

The representation of a pantomime performance was perfect.

After the first scene, there was great applause by the Spirit audience. Immediately following, one Spirit was heard to dance *as if with clogs*, which continued fully ten minutes. This amused the audience very much; and a loud clapping of hands followed. After this we heard nothing more except the representation of a large crowd walking away down-stairs,

through the rooms, closing the doors heavily after them. It is useless to attempt to record all the manifestations which occurred nightly during the last few weeks that we remained in that house. I came to the conclusion that it was haunted, and decided to move out of it as soon as I could find another house that suited me.

There was a house on Prospect Street, nearly finished, and I engaged it. I was particular to tell the agent that I wanted a house in which no crime had been committed. For I believed that the house I was then living in, like the one at Hydesville, was haunted; and I presumed that in this case as in the other it must have had its origin in hidden crime. He smiled as he remarked that he “thought that I would have no difficulty on that account.” We moved into this house as soon as possible, and congratulated ourselves on our good fortune in finding a place that had never before been tenanted.

Two houses stood on one foundation. On the ground floor was a kitchen, cellar, and pantry. The staircase led from the kitchen to the second floor. On the outside, a front and rear flight of steps led to a balcony from which we could enter the parlor and dining-room, on the second floor. Another flight of steps led from the dining-room to the third floor, which was one room the entire length and breadth of the house. In this last-named room we put up three beds, and one bed in the room on the parlor floor. I partitioned off a small room in one corner of the upper floor with chintz curtains. This lessened the size of the large room and afforded us a store-room. In the rear of the house was an old cemetery, called “the Buffalo Burying-ground.” This cemetery was separated from our lot by a high fence. I remember I disliked the idea of seeing those tall monuments every time I went into the pantry. (The entrance into the dining-room from the kitchen was through the pantry.)

Nothing occurred, during the first night of our occupancy of this house, of an unusual character, and we slept undisturbed.

I had written to our family at Arcadia, and told them what was transpiring with us nightly. This worried mother, and she determined to come immediately, and find some plan for suppressing it, if it could possibly be done. She, with Margaretta, arrived the next day, and we rejoiced to tell her that we had occupied the new house one night, and no sounds had been

heard to disturb us. After supper we remained at the table a long time, until mother suggested that it was getting late, and we had better retire for the night.

All was quiet until about midnight, when we distinctly heard footsteps coming up the stairs, walking into the little room I had partitioned off with curtains, which seemed admirably adapted to their purposes. We could hear them shuffling, giggling, and whispering, as if they were enjoying themselves at some surprise they were about to give us. Occasionally they would come and give our bed a tremendous shaking, lifting it (and us) entirely from the floor, almost to the ceiling, and then let us down with a bang; then pat us with hands. Then they would retire to the little room, which we subsequently named "the green room." At length we were quiet, and all fell asleep and slept until late in the morning.

The sun shone brightly in through the window, and mother exclaimed: "Can it be possible? Is it really true? How can we live and endure it? We cannot much longer stay here alone nights. We must have somebody to stay with us." Fillmore Grover came to take his lesson, and mother asked him to tell Calvin she would like to have him call and see her. (Calvin Brown's mother had been left a widow when quite young. She was the daughter of Daniel Hopkins, of Canada West, and belonged to the Society of Friends. She married out of the society, which was then against their discipline. She placed her oldest child, Calvin, in a military school; and when she found herself gradually failing in strength, she wrote to her father, who came and took her home, with her three younger children. She returned once to Rochester, and requested mother to look after Calvin, and care for him as she would for her own child, if she should not recover. His mother died, and he called my parents father and mother; the same as the rest of us.)

He called at about two o'clock. We all sat down and related what had happened and what we had witnessed during the past night. He promised to come and stay there at night; but he advised us to ask no questions, nor give them any encouragement, as he considered them evil spirits. To this we all agreed.

He came that night, and we were allowed to rest quietly until about two o'clock, when we were all awakened by a disturbance in the "green room."

Everything seemed to be in commotion, but, as Calvin was in the house, I felt more confidence in myself. I asked them to please behave themselves. At this, one Spirit walked around, as if on his bare feet. He answered my question by stamping on the floor. I was amused—although afraid. He seemed so willing to do my bidding that I could not resist the temptation of speaking to him as he marched around my bed. I said, “*Flat-Foot*,^[3] can you dance the Highland fling?” This seemed to delight him. I sang the music for him, and he danced most admirably. This shocked mother, and she said, “O Leah, how can you encourage that fiend, by singing for him to dance?” I soon found that they took advantage of my familiarity, and gathered in strong force around us. And here language utterly fails to describe the incidents that occurred. Loud whispering, giggling, scuffling, groaning, death-struggles, murder scenes of the most fearful character—I forbear to describe them. Mother became so alarmed that she called to Calvin to come up-stairs. He came—angry at the Spirits, and declared that “he would conquer, or die in the attempt.” This seemed to amuse them. They went to his bed, raised it up and let it down, and shook it violently. He was still determined not to yield to them.

Before Calvin came up-stairs, and during a short lull in their performances, we quickly removed our beds to the floor, hoping thereby to prevent them from raising us up and letting us down with such violence. Calvin said, as he came up, that we were foolish to make our beds on the floor, as it pleased the Spirits to see how completely they had conquered us. So he laid down on his bed, and quietly waited developments. Mother said, “Calvin, I wish your bed was on the floor, too. We have not been disturbed since we left the bedstead.” Calvin remarked, “They are up to some deviltry now. I hear them.” He no sooner uttered these words, than a shower of slippers came flying at him as he lay in his bed. He bore this without a murmur. The next instant he was struck violently with his cane. He seized it and struck back, right and left, with all his strength, without hitting anything; but received a palpable *bang* in return for every thrust he made. He sprang to his feet and fought with all his might. Everything thrown at him he pitched back to them, until a brass candlestick was thrown at him, cutting his lip. This quite enraged him. He pronounced a solemn malediction, and, throwing himself on the bed, vowed he would have nothing more to do with “fiendish Spirits.”

He was not long permitted to remain in quiet there. They commenced at his bedstead and deliberately razed it to the floor, leaving the head-board in one place, the foot-board in another, the two sides at angles, and the bed-clothes scattered about the room. He was left lying on his mattress, and for a moment there was silence; after which some slight movements were heard in the "green room." I had stowed a large number of balls of carpet-rags in an old chest standing on the floor, with two trunks and several other articles on the top of it. It seemed but the work of a moment for them to get at the carpet-balls, which came flying at us from every direction, hitting us in the same place every time. They took us for their target, and threw with the skill of an archer. Darkness made no difference with them, and if either of us attempted to remonstrate against such violence, they would instantly give *the remonstrant* the benefit of a ball.

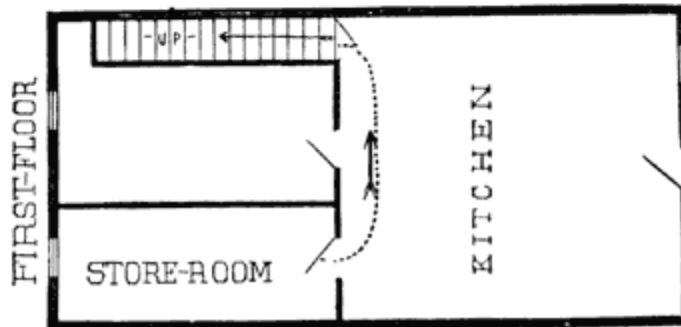
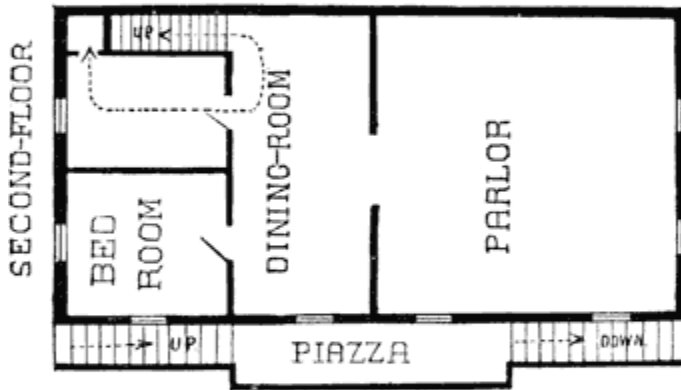
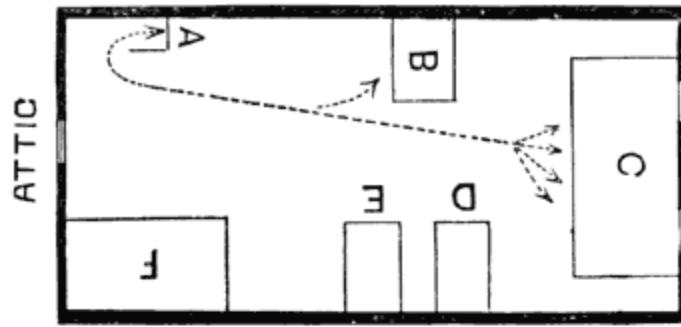
The next day was Sunday. We were greatly depressed, and decided to leave things as they were. After breakfast we concluded to visit Mount Hope Cemetery. We returned late, and retired immediately after supper. While sitting on our bed-side (on the floor), deliberating in our own minds what was best to do, we were suddenly startled by a tremendous knocking on the roof of the house. (The raps always appear to be made on the opposite side of the door, or floor, table, etc.) We implored them to stay where they were (as it seemed the noises were outside the house), and let us alone; but no sooner was the request made, than a sound slap was given us each, as if in reproof of what we had been saying. A second slap, as if with an open hand, was administered to Cathie, when she cried out, "O, look!" We all saw what seemed to be the form of a large man, lying across the foot of our bed, breathing irregularly, and apparently in great distress. (The sheet was wrapped around him, muffled closely about his neck.) His gurgling manifestation was terrific, and produced a sensible vibration. We pitied him. He appeared like one passing through the agonies of death. While we were contemplating this figure, another slap came upon Cathie,^[4] and she fell to all appearance lifeless. We were greatly alarmed at this terrible manifestation. We knew nothing of Clairvoyance, Magnetism, or Trance Mediums, at that time. We had no one to advise us, and we were nearly distracted. Calvin took a looking-glass and held it close to Cathie's mouth, but we could discern no signs of life. Finally we were on the point of calling some one in, when a deep groan announced that she lived. We held

her hands, but could not perceive the slightest pulsation. After remaining in this unconscious state for some time, she again moaned piteously and raised her hand, pointing at something she saw, and explained to us afterward. We asked many questions which she answered by pressing our hands. She described the terrible occurrence at the Hydesville house, and when the influence left her, she wept inconsolably for a long time.

After she became quiet a holy influence fell upon her, and she repeated twenty or thirty verses of poetry. I can only remember the last line of each verse, which was:

“To be with Christ is better far.”

After this things changed somewhat. We heard the sounds at all times of day and night, variously located in different parts of the house, but in a much milder form; unless some of us attempted to go contrary to their wishes. Often at meal-time the table would be gradually agitated, and Calvin in particular would be more disturbed than the rest of us. Once he arose from his chair and reached across the table for a heavy pitcher of water, when the chair was instantly removed and he sat down on the floor, spilling the water all over himself. He instantly arose and with an execration denounced the whole thing as the work of the devil and his imps. Of course we laughed at his calamity, and he thought we should not encourage such things by laughing at them. He often laughed about it, years afterward, as heartily as we had done.



A, Handrail to landing from second floor. B, Bed occupied by Calvin. C, Our mattresses laid together on the floor. D, E, Beds. F, A store-room. The dotted lines, with arrows, show the route taken by the vegetables from the store-room or kitchen floor to their destination two stories above.

We had stored our winter provisions in the cellar. Among them were several barrels of apples, potatoes, turnips, etc. From this cellar came the apples, potatoes, and turnips flying across our room, hitting all in precisely the same place every time. It will now be remembered that these articles were

in the cellar on the ground floor, and had to come from the rear of the cellar, through the door, into the kitchen, through the kitchen, up the stairs, into the pantry on the second floor, through the pantry into the dining-room, up the second flight of stairs, into the large room in which we slept, hitting us as we lay in our beds near the front window. The reader can trace their pathway from departure to arrival at their destination on the diagram of the three stories.

A cabinet shop was the next thing represented by the Spirits. They seemed to be possessed of all kinds of tools to work with. After sawing off boards they would let them fall heavily on the floor, jarring everything around them. Then after planing, jointing, driving nails, and screwing down the lid of a coffin, they would shove the hollow sounding article about the room. (This we understood at a later day.) Often, to our utter amazement, pickets from the discarded lots in the cemetery came flying through the room over our heads, on our beds, like débris in a tornado. They came from the extreme west side of the burying-ground, through *that* lot, and the distance of two hundred feet through *our* lot; an entire distance of about four hundred feet. That they came by no visible means, we knew; as no human power could have thrown them through the air into our chamber window, hitting us on our beds, in the same place every time.

Mrs. Vick and her three daughters lived in the other house, on the same foundation as our own. She was a very quiet neighbor, and sympathized with us. She was a native of England, and related many interesting and strange things which she had witnessed in her own family.

I did not wish to encourage the manifestations, and we seldom asked questions. At this time, our troubles (in Rochester) were not known to any one except Mrs. Vick and our own family. But things were coming to a fearful crisis. We closed our windows and did not raise our shades during the day. This seemed to annoy the Spirits more than anything else we had done, and caused them to make a change in their manifestations. Calvin had gone away with his (military) company, and we were left alone several days, at the mercy of the Spirits. We had the consolation of knowing that we had never harmed *any one*, and we could see no reason why the Spirits should wish to *harm us*.

We called on our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Post, and told them our story, which afforded them no little amusement at our expense. They were friends of our family, and listened attentively to our statement, believing we were suffering under some psychological delusion. But when they came to examine for themselves, and witnessed the manifestations *in their own house*, they began to think we were not so entirely deluded as they had supposed. As soon as they became interested, they begged permission to invite some friends of theirs. We consented to let Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bush, and Mr. and Mrs. Lyman Granger come as they were friends of our family, provided they would keep the matter a profound secret. But we soon found it was not long to be so kept.

At times, when we were overcome with anxiety, we would all kneel down with mother, and pray for protection. We had become satisfied that no earthly power could relieve us. While on our knees, pins would be stuck into different parts of our persons. Mother's cap would be removed from her head, her comb jerked out of her hair, and every conceivable thing done to annoy us. We resolved to rest, as best we could, during the day; but would, on our knees, pray to have these evil doings suppressed. Often did my dear anxious mother exclaim—"What have we done? What have *we* done, that we should be so tormented? Dear children, pray to God to have mercy upon us."

My little sister Katie would sometimes say, "*I can't pray, I feel more like swearing.*"

One evening they had been more quiet than usual. We remained some time at the table, and began to hope that things were going to be better with us, when we were suddenly startled and shocked by sounds from the piano, which was open in the parlor. The lower bass key tolled the death-knell, solemnly and distinctly, while we sat at the table, unable for a time to stir. At length I went into the parlor, closed the piano, locked it, and took the key with me; but the sounds kept on. No other demonstrations were made during the night, but the tolling of that knell inside the locked piano. While this solemn sound was made, they would make no other disturbances.

Calvin had not yet returned. The door-bell rang, and Mr. and Mrs. Post came in. On hearing these sounds Mr. Post went for Mr. and Mrs. Bush.

When Mr. Bush came and listened to the solemn sounds a few minutes, he fell upon his knees and prayed to God to sustain this family if, in his great wisdom, he had chosen them as instruments through whom mankind should be benefited. Still the dreadful sounds continued until about one o'clock. Our friends left, and we retired to our sleeping-rooms to try and rest, if possible. We seldom all slept at once, as we were sure to be disturbed by some frightful exhibition, if we allowed our light to go out. We were getting ready for bed, when we heard a wagon drive up to the side gate and a familiar voice say "Whoa" to his horses. Mother hastened to the door, and called out, "Oh! Stephen, who is dead? We have had a terrible warning of death, all night." Stephen, my sister Maria's husband, replied, "No one is dead, that I know of. But David's little Ella was supposed to be dying when I left, I have come to take you back with me." He fed his horses, rested a short time on the sofa, and about four o'clock started for Arcadia, with mother and Maggie. The sounds on the piano ceased. When we received a message from Arcadia, it was to this effect: that dear little Ella was alive when they reached home, but died the next day.

We had been warned, in the spring, when I was there in company with Mrs. Grover and Mrs. Granger, that a death would take place in our family. The words were written on a block of wood corresponding exactly with those the children had brought from the new house which was being built by my father, within speaking distance of brother David's home. The communication, written in plain letters and thrown through the open window in broad daylight, read as follows: "One of your family will die. She will be happy with the angels; mourn not for her." I believed it would be mother, as she was so broken down and unhappy. We feared that she would not endure it much longer.

The writing on the block had always troubled me. I was in the room when it was thrown in, and knew that no human power could have thrown it in at that window and escaped instant detection.

[3] As from the sounds of the foot-falls it seemed to us.

[4] My youngest sister Catharine is sometimes called Cathie in these pages and sometimes Katie. Mother and father always called her Cathie and it was her domestic name. At a later period the public always spoke and wrote of her as

Katie, so that that appellation came practically to supersede the other. But now, while writing of the period here referred to, the Cathie rises spontaneously, and for mother's sake I love to let it so stand, pronouncing it to myself as she did, *Cathie*, as a diminutive of Catharine.

CHAPTER IV.

ROCHESTER (*Continued*).

VENTRILLOQUISM—"PROCLAIM THESE TRUTHS TO THE WORLD"—THE CALL FOR THE ALPHABET—VOICES IN RAPS—GOD'S TELEGRAPH BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS—AN EVICTION—COMMITTEE OF FIVE—NO MONEY ACCEPTED—IMPROPER QUESTIONS TO SPIRITS—"DONE"—STRUGGLE AGAINST THE "UNCANNY THING"—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Mother and Maggie returned in about two weeks to Rochester, expecting to remain with us until the new house was finished. But "a change came over the spirit of our dream." Things in spiritual matters grew from bad to worse. Our kind friend, Mrs. Vick, had died suddenly during mother's absence, and the family soon gave up the house. It was rented by a new tenant, a diminutive, sickly-looking man who could not stand the "racket." His wife complained to him, and declared that she was afraid to remain at home with the children while he was absent. One day, while they were eating dinner, they heard knocks on their table. He was furious in his irritation at this, and coming up to me said: "You are ventriloquists, and I will put a stop to your doings. I will have you arrested if I ever hear any noises in my house again." I doubt if he had finished eating his dinner. He was very pale and trembled with excitement. My neighbor, Mrs. Bush, a very intelligent and talented lady, had called on me, and took up the argument in my behalf herself. She said to him: "Inasmuch as the sounds have been in your house, which have disturbed Leah all the morning, I think, if any one is arrested, you should be the one."

The Spirits took "a new cue" from this visit of our neighbor. They seemed determined to take measures to satisfy him that his attempt to interfere with, or stop their manifestations, did not accomplish that object. They were, apparently, determined to settle the question of ventriloquism beyond any future doubt. They sounded their trumpets upon the house-top. In other words they carried on the manifestations on the very peak of the roof. It sounded like the frequent discharge of heavy artillery. It was stated to us, the next day, that the sounds were heard a mile away. We feared that the roof would fall in upon us. We all fell upon our knees and prayed for

protection. We were in this position when Calvin returned. That night the sounds continued until daylight. The furniture on the second floor moved in every direction. Books were thrown about the room. The bureau in the bedroom was moved so that it blocked up the door. The music, from the parlor, flew at us while at breakfast in the dining-room. We knew not what to do. We had been in the habit of conversing by putting direct questions, which could be answered affirmatively or negatively; but we did not think of getting the alphabet, until our dear friend *Isaac Post* came in. He said to me, "Leah, why, don't thee remember that thy brother David conversed with the Hydesville Spirits by using the alphabet? Perhaps they will explain what is wanted, if thee will call the alphabet now." This seemed to be exactly what they *did* want; and I asked the question, "Do you want to say something to us?" There was a tremendous rapping in answer. I then commenced calling the alphabet, letter by letter in its order; and the first message we ever obtained in Rochester, through the Spirits, was this: "Dear friends, you must proclaim these truths to the world. This is the dawning of a new era; and you must not try to conceal it any longer. When you do your duty, God will protect you; and good Spirits will watch over you."

I asked if the Spirits would give me a *signal* by which I might know when they wanted us to use the alphabet. They then spelled, "We will rap five times, in quick succession; and you will know whenever it is called for." When this was concluded there was a tremendous rapping all over the room; and then each one gave his own distinctive signal. They have been continued from that day to this.

By this I mean that they gave their several rappings with such differences in sound as to be quite distinct from each other, and almost as clearly recognizable as would be their intonations of voice as speakers, or signatures as writers. On the occasion here mentioned I think there must have been a score of spirits who rapped one after the other, some on the table, some on the door, ceiling, windows, floor, etc. Some were loud, some low, some rapid and some slower, and no two of them seemed quite the same. Many persons who are familiar with these signals frequently identify them by the sounds.

I soon received letters from various places saying that it had been made known through clairvoyants, speaking mediums and seers, that the same

signal had been given to all mediums.

Thus we see that God's Telegraph^[5] ante-dated that of Samuel F. B. Morse.

This work progressed too slowly to suit the Spirits. We could not consent to let it be publicly known that we were having such marvellous disturbances. So they sought out a new way to coerce us.

One night there was a great uproar in the other house. Loud rappings were heard, the little man's pillow was jerked from under his head, his wife nearly fainted, his children screamed, and he was badly frightened. He could stand it no longer. He arose in the middle of the night, and called up a party of his church brethren, who went to his house and witnessed the demonstrations. They then went to the office of my landlord and got his concurrence, and obtained a warrant for our removal from our house. It will be recollected that this was Mr. J. B. Bennett, to whom, when I engaged the house of him, I said I wanted a new house where no crime had been committed, as I believed the house I lived in was haunted; and that he replied, "I think you will have no difficulty on that account." Yet he at once consented to our expulsion because my little neighbor had heard the sounds in his own house. The warrant was served in the morning. I immediately communicated with my friends, who rallied in large numbers, and before the week was out, we were all settled in a pleasant little cottage on Troup Street. It was about September 1, 1849, when we moved into the house. I cannot let this opportunity pass without paying a tribute to those dear friends.

They too were ridiculed and persecuted at home and abroad; but they stood firm, and defended the right, as they were fully convinced that it only required time to prove it to the world. Many of those precious souls have passed to the world beyond, and I know they rejoice in Heaven to-day over the happy discoveries they made, and which they tell us have greatly widened their capacity for usefulness and enjoyment in a higher sphere.

There was a marked difference in the manifestations during our meals. The rappings seemed more concentrated, and very near us. The Spirits appeared interested in much that we were saying, and often pressed us approvingly with their hands. On one occasion a Spirit child laid its little hands on mine (not in mine), and so long as I remained quiet and permitted the little angel

to do as it wished to, without disturbing the conditions requisite to enable it to come so near me, there was no shrinking or withdrawal on the part of the Spirit, who had thus far re-entered this mundane sphere to prove to us, beyond a doubt, that she still lived, and loved us. We could not doubt it. There was no one to deceive us. The Spirit was my darling little sister. She pressed us with both her hands, and kissed them over and over again. We would close our eyes in daylight and they would kiss us naturally as in life. We were truly converted, and as the dear old Methodists used to say, “born again.”

We could then realize that we had something to live for, something to hope for, in that sacred hour when each one in our humble group “lay at the feet of Jesus,” willing to be guided and directed in the paths of truth and duty. The alphabet was called for, and the following message was given and signed by our ever revered grandfather, known to his family and friends as a man of encyclopædic knowledge, as well as of noble character. “You need not wait as I did for that great ‘change of heart;’ but adopt the course at once and live up to your highest light. Go where that leads you.”

“MY DEAR CHILDREN:—The time will come when you will understand and appreciate this great dispensation. You must permit your good friends to meet with you and hold communion with their friends in heaven.

“I am your grandfather,
“JACOB SMITH.”

This communication affected us all deeply (particularly my mother), and brought our souls together sympathetically. We read it to our visitors. They at once adopted the plan of sitting around the table with us. This method immediately, as a consequence, placed the subject before the community. It was discussed everywhere, both publicly and privately. Mr. Isaac Post’s store was beset, from morning until night, with inquirers who were anxious to visit us. As we were situated, our friends felt a delicacy in bringing strangers to our house, except by previous arrangement.

In a short time the interest increased to such a degree that it was thought advisable to form a committee of five in a convenient part of the city, through whom the rushing crowd of curiosity seekers could be

accommodated. The names of this committee were Isaac Post, R. D. Jones, Edward Jones, John Kedzie, and Andrew Clackner. They were faithful friends, who never permitted any one to visit us unattended by themselves, or some reliable person. All through this, and, indeed, for the first two years, we scorned the idea of receiving money from visitors. We felt that it would be degrading to accept money for the exhibition of spiritualism. Our time and business were greatly interfered with, and the overwhelming question frequently arose, "What shall we do? We cannot endure this much longer." But there was a course marked out for us (unconsciously to ourselves) to follow. For a time we fancied things were going on better, and we felt encouraged, but we little knew the bitter experience we were destined to pass through. Many of our visitors were anxious to learn, through the Spirits, how to make a fortune. Some wished to know the secrets of others; some, dissatisfied with their domestic relations, sought the aid of Spirits to help them out of their difficulty; some wanted to know what numbers they should buy in a lottery, to be successful; others would wish to be advised in their stock speculations.

To all such questions ready responses were given, but invariably ended in failures.

This order of investigation brought us in rapport with an entirely different class of Spirits. They had no particular motive in tormenting us, but they seemed delighted to lead us on, and deceive the visitors who sought them in such a spirit. But, when people sought for communications of a more elevated character, answers were given accordingly.

Frequently our friends would become so deeply interested in their manifestations that they would forget we were mortal and needed time to recuperate our physical strength. They did not know that every echo, as it came through our medium forces, consumed a portion of our vitality. The Spirit knew this, and would close the séances by spelling "done." This, our friends would sometimes take exception to, and complain that they should break off so abruptly. We could not explain, to their satisfaction, that we were exhausted under the constant pressure of mind and body. The Spirits, knowing this, would give the signal "done." After this word done was spelled, we never obtained anything of an elevated character. We could get physical manifestations, of an independent character, such as throwing

things, and moving furniture in different parts of the house. *Those* manifestations seldom seemed to weaken us, but intellectual communications given through our immediate brain forces had a weakening effect upon us when continued too long.

A gentleman (Dr. C. D. Griswold) living in Batavia had induced his minister (an Episcopal clergyman) to visit us.

They arrived late; and, after a few questions had been answered, the word “done” was spelled. They did not understand the meaning of this, and continued their questions. Suddenly a loud rapping, in a distant part of the room, spelled out, “Why the devil do you ask questions after you have been told done?”

This was a terrible damper to us all. The minister stood aghast, looking first at one and then at the other with astonishment, as if wondering what kind of creatures we were. The friend who had brought him was mortified in the extreme. They remained in town, and called on us again the next morning. All things were quiet, and we sat down with these two gentlemen alone. The doctor asked this question, “Will the spirit of my dear father come and answer my questions?”

Immediately the alphabet was called for, and spelled out this sentence, “When good Spirits say ‘done,’ you should not seek for further communications. Order is heaven’s first law, and you should not overtax mediums; for no good Spirit will answer, after their guardians say ‘done.’”

The doctor received the explanation favorably, and felt greatly relieved when he saw his friend, the minister, was disposed to investigate further. With us all was turmoil and confusion. When manifestations and communications were consistent, we believed them to come from good Spirits; but when they were to the contrary, we condemned all as evil. We had no religious prejudices, no motive whatever in establishing theories. We could make no satisfactory explanations to the various interrogatories, made by promiscuous parties who were constantly in attendance.

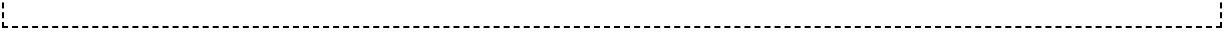
Let me here emphasize the fact that the general feeling of our family, of all of us, including Calvin Brown, who was virtually one of us, was strongly adverse to all this strange and uncanny thing. We regarded it as a great

misfortune, as it was an affliction, which had fallen upon us; how, whence or why, we knew not. The influence of the surrounding opinion of neighbors, and the country round about, reacted upon us in conformation of our own natural and educational impressions, that the whole thing was of evil origin, unnatural, perplexing, and tormenting; while its unpopularity tended to cast a painful shadow upon us. We resisted it, struggled against it, and constantly and earnestly prayed for deliverance from it, even while a strange fascination attached to these marvellous manifestations thus forced upon us, against our will, by invisible agencies and agents whom we could neither resist, control, nor understand. If our will, earnest desires and prayers could have prevailed or availed, the whole thing would have ended then and there, and the world outside of our little neighborhood would never have heard more of the Rochester Rappings, or of the unfortunate Fox family.

But the movement was not in our hands nor under our control. It had an object, and we, as reluctant and humble instruments, were in the hands of other and higher wills and forces, from whom it had proceeded, by whom it was directed, and, so to speak, engineered. We have since come to understand that all these events and incidents, perplexing and distressful as they were to us, were but the birth-throes of a new truth, which was destined to revolutionize this world, and establish a communication between the here and the hereafter; of the Earth and of the Spirit.

And I may here say that, inasmuch as Electricity and Magnetism seem to play some part in the machinery of this intercommunication, it is not surprising that the Spirit on the other side who seems to have been the principal initiator, not to say the inventor of this new development in the evolution of Humanity, was the great man known to earthly fame as the father of electrical science, as he was one of the great fathers of American liberty; he of whom it has been grandly written that he snatched the lightning from the sky, and the sceptre from the hand of the tyrant: the immortal BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

[5] It opened up communication between the two worlds of matter and spirit, as that of Morse had done between distant places in the material plane of our life.—
ED.



CHAPTER V.

ROCHESTER (*Continued*), NOVEMBER, 1848.

LIGHT ARTICLES MADE IMMOVABLE—THE COFFINS—ADIEU OF THE SPIRITS—THEIR RETURN—FIRST STEPS TOWARD PUBLIC INVESTIGATION—“HIRE CORINTHIAN HALL”—FIRST COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION—SECOND—THIRD OR “INFIDEL” COMMITTEE—BEHAVIOR OF A GREAT DINING-TABLE—THE TAR AND TORPEDO MOB.

All this could not have gone on very long in a western city (as it then was) like Rochester, with its 70,000 inhabitants, without leading to a state of feeling and opinion which made it impossible to keep the matter confined to the limited number of persons who, from time to time, got access to séances (at our house) held under the auspices of the committee of five persons previously named.

Mr. E. W. Capron, of Auburn, had been introduced to us by friends of long standing. He was at that time a sceptic in almost everything relating to immortality, but he was an honest man, and soon became thoroughly convinced of the truth of Spiritualism. We still hoped to suppress the manifestations, and mother consented to let Cathie go home with Mr. and Mrs. Capron, imagining by that means to put a stop to further disturbances. For a few days there seemed to be a change for the better, and again mother thought she had accomplished her object; but all this while the Spirits had been actively employed, as they soon convinced us by more powerful demonstrations than ever. They had redoubled their forces and paraded themselves through every part of the house, standing guard at all the apertures, thus to prevent any two of us from coming near each other to confer on any matter, however important we deemed it to be.

During the winter of 1849, scarcely a day passed that we did not have some new and wonderful exhibition of the power and intelligence of our strange visitors. At times things would fly through space, above our heads, when there was no human form to be seen. The chairs, tables, and even small articles, would suddenly become so heavy that no strength that we could exert could move them. It became a common saying in our house that “the

Spirits are holding them down,” when we would have occasion to lift any light article from one place to another. It was constantly repeated to us that we had “a mission to perform,” and we were directed to “make ready for the work.” My mother declared that we would never yield to any such directions again; but the Spirits said, “You have been chosen to go before the world to convince the sceptical of the great truth of immortality.” It was in vain that we opposed to this a strenuous resistance, and argued that we had already done enough, and more than should be required of us. But the constant burden of their declaration was that we must “go forth and do our duty.”

At last they resorted to more violent measures of coercion. One morning, on awaking, we found four *coffins* drawn on the kitchen floor, of life-size, and corresponding to the different sizes of mother, myself, Margaretta, and Katie: and after we had washed them away, we found next morning the same fearful objects on the ceiling. Twice again was this repeated in the dining-room, so that they came four times in all. They were handsomely and artistically drawn in black and white, the lids being thrown back to show how beautifully they had done the work of pinking the white linings. Each coffin had the drawing of its plate, and on them were perfectly and correctly written our respective names and ages, while beneath them was also written in large plain letters: “If you do not go forth and do your duty you will soon be laid in your coffins.” We called in our friends to behold the gruesome sight. Some were superstitious and declared that they would not dare to disobey such biddings; but we feared that if we yielded to them, we would become subject to some unknown evil influences, so that mother still held out against what did not meet her approval.

It is impossible for me to make my reader understand and realize the scenes we passed through. Crowds of inquirers came to the house at all hours of the day and evening.

The committee had more than they could attend to; we had no time to attend to any household duties. My music pupils had all left, and the question arose: “What shall we do? How can we live so?” The new house was finished, and father wanted us all to come home; but the Spirits said, “No, you cannot go; you must remain here and do your duty.” After a few brief messages to friends, the Spirits, in a most impressive and solemn

manner, bade us all good-by, and closed their manifestations. They made the occasion quite solemn, and the company felt wholly deserted when they became satisfied that the Spirits had taken their final departure. We tried, on several occasions, to get the sounds; but could not. The Spirits remained firm in their decision for twelve days.

Mother now deemed it advisable to return to her home (in Arcadia, Wayne County), as she was much needed there, and she hoped we would no longer be disturbed by Spirits. Margaretta, Calvin, myself, and Alfie, our good servant, were alone, and the absence of all manifestations or Spiritual communications caused many a pang of remorse. Often we wished it were possible for us to enjoy the society of our dear Spirit friends, without being forced into that public notoriety and that constant collision with a hostile world which seemed to be involved in what the Spirits called the “duty” which they were urging upon us.

While we were thus in silent waiting, and had given up all hope of again hearing from our Spirit friends, Mr. Capron, of Auburn, and Mr. George Willets, of Rochester, called on us. As we saw them coming, we met them at the door and informed them that the Spirits would not rap for us any more. They came into the hall, saying, “Perhaps they will rap for us, if not for you.” And so they did. They came with the well-known joyous sounds, all over the hall, as if they were glad to meet us all again. We could not repress our great satisfaction at the renewal of our enjoyment, for we now felt that there had really been enjoyment in it, however mingled with perplexity and distress. It was, to us, like the return of long absent friends, whose value, while with us, we had not sufficiently appreciated.

It was during this interview that the Spirits again broached the subject of a public investigation. Directions were given to have the whole matter made public.

They then detailed their plan to us in a lengthy communication. They told us what was required of us, and what they declared to be our duty, as follows:

“You all have a duty to perform. We want you to make the matter more public.” To this, Mr. Capron replied that nothing but the greatest ridicule would be heaped upon all who should engage in such an undertaking. The

following message immediately came in reply, "That will be so much the better. Your triumph will be so much the greater!" They told Capron and Willets, that they (the Spirits) wanted them to get up meetings for the purpose of letting the public know this great truth. Our friends (C. and W.) said in reply to this that they had families to support; and they could not see how they could go before the public with a matter which must make them so decidedly unpopular in the then existing state of public opinion. The Spirits then directed that we should hold meetings at different private houses; and they (the Spirits) would manifest for promiscuous companies. Meetings were accordingly held at the residences of Messrs. Willets, Post, Granger, and others. The Spirits fulfilled their promises admirably. We decided to leave the entire movement to their direction. We felt powerless to act on our own judgment. We met at the house of Mr. Isaac Post to talk over the matter, and learn all we could in regard to this great step forced upon us in a way so contrary to our own wishes. We had not been long in the parlor before the alphabet was called and spelled, "Amy, thee must invite sixteen persons to come here on Saturday evening, to hear the Spirit rappings." Amy (Mrs. Post) replied, "Why, I don't know whom to invite to such an entertainment. How can I do so?" The rapping answered, "I will tell thee: 'Mr. or Mrs. ———: You are invited BY THE SPIRITS to call at the house of Mr. Isaac Post next Thursday evening, at eight o'clock, to hear the Spirits rap.'" Amy said she did not know whom to invite, and asked the Spirits if they would give her the names. This they consented to do, and proceeded to spell out the names of persons, many of whom neither Mrs. Post nor any one present knew. They were all lawyers, editors, and doctors. It is to be regretted that the book containing these names is lost. Dr. Moore was the only one named who did not come in answer to the invitation. Frederick Douglass, editor of *The North Star*, was present. They met, as I have stated, at the house of Isaac Post. They listened, with respectful attention, to the sounds of the rappings. A part of the company went into the cellar, and a part remained in the room above; but the rapping always seemed to be on the side opposite to the listeners. After they had satisfied themselves of the reality of the sounds, and that they were not made by us, they proposed to get some answers to questions, but the comment or answer of the Spirits was, "No. We invited you here to listen to the sounds, and not to get communications. Good night." They did, however, make another appointment for the next Thursday evening, at the house of Mr. George

Willets, and again all except Dr. Moore came, with some individuals added to the number, and the sounds were heard as in the first instance. Again the visitors proposed to get answers to questions; but again the reply was that they were only invited to hear the sounds.

This whole proceeding, as they informed us, was to convince us that they could rap sufficiently loud to be heard in a public hall.

The Spirits then gave us their directions as follows: "Hire Corinthian Hall" (then the largest hall in Rochester). Margaretta and myself were to go to the hall; Mr. Capron was to deliver the lecture, in which he was to relate the commencement at Hydesville, and the progress of it up to the present time. Mr. Willets was to act as friend and business man, doorkeeper, etc. A committee of five gentlemen was to be appointed at each meeting, by the audience, and instructed to report at the commencement of the next meeting.

The Spirits who had given the directions had promised to make the sounds so loud that all in the hall could hear them. Before the meeting the following names were spelled out, of persons thus designated to sit on the platform with us: Rev. A. Jervis (Methodist minister), Lyman Granger (a well-known member of the M. E. Church), Simeon Draper (a prominent Methodist), Mrs. Sarah D. Fish (a member of the Society of Friends), and Mrs. Pierpont. When these names were first spelled out by the Spirits some of the persons objected to thus going forward in so unpopular a work, when the Rev. Mr. Jervis spoke up and said, "I know it is true, and I'll face a frowning world." His emphatic earnestness awoke the others who had been named, and they all consented to serve. It should be remembered that the most minute directions were given by the Spirits, through the use of the alphabet, without suggestions from any one concerned in the work to be done. The Spirits told us, moreover, that this was the best way to interest the public, and prepare them for a more general acceptance of Spiritual Communication by the world at large.

Notices were accordingly published in the newspapers of the meeting to be held in Corinthian Hall, on the evening of November 14, 1848.

According to the directions of the Spirits, Margaretta and myself appeared at Corinthian Hall, where a large audience had already assembled to witness

the manifestations which had excited so much general curiosity.

Mr. Capron, in delivering the lecture, depended more upon his knowledge of the facts, as they had then occurred, than on any theory of his own, or of others, in regard to the rappings.

We wished to have the subject carefully scrutinized by honest committees, and have them report to the public the result of their investigations. Mr. Capron stated emphatically that if he could not explain what it was, he certainly knew what it was not.

It was also announced to the audience that no ordinary minds would be accepted on the committees. We had, at that early day, discovered that the greater the intelligence, the more satisfactory were the manifestations. At this lecture the audience listened with very respectful attention. The editor of a Second Advent paper also delivered his little speech, telling the audience that the sounds were spiritual, he had no doubt; but it was the spirit of the devil, and that the persons in whose presence the sounds were heard should be cast into prison. He said his "little say," and we never heard of him afterward.

When this episode had closed, the following gentlemen were named as a Committee of Investigation, and requested to report the next evening, viz., A. J. Coombs, Daniel Marsh, Nathaniel Clark, A. Judson, and Edwin Jones.

Thus the first great step was taken, in order to lay the facts of Modern Spiritualism before the world. It was now to be tried in a way by which no guilty person could hope to escape detection. Any one guilty of fraud as great as this would have been, had it consisted of simulation on our part, must certainly have met with swift exposure, and been stripped of all power or opportunity for further mischief. In fact, could it be rationally apprehended that we, or any one, would have dared to face an adverse public, of a thronged city, and the entire sentiment of a world against us, as we had been directed to do, with nothing but a damning falsehood at our backs to lean upon?

The appointment of an intelligent committee was readily agreed upon by the audience; and they—most of them perhaps—felt confident that the supposed fraud would now be probed to the bottom. So sure seemed the

editors of the *Rochester Democrat* that this was “the last of the rappings,” that they wrote a long article on the “humbug” which had deceived so many, rejoicing that the end was near.

But when, on the following evening, the Committee made their report, the newspaper men were obliged to substitute something else in place of the anticipated detection and exposure, as the result of their examination did not verify the theory of these newspaper quasi-leaders and instructors of public thought. The following was the report of the Committee:

“Without the knowledge of the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, the Committee selected the hall of the ‘Sons of Temperance,’ for investigation of the subject under consideration. That the sounds, on the floor near where the Mediums stood, were heard as distinctly as at the other places; and that part of the Committee heard the rapping on the wall behind them; that a number of questions were asked, which were answered not altogether right nor altogether wrong; that, in the afternoon, they went to the house of a private citizen, and while there, the sounds were heard *on the outside* (apparently) of the front door, after they had entered, and on the door of a closet. By placing the hand upon the door, there was a sensible jar felt when the rapping was heard.

“One of the Committee placed one of his hands upon the feet of the ladies, and the other on the floor, and though the feet were not moved, there was a distinct jar of the floor. On the pavement and on the ground the same sounds were heard; a kind of double rap, as of a stroke and a rebound, was distinguishable. When the sisters were separated at a distance from each other, no sound was heard; but when a third person was interposed between them, the sounds were heard. The sisters seemed to give every opportunity to the Committee to investigate the case fully, and would submit to a thorough investigation by a committee of ladies, if desired. They all agree that the sounds were heard, but they entirely fail to discern any means by which it could be done.”

On the following evening, each member of the Committee spoke for himself, and they all perfectly agreed as to the facts stated. Their report was received with surprise by such of the audience as had come with the

expectation of having the subject exposed as a fraud, and the rappings stopped.

After some further remarks by Mr. Capron, and a discussion of a brief character upon the subject, another Committee was appointed consisting of the following gentlemen: Dr. H. H. Langworthy, Hon. Frederick Whittlesey, General D. C. McCallum, William Fisher, of Rochester, and Hon. A. P. Hascall, of Le Roy, subsequently member of Congress.

At the meeting, on the evening after this lecture, this Committee reported that "They went into the investigation at the office of Chancellor Whittlesey, and they heard the sounds on the floor, on the wall, and on the door; that the ladies were placed in different positions, and, like the other Committee, they were unable to tell from what the sounds proceeded, or how they were made; that Dr. Langworthy made observations with a stethoscope to ascertain whether there was any movement of the lungs, and found not the least difference when the sounds were being made, and there was no kind of probability or possibility of their being made by ventriloquism, as some had supposed; and they could not have been made by machinery."

As this report was read, there was a murmur of discontent, of baffled opposition, and, in some cases, unmistakable willingness to proceed to violence against all who had offered every opportunity for fair investigation. Many persons, among the large number congregated there, were disappointed and indignant at the discovery that it was *not a cheat*. A very large number of people were present on this occasion, and a portion of them seemed determined that the *cause of the deception*, or the manner of its performance, should be ascertained and exposed. They predetermined that there could be no honesty unless it came in their old beaten track of belief.

It was during the investigation on this second day, that Chancellor Whittlesey informed me that he was a friend to us. He said to me: "Now, don't be alarmed. I am a friend to you and know that these things are true. I have read 'Davis's Revelations,' and I believe fully that Spirits can communicate. You shall have a fair investigation." This was after very insulting and even violent behavior by Dr. H. H. Langworthy; and it did me

a great deal of good to be so assured by one of the Committee, and one of the best of them; and also a man who had long been Vice Chancellor of the State of New York; and whom the whole country knew as one of the wise men of the time, a neighbor of ours and known to us.

On the third evening the audience was much larger, and a portion of them seemed determined that at all hazards, and cost what it might, it should be exposed. Mr. Warren L. Burtis declared that “those girls would not have him on the Committee for a hundred dollars;” intimating that *he* was known to possess unusual facilities for the detection of fraud. The audience was not looking for the proof of facts. They constituted a large and self-chosen committee who seemed to consider it their duty to prove by anathemas the falsity of Spiritualism. He, W. L. Burtis, was at once placed on the Committee; and after being so appointed, he remarked with much importance, if he “could not find it out he would forfeit a new hat.” Mr. Kenyon said, “If I cannot fathom the fraud, I will throw myself over Genesee Falls.” He too was immediately placed on the Committee. All the others chosen as members were equally opposed to us. The Committee consisted of Dr. E. P. Langworthy, Dr. J. Gates, William Fitzhugh, W. L. Burtis, and L. Kenyon. Mr. Packard, a well-known cabinet-maker, suggested that if he were chosen he would have a party of ladies to examine the clothing of the girls, as he believed the sounds were all made by leaden balls, sewed in the bottom of their dresses. But Mr. Packard was not chosen, because, as before stated, the occasion required the application of the higher order of intelligence. To this, however, no attention was given by him or others excepting a significant smile of disappointment. The public had by this time learned that such leaden-ball suggestions were not less than absurd.

This Committee met at the rooms of Dr. Gates, in the Rochester House. This was called the “Infidel Committee.” The public had heretofore chosen persons of a more religious character; and men representing the scientific portion of the inhabitants had now concluded that, by placing the subject in the hands of scientific infidels, they would “fathom the fraud.”

This party now chosen were disgusted by the reflection that they were to enter upon such an undertaking; but they had been chosen, and would serve and do their duty to the public. This Committee appointed three ladies, who

took us into a private room, disrobed and clothed us with garments of their own selection, after which we seated ourselves around a table; but no manifestations of any importance were made. Disappointed in not finding any machinery, they had a lurking suspicion that we had doffed it for the occasion.

They called on the “Ghosts” to manifest themselves if they could, but no responses came to such invitations. They now concluded it was about dinner-time, and said to us, “You can go home and get your dinner. Perhaps the ghosts will be more sociable in the afternoon;” plainly intimating that we could go home and prepare ourselves for rapping, and that things would be more satisfactory after our return. It was now my turn to be the speaker; I told them: “No, we shall not stir from this room until the time for this investigation shall expire; which will be at six o’clock P.M.” Some of the Committee exclaimed, “Good for the Rappers! That looks like business. Ladies and gentlemen, let us have dinner in this room. We will give the girls fair play.” A sumptuous dinner was prepared and brought in to us, and all took seats at the table. They taunted us in every way. Sometimes we felt ourselves forsaken, and disposed to give up in despair. Our friends were locked out, and not permitted to come into the room; but we could hear their faithful footsteps outside the door, in the hall of the hotel—Isaac and Amy Post, Mr. and Mrs. Pierpont, George Willets, and others. My young sister Maggie was by my side, bathed in tears. Dr. Gates was carving. I was struggling with a choking emotion, and could not taste food. The party were joking and funning at our expense, when, suddenly the great table began to tremble, and raised first one end and then the other, with loud creaking sounds, like a ship struggling in a heavy gale, until it was finally suspended above our heads.

For a moment all were silent and looked at each other with astonishment. The waiters fled in every direction. Instantly the scene was changed. The ladies threw their arms around us, one after another; and it was their turn to cry.

They said to us: “Oh, you poor girls, how you have been abused! Oh, how sorry we are for you; after all, *it is true!*” The gentlemen with one accord said, “Girls, you have gained a victory. We will stand by you to the last.”

Let it be understood that this Committee of ladies and gentlemen took us to the parlors of the Rochester House, which could be divided into two rooms by closing the folding-doors. After dinner the gentlemen of the Committee insulated the table by putting glass under the legs, procured two sacks of feathers, and advised the ladies how to conduct the investigation. They then closed the doors, and (the gentlemen of the Committee having retired) left us and the lady members of the Committee alone. By this time the Committee had become kindly disposed toward us. They suggested to us that we should stand upon the sacks of feathers on the table, with our dresses tied tight above our ankles. We complied with all their suggestions, cheerfully. Immediately the sounds were heard on the table, floor, and walls. The ladies instantly opened the doors, and the gentlemen came in and witnessed the manifestations themselves.

The ladies, at my suggestion, signed the following certificate:

“When they were standing on pillows, with a handkerchief tied around the bottom of their dresses, tight to their ankles, we all heard the rapping on the table, on the wall, and floor distinctly.

“MRS. STONE.

“MRS. J. GATES.

“MISS M. P. LAWRENCE.”

Before we left the room, word was sent to the Committee, saying, “Do not go to the Hall this evening; for if you report favorably to the girls you will be mobbed.” Our friends, who anticipated a riot and feared for our safety, as soon as we got to the house after this terrible day’s work and anxiety, urged us not to go to the Hall. But what were we to do? Even the Committee were threatened if it made a favorable report; but they all informed us that they would protect us in any event.

E. W. Capron and George Willets said, “What are we to do, if you forsake us at such a time?” Amy Post said, “Go, I will go with you.” The Spirits spelled, “Go, God will protect you. You will not be harmed.” Margaretta had been so harassed during the day, and had been so urged by some of her friends, that she resolved not to go to the Hall that night. This would have spoiled all our success so far. It would be utter ruin to us. Amy Post (that

darling little Quaker lady), who stood firm as a rock, said, "We will go and sit down by ourselves, and see how we shall feel about it." I soon said, "Amy, if you will go, I will go with you, if I go to my death." Margaretta did not change her mind until we were preparing to go, when she said, "I cannot have you go without me. I must go, although I expect we will be killed." So we all went. We found the faithful friends, who were appointed to sit on the platform, already in their places. There were but few words said by Mr. Capron, as every one was anxious to hear the report of the Committee. When it was made, it was more full than any of the others. It rehearsed the fact that they had excluded from the room, in which the examination was conducted, all our friends, and we were left alone to fight the battle. Each member of the Committee reported separately, agreeing with, and corroborating the first statement.

The reports of the different committees did not satisfy the rowdy element, which at this time had become a howling mob, who were predetermined to assault us, and also the last Committee, if they did not report against us. They even warmed tar, and had it concealed in a closet at the head of the stairway adjacent to the door of the Hall. Some of our friends, knowing this, took the precaution of calling on the police. Our Committee was informed of the proceedings of the mob, and when we separated at six o'clock and went to Mr. Post's to await the hour of meeting at the Hall, declared to us that they would stand by us, in these words: "Never fear, girls, you have gained the victory; we will stand by you to the last." And they did, nobly.

We were directed by the Spirits to go forth and submit to everything lawful; but that the committees chosen by the audience should be composed of such as represented the best intelligence of the community.

Josiah Bissel was the presiding genius of the mob. He had caused to be purchased some torpedoes which he distributed among his rowdy friends to throw upon the floor, and thus begin disturbance. It had been agreed upon by his bosom friends (the rowdy element) that he should ascend the platform, and with a long heavy stick, which he carried as a cane, give a signal for the onslaught. The other leaders in this mob were Lawrence R. and Leonard W. Jerome, Alderman Lewis Seelye, Major Packard, and others, awaiting the signal. But no sooner was it given them than a fine, large, respectable-looking gentleman sprang upon the platform and took a

seat between myself and my sister, whose hand he took in his. I thought, at the moment, he was an enemy, and ordered him to leave, and not dare touch my sister. He replied, "I am your friend; I am the Chief of Police—look, these men in front are all my men; and they have come to protect you."

At the sound of the signal made by Bissel, the mob rushed to the platform. Torpedoes were heard in every part of the Hall. The Chief of Police quietly informed Josiah Bissel that if any one was taken into custody he would be the man.

As the mob began their demonstrations, one gentleman, Mr. Alfred Hubbell, who had been an investigator at our house, raised his hand and said in a loud voice: "Girls, you have nothing to fear. Don't be afraid. I have fifty good men here all ready to protect you."

Mr. Abelard Reynolds, proprietor of the Hall, was on the platform, determined to stand between us and the mob. The ringleaders of the mob, followed by their gang, quickly disappeared. Our work, as planned by the Spirits, for that time was done. Our triumph was complete. The promises of our Spirit friends and directors were all fulfilled. However they may have allowed suspicion to come upon us, which it was not in their power to prevent, they had always brought us safe and sound out of the apparent difficulty, and gained a signal triumph through our humble agency.

CHAPTER VI.

MEDIUMISTIC VEIN IN OUR FAMILY.

SOME FAMILY ANTECEDENTS—OUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHER—PHANTOM PROPHETIC FUNERALS—VISION OF A TOMBSTONE NINE YEARS IN ADVANCE, ETC.

I will here interrupt the course of this narrative with a chapter about our family, principally in reference to that peculiar and strange constitutional *something*, which, in us three children (myself and the two younger ones, Margaretta and Catharine), has come out so strongly into what is called “mediumship,” and which would seem to have been the cause why the “Spirits,” whose instruments we have been, chose us for their purpose, and imposed upon us the burden of what they called “the duty,” against which we thus so long and hard, but vainly, struggled.

My parents were both native-born Americans. My father’s ancestors were German; the name having been originally Voss, which passed through Foss into Fox. In my mother’s family, French, English, and Dutch mingled. Her paternal grandfather, John C. Smith, was of English ancestry. He married Elizabeth Blauvelt, of descent from Holland. Her maternal grandfather was French, Rutan by name, and her maternal grandmother, whose maiden name was Margaret Ackerman, was also a descendant from Holland, and resided on Long Island with her parents until her marriage, after which she removed to New York City, where her only child, my grandmother, was born. She (Margaret Rutan), my mother’s maternal grandmother, had, from childhood, evinced the power of foretelling events. She frequently followed phantom funerals, and entering the grave-yard, would stand and look on until the last rites had been performed, after which she would turn away sorrowing. She never felt timid until the ceremony was ended. Then she would find herself alone, in her normal condition, and remembering all she had seen, and knowing also what would inevitably follow, she would be sadly depressed.

On two occasions she was prevailed upon to tell whose funeral she had attended the previous night, which caused her such intense distress of mind, she besought them to never again urge her to reveal that which was made

known to her during her somnambulatory walks. The moment the person ceased to breathe, she would say, "Mr. or Mrs. (whoever it might be) is dead."

If the death had taken place in a distant part of the country it would make no difference, so long as the burial place was there. She felt relieved as soon as the event transpired. She always visited the grave-yard between the hours of twelve and two o'clock at night. My grandfather frequently walked slowly after her to accompany her home on her return.

Another remarkable feature used to attend these nocturnal excursions of my great-grandmother, in the somnambulatory condition, when she would thus witness the celebration of funerals of persons who were at the time still alive and well. She would see and recognize all the persons in attendance on the funeral, from the officiating minister down, and afterward remember and relate their names, which used always to correspond with the fact as it afterward came about. She would even tell by whose horses the body was brought to the grave (in the country at that time there were no regular hearses, and this service was performed by some friend or neighbor). When the crowded phantom funeral was over she would awake to find herself alone in the graveyard; sometimes with my grandfather (her son-in-law) awaiting at a little distance to accompany her return home. But frequently she had no such watching attendant, and I remember to have heard it said how distressing it would be for her to awake entirely alone and make her solitary way homeward, from what she knew to be the foreshadowed interment of some one near and dear.

MY AUNT ELIZABETH'S VISION OF HER OWN TOMBSTONE.

My mother's sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Higgins, had much the same faculty. She never left her bed at night to visit scenes about to transpire, but nearly everything of importance was foreshadowed in her dreams. She would frequently relate them on the morning following. One morning, she gave us a relation of her dream. She said, laughingly, to her brother: "I dreamed I had a fall, last night. You and I were riding on horseback, when suddenly my horse stumbled and fell in front of Judge Perry's door. I rolled down the little embankment, and Tom Foot came and helped me up." Grandmother

said, "That can't come true, for Tom is, by this time, far away." They thought no more of it.

Some time after, her brother said to her, "Bessie, would you like to take a ride with me this morning?" She replied that she would, and they soon started off, each on a spirited horse, never thinking of her dream, until the horse stumbled and she fell and rolled down the bank, exactly in front of Judge Perry's door. *Tom* came out and helped her up. He had not gone away, as he had contemplated doing.

Mr. Robert Dale Owen, in his "Foot-falls on the Boundary of Another World," has given a more detailed account of her remarkable dreams. I will only add the last sad fulfilment of a dream which she had some years previously to its fulfilment. She was then in her nineteenth year. She said, "I dreamed I was in a new country, walking alone, when suddenly I came to a small cemetery, and, walking up to one of the most prominent head-stones, read the inscription, which was this:

IN MEMORY

OF

ELIZABETH SMITH,

Wife of H——,

Who departed this life

In the year of our Lord 18—,

Aged 27 years, 8 months and 26 days."^[6]

She was deeply impressed by this dream, and could not rest. She left her bed, and went into her mother's sleeping-room, sobbing, and related the dream. Her father and mother both endeavored to disabuse her mind of any belief in this unhappy dream. He tenderly folded her in his arms and quoted from Scripture many beautiful sayings, such as: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man: no, not even the angels in Heaven." She was comforted and seldom referred to her dream. The gentleman to whom she was affianced died. Her father purchased a home, and moved to Sodus, Wayne County, N. Y., where she became acquainted with Mr. C. Higgins. They were married, and enjoyed five years of uninterrupted happiness. The time

was drawing near when she expected to become a mother. Uncle Charles was a devoted husband, and regretted that duty called him from home at this time. (He was engaged in Albany on public business.) He could not rest; he must return to his darling little wife, and spend a few days with her, and arrange with his brother, Dr. Higgins, to remain as a protector and physician in his house, until all danger had passed. He came (to her) unexpected, and she was delighted to see him.

The doctor came to remain as long as it was necessary. Her husband had already overstaid his time; and, as it was important for him to be in Albany, he was obliged to leave. There were many anxious hearts that feared, and silently prayed that their hopes of happiness might be realized. (I really do think that she had been reasoned out of belief in *that* dream.) She rejoiced and was happy when he promised her he would never again accept an office which would take him from home.

It was a bright, lovely morning. The team stood waiting at the gate, to take him to Newark (ten miles), the nearest point from which he could reach the canal packet boat, for Albany. Bessie walked with him to the gate (about two hundred feet from the door), where he tenderly embraced her and kissed her again and again, promising that he would refrain from leaving home on business in the future. He alluded in glowing terms to their prospects of happiness, in the birth of their expected child, and warned her of the danger of yielding to superstition. He begged her not to repeat her dreams, as they were the result of a disordered condition of health. Then, taking her in his arms, he carried her back to the house, saying: "My darling, I cannot part with you here at the gate; permit me to remember you as seated in your pleasant room, surrounded by loving friends, and happy again." He held her in a long, fond embrace, kissing her with tears and sobs, and gently seating her in her easy-chair, bade her farewell, and rushed to the conveyance, fearing to look back, lest he should see her weeping at the door.

She wept some time after he was gone, but soon felt more cheerful, and frequently repeated what he had promised—that he would never leave home again after that season.

A week had passed, and a little voice was heard. She fondly clasped her babe to her breast and called it "My little Charles, my darling baby! Oh! how happy I am." They were both doing well. Letters were sent to her husband by every mail, which were duly received by him. She wished the child would resemble his father, who was a splendid man in every sense. She too was perfect in form and feature.

It was the day on which she had attained her age of twenty-seven years, eight months, and twenty-six days, *the age marked on the tombstone she had seen in her dream of about nine years before*. All the family knew of it, though she gave no sign of thinking of it, and seemed entirely cheerful and happy.

The little one was two weeks old; a letter was received that morning saying, "I shall be at home the last of this week. I shall say farewell to Albany." Words cannot express her joy at this unexpected announcement. She directed everything, how to dress the baby, and arranged for them to go after her husband's mother and sister, who had not seen the little one, as they had been absent on a visit. They were delighted to find Bessie and the baby so well, and the little Charles looking "so exactly like his father, except that he had his mother's curly hair." The mother seemed perfectly happy, but there were anxious hearts that silently prayed to God to avert the fearful calamity, which they feared might now be hanging over them. The day was passing away. She was well and cheerful. Her family were near her, doing all they could to divert her thoughts from *the date*. Her minister, Rev. Mark Johnson, and his wife called to spend an hour with the family. She was pleased to see them, and united with them in prayer. She called Mrs. Johnson to see how sweetly the infant nestled in her bosom. Then, turning to the minister she said, "Mr. Johnson, we shall have the baby christened Charles Smith Higgins as soon as his father comes home."

The last rays of the setting sun shone on the tree tops. Once more she called attention to the child, smiling on it the while; when suddenly she exclaimed, "Oh!" and placed one hand upon her breast, while with the other pressing the babe closer to her bosom.

Mother caught her in her arms, her sister Catharine ran to call the doctor; but before they could enter the room, her spirit had taken its flight to the

immortal world.

Her tombstone now records her dream, verbatim, in the old cemetery in Sodus.

They directed letters to her husband and friends in Albany, also sent letters to every packet-boat going east and returning. (There were no railroads nor convenient telegraph wires at that time.) They published the sad news in all the papers, and sent them to every place where he would be likely to get them.

He left Albany on Thursday, expecting to reach home on Sunday. At Lyons he left the boat, thinking he could reach home some hours sooner by taking a private conveyance. He met an acquaintance at the hotel, who handed him a paper containing a "special notice" of the sudden death of Mrs. Elizabeth Higgins. He saw no more, but fell prostrated with overwhelming grief. In vain they tried to rouse him until the reaction came. The funeral was appointed for half-past two o'clock P.M. He had twenty miles to ride, and it was nearly one o'clock then; he called for a horse, and started direct for the church, hoping to reach there before the burial. A large concourse had already assembled at the house, which was about two miles distant from the church. All were anxiously looking and waiting for the absent one. The weather was extremely warm, and they would proceed slowly; so it was thought best to start. Several times they halted on the way. Every eye and ear were strained to catch the faintest sight or sound, but all in vain. The church was reached. The mourners moved slowly up the aisle. There was not a single heart in that large assembly which did not thrill with sorrowful emotion. The congregation prayed in silence, and sobs were heard in every part of the house. The minister stood silent for a moment, then slowly and distinctly said—"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord."

His voice was deep and solemn, and its clear tones penetrated every heart. His eyes beamed with tenderness, as he recounted with touching pathos the scenes of past happiness and this sad reverse. He offered up petitions to the Most High for the bereaved husband and friends. After taking final leave of those dearly loved features, so soon to be closed forever from our mortal vision, we started for the cemetery, distant about a quarter of a mile. Once more we halted. All hearts were high-strung with the hope that Uncle

Charles might yet arrive; a prayer was said, the last sad offices were performed, and the friends returned, with aching hearts, to their bereaved home. Just as the family were entering the gateway, a tired, dusty rider came galloping at full speed. He came from the cemetery, where he had been seen to throw himself on the newly made grave, and call, in the bitter anguish of his soul, "My darling, O, my darling, come back to me." (His sister's son witnessed the scene.) It was sad to see his manly form so bowed by sorrow. He threw his arms around her sisters and held them in a long embrace; then calling for the child, he clasped it to his heart, crying, "My Bessie's baby! Oh, my darling child! You are all that is left to me."

I cannot describe his grief. It can be better imagined, than expressed in language.

PROPHETIC CLAIRVOYANCE.

Another story of my great-grandmother, which not only exists in the family, but which I perfectly remember to have heard from her own lips, illustrates her faculty of what I may call prophetic clairvoyance.

She had a friend and neighbor, named Urie, who had a splendid team of horses, of which he was very fond and proud, but which she had often urged him to get rid of, assuring him that they would cause his death if he did not. Her habitual manifestations of this faculty were during her somnambulic walks in the middle hours of the night; but this I am now to relate occurred about noonday, when she had not been asleep.

She was seated at a window which looked upon the road, engaged in some work of embroidery, when she was seen to start up, rush out to the road and run at her utmost speed about a mile, to a spot where the grassy side of the road sloped up to a fence. At this spot (followed by Mr. Urie's wife and family), she ran up to the fence, and, taking off her apron, was seen to hold something, seemingly enfolded in it, with every indication of extreme agitation and distress. With her hands clasped together she was seen to rock her body backward and forward in great distress over the *something* apparently covered by the apron. Exactly one year from that day she *did* see from her window Mr. Urie's team running away wildly past the house, dragging him entangled in the lines.

At the precise spot where she had stopped before, now lay his dead body, with the bloody face so torn and disfigured that she took off her apron to cover it up from sight.

My mother used frequently to receive warning of an approaching death in the family, through a particular dream (it was that of dining with General Washington). The recurrence of that dream always brought with it great distress to her mind, and she used to say (she was the soul of truth and all human goodness) that this warning had never failed her.

Much more on this subject of these indications of ancestral mediumship running in our family may be found in Mr. Owen's "Foot-falls," he having taken particular interest in inquiring into the aspect of the subject.

BROTHER DAVID.

Besides ourselves, who have been brought so prominently before the public, my brother David and my other sisters have often given clear proofs of some form or degree of mediumship. David and his wife can, at almost any time, communicate with Spirits; not only by sitting at a table, but by together touching a chair, or any other similar object, the movements of which will signal to them the letters of the alphabet.

UNCLE JOHN.

My mother's only brother, John, was once kicked on the head by a favorite horse, which the blacksmith did not dare to shoe, and which his young master once rashly attempted to handle for the purpose. Uncle John was carried into the hotel unconscious, where he lay all night in that condition. About twelve o'clock that night his sister, Aunt Elizabeth (Mrs. Higgins), at home, about thirty miles distant, both heard and saw him walk across her room, groaning in pain. As he did not answer when she spoke to him, she supposed he had not heard her, and she went into her grandfather's room; who, speaking first before she could do so, said, "What's the matter with John? He has walked past my door several times, holding his hand to his head, and looked into my room; but when I spoke, he went away without answering me."

The next morning word came that he was lying, dangerously injured, at the hotel. His father went immediately to him, but found him unconscious and unable to speak. He eventually recovered, and declared that he had been at home with the family during the night of his injury.

His grandfather, John C. Smith, my great-grandfather, English by birth, was the one who saved me when lost in the woods. (See the curious story related on a future [page](#).) I think he was the very noblest and grandest man I have ever known. He was of unusual stature and strength, of the sweetest temper and character, as well as of superior intellect.

MR. COOK'S DEATH.

A party consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Emerson, Mr. Cook—an English gentleman and a partner and intimate friend of Mr. Emerson—mother, her sister Catharine, Ann Emerson and myself (we were little girls at that time), drove to the “Sand Hill burying-ground” to visit the graves of our loved ones. Mr. Cook and my aunt rode in his carriage, while the rest of us rode in the family carriage. They arrived a little before we did, and walked to Mr. E's. plot, where stooping he pulled up a flower and, tossing it at my beautiful Aunt Catharine, said, “I wonder who will lie here next?” After remaining a while we drove home, in Clinton Street, Rochester, where the nurse was standing with the babe Georgie in her arms. (George was an uncommonly lovely boy, named after Mr. Cook.) When taking the child in his arms Mr. Cook said, “O thou angel boy! I must not neglect to will thee thy dower.” He remained with us through the evening and bade us good-night. His house was nearly a mile away. I retired with mother and her sister. I slept in a trundle-bed drawn from under their large bed. Our family was then boarding there, father being absent from home much of the time. It was my habit to study my lessons in bed before going to sleep, in which way I was sure to remember them in the morning; and as there was to be a school exhibition next day, it was late before I put out the candle, when mother gave a fearful scream which brought every one to inquire the cause. At first she declined to say anything about it—feeling very sure it must have been Mr. Cook she had seen; and she disliked to say anything more. She however insisted upon having seen a man, and described him as resting upon his hands on the bed, bending over her sister Catharine, and looking her in the face; she recognized the man to be Mr. Cook. They tried to

impress her with the belief that it was a dream, but she knew she had not slept.

Early next morning a messenger woke up the household, and announced that Mr. Cook had dropped dead in the mill at 6 A.M. He and Mr. Emerson were the wealthy owners of the principal flouring mills on the Genesee River, at Rochester.

Mr. Cook's body was buried at the spot from which he had plucked the flower.

Mr. Cook was no doubt sleeping quietly at the time they were searching the house to find the apparition just before the midnight hour, as he said to his foreman on entering the mill, in reply to his morning salutation, "I am well, and I think I slept too well, as I intended to be here at five o'clock." He walked a moment longer and fell, to rise no more.

STRANGE OCCURRENCES PRIOR TO GRANDFATHER'S DEATH.

My sister Maria (Mrs. Smith) from her childhood has, at certain times, been able, by gently touching her fingers to the lightest of tables, to make it impossible for a strong man to lift it from the spot without danger of breaking it.

My sister, Mrs. Osterhout, was also remarkable for intuitive knowledge, dreams, and visions. Some fifteen or sixteen years ago some singular manifestations occurred around the lingering death-bed of her husband. About a week before his death my sister was called off to a room in the house, five rooms distant from the one he occupied, where some sewing women were at work, really in preparation for his fast-nearing end. On her return he told her he had heard all the directions she had been giving, and repeated them to her. The following extract is from a letter from my niece Helen, one of his children. It speaks for itself:

"A few days afterward we were all in the room, and he said, 'Do you see?' We all looked in the same direction he was looking, and saw a coffin being carried out of the house. I shall never forget the look he gave us; Emma, Ben, Nannie, and myself were in the room. We all saw it. Three days before he died the boys were in the barn. It being Sunday, we were busy doing the

morning work, when we were startled by what we thought to be the report of a gun. A second time we heard the same report. Father said, 'The boys have got the gun in the barn,' and wanted them to be called into the house; but they had heard the second report, which they thought was in the house, and came in to see what was the matter. We were now all gathered in father's room, when a third report sounded still louder and seemed to be in the same room with us. Mother was very much affected, and father said, 'Don't be frightened, my darling, it is only a warning of the near approach of my death.' There were a great many things at that time transpiring which were very mysterious. Lights were seen in the house and door-yard, barn, etc., which could not be accounted for; and sounds were heard as of sawing, driving of nails, etc."

MY OWN CHILDREN.

All my children grew up into Spiritualism naturally. Lillie, once, while lying awake in bed with her sister Lizzie, the gas being at half-light, saw a lady standing in the corner of the room who then walked about it, passed out, and then re-entered it. She wore a dress resembling her sister's wrapper, with its peculiar large flowered pattern. The bed being a wide one, she was not in contact with her sister, and supposed the figure to be Lizzie, and called to her to ask what she was about, but she perceived that it was *not* her sister, who was asleep by her side, and whom she waked. They turned up the light, and the figure was no more there. Both were frightened, and kept the light burning brightly for the rest of the night.

Lillie used often to say to me, "Mamma, put out the light. My guardian Spirit will take care of me." She had no fear of them. Georgie, on the contrary, was somewhat afraid, and would say, "Leave a little light, mamma, 'cause the Spirits are rapping." Leah would come flying downstairs, pale and almost breathless, at the least indication of the presence of Spirits. Still they all knew and believed in them, and loved to sit in dark circles in our family alone and witness the different forms of manifestations.

Lillie has an abnormal faculty which often gives entertainment to her friends. She goes out of the room, and any member of the company may hide any small object wherever he may please—such as a key or coin or

anything convenient. All the rest of the company are requested to fix their thoughts on the object and its place of concealment, while careful not to do or say anything to suggest a clue. On her entrance she takes his hand and applies it to her forehead, still holding on to it and keeping her eyes shut. She will then lead him to the spot where it is concealed. She moves by starts, he accompanying her passively. She very rarely fails to find the article concealed.

MUSICAL MEDIUMSHIP.

I might tell much of the indications of the mediumistic character which have run through the children of the generation following our own; that is to say, those of my brother and sisters and myself, including my nephew's little son of five years, who plays on a child's harmonica with astonishing accuracy and beauty, accompanying any musical performance and following every variation with whatever rapidity, with his face kindled with excitement and delight; the whole being spontaneous, without ever having had any instruction. He is (I have no doubt) a musical medium, of whom the world has seen several; the most remarkable one being the idiot boy known as "Blind Tom." It is indeed evident enough that this mysterious gift, or whatever it may be called, is not destined to die out with the present generation.

The next instance of mediumship in the generation succeeding ourselves is such as to merit a chapter to itself.

[6] I am not entirely certain that I remember the number of days with distinctness: it is very nearly correct.

CHAPTER VII.

MEDIUMISTIC VEIN IN OUR FAMILY (*Continued*).

MARVELLOUS WRITING BY A BABY MEDIUM.

But I must mention more particularly the case of my little nephew, the elder of the two children of my sister Katie, now Mrs. Jencken (pronounced Yencken); for I have now before me two pieces of writing actually executed by his baby fingers. The story of the incident is as follows:

Katie and I were sitting at the billiard table, which then occupied the middle of our library, with the child in my lap; while his mother, at my side, was relating some of the incidents of the day. (She had been calling on old friends.) The child being troublesome in his movements and cries, his mother, to quiet him, gave him the paper and pencil (it was a piece of white blotting paper, not much inked by use), as the child was fond of scratching lines and marks. She said, "There! take that, and keep still." He dropped the paper once or twice, and I picked it up and held one end of it, he holding the other; and with his disengaged hand I noticed that he was not making mere marks and scratches, but that he was actually forming letters, and I exclaimed, "Why, Katie, he is writing!"

"I shouldn't be surprised," was her answer. We watched the process, as his dear little fingers were guided to complete, in somewhat straggling letters, though perfectly distinct, "Grandma is here. Boysie." It is not strong nor dark enough to be reproduced in photography, but any respectable inquirer is welcome to inspection of the sentence written by the child, then one year old. His father had been delighted, at his birth, with the appearance of so beautiful a child; and his baptismal name was Ferdinand Lowenstein Diedrick. His pet name was "Boysie." The extent of his baby vocabulary at that time was "papa" and "mamma." My late brother-in-law, Mr. Jencken, was a highly respected barrister in London. He was prominent in the labors of the "Society for the Codification of International Law," of which the well-known David Dudley Field is President; who has said of him that not half a dozen men in all Europe could compete with him.

Besides the above-mentioned writing actually executed by this wonderful medium baby of about a year old, which I have in my possession, and of which I regret that it cannot be photographed, I have before me also a photographic copy, of *carte de visite* size (sent me by Mr. Jencken), of a piece of writing executed by his infant fingers at the age of five months and eighteen days (of course controlled by Spirit power), in these words: *I love this little boy. God bless his mama. J. B. F.* And below, *I am happy* (the last syllable of “happy” being scrawled very indistinctly). Below it is the following attestation by Mr. Jencken’s hand: “Written by the infant boy of Mrs. Jencken on the 11th March, 1874, aged five months and eighteen days. Mr. Jencken, Mrs. Jencken, and nurse present.”

On the rear of the card, in the hand of Mr. Jencken (and in that of my sister, Katie, for her signature), is the further attestation: “The writing on the other side of this leaf was written by our infant child, aged five months and eighteen days, in our presence, in a clear light, the pencil having been placed in the baby’s hand by an invisible agency.—London, 11th March, 1874. (Signed) H. D. Jencken. (Signed) K. F. Jencken.”

On the opposite page will be found lithographic copies of the two sides of the card above described.

I love this little
boy, God bless
his name

I B 7,

John boy

Written by the infant boy
of Mr Jencken on the

11 March 1874. aged 2 months
18 days

Mr Jencken Mr Jencken &
Mrs Jencken.

The writing on the other
leaf was written by our
infant child, aged 5 months
& 18 days. in our presence, in
a clear light, the pencil
having been placed in the baby's
right hand by an invisible
agency.

London 11 March 1874.

H. D. Jencken
R. D. Jencken.

Among my loose papers I find a newspaper article from the *London Spiritualist* of December 12, 1873, respecting this extraordinary child:

“MEDIUMSHIP OF A BABY.—H. D. Jencken, Barrister-at-Law, of 53 Brompton-Crescent, Brompton, has had further disturbances in his house, in consequence of the mediumship of his little boy, aged two months.

“Last Friday Mr. Jencken and Mrs. Jencken (Kate Fox) went to the great scientific *soirée* at the Crystal Palace, and that same evening, about nine o’clock, their housemaid, Elizabeth, went up-stairs to the front drawing-room to turn down the gas burners. As she approached the door she saw its handle turn round and she cried out, ‘Who is that?’ The door then opened, and a veiled figure looked out at her. She only saw a part of the face, because the white drapery about it hid the rest, and she fancied that the eyes had an evil look. She ran down-stairs and gave the alarm to the cook and sempstress, saying that she thought thieves were in the house.

“Just after this occurred on the first floor, the nurse, Mrs. Macarthy, who was watching the baby in a room near the top of the house, heard footsteps outside; the door gently opened, and a short woman, young and pleasant-looking, robed in white, entered, and returned quickly, twice. At first the nurse thought that a joke was being played upon her; but, upon searching the adjoining room and landing, she could not find anybody. She then went down-stairs and joined the three servants below, who had previously heard footsteps going up-stairs from the drawing-room to the nursery.

“The cook then went for a policeman, and the other three servants went up to the nursery, where they heard rapping noises and voices; the latter were not sufficiently distinct to be intelligible. They also heard footsteps going right up to the top of the house. When the police arrived they searched the house and found nothing. Just as they were going away, some footsteps followed them down the stairs. One of the policemen turned round and said that the noises must be caused by a ghost.

“Three days previously the housemaid had seen a figure in the drawing-room. It suddenly disappeared. This form, she said, was covered with a shawl, like that worn by Mrs. Jencken before she left the house. Was it Mrs. Jencken’s ‘double,’ present there in consequence of her constant thoughts about the baby?

“The nurse says she has seen hands making passes over the baby, and has heard raps at the head of the child’s bedstead, and once the pillow was pressed down by an unseen hand. On another occasion, a gold ring was seen knocking against the iron rail at the head of the bedstead. Last Sunday we questioned the nurse and housemaid on all these points. They were in a very

nervous state about the whole matter, and evidently deeply impressed by the circumstances, since they knew nothing about Spiritualism, until these phenomena forced themselves upon their attention.

“Mr. Jencken tells us that a few days ago, about six o’clock in the morning, while it was yet dark, Mrs. Jencken brought the child to him. A strong light streamed from both the eyes of the baby, and illuminated its face, and raps said, ‘We are looking at you through the eyes of the baby.’ When Mr. Jencken stated this, we called his attention to the circumstance that a similar thing had occurred in connection with the mediumship of Swedenborg, whose eyes shone for a time with such lustre, as to frighten some persons who unexpectedly entered his room. In that case also, the Spirits said that they were looking through his eyes. On several occasions recently, while we have been present at *séances* at Mr. Jencken’s house, footsteps have been heard outside, and the rustling of a dress against the door. On quickly opening the door, nobody was there.

“Mr. and Mrs. Jencken leave town for Brighton next Monday.”

For a further specimen of Spirit writing executed by the fingers of this marvellous infant, the reader is referred to page 550 of Mrs. E. Hardinge Britten’s recent great work, entitled “Nineteenth Century Miracles.” The writing in this case was, “*I love this little child God bless him advise his father to go back to London on Monday by all means. Susan.*” The attesting witnesses are, I. Wason, K. F. Jencken, E. Buffum, New Church College, Devonshire Street, Islington, London, and the + mark of Mrs. McCarthy, the nurse who held the child.

From a letter from Mr. Jencken I know that this advice to him “*to go back to London on Monday by all means*” was good counsel. It proved that his presence there was necessary for important business. Mrs. Britten’s book (p. 550) gives a facsimile of this communication as written by Spirit power through the tiny fingers of a baby. My sister wrote me at the time a long letter about it, full of anxiety lest so wonderful a child could not be expected to grow up to health. Its correctness is therefore unimpeachable. But I must add that the letter-press at the bottom, in which the age of the infant is given as “nine days,” is a manifest mistake, probably typographical. It is quite sufficient that his age counted by months. As a

human achievement by such baby fingers, it would be incredible; as the act of a Spirit employing those of a remarkable baby medium, it is simple enough to the apprehension of any experienced Spiritualist.

What future awaits this child remains to be seen. The house of his parents used for a time to be overrun by people of rank too high to be (in that country) refused admittance, who wanted to see some specimens of his mediumistic manifestations; until his parents wisely determined to break it all off, and not allow any exercise of his powers in that line to be indulged in, till he shall have reached the age of adult physical development in health and strength.

The child is now about ten years of age, and, I rejoice to say, healthy, active, and bright, as well as beautiful;—and further that his parents have kept him entirely aloof from mediumship—to which course I strongly advised them.

OUR MOTHER AND FATHER.

Our dear mother (who passed from this life to the next on the 3d August, 1865) was a woman of sound intellect, gentle disposition, very charitable, and just to every one. She had great power of discrimination, and seldom failed in her estimate of character. Her portrait looks down upon me from our parlor wall; and when I look up into her blessed face, my first impulse is to fall upon my knees and thank my God that I have had such a mother.

Robert Dale Owen was one day sitting in the back parlor, engaged in writing. He remained with us three months, at my husband's invitation, while writing his "Foot-falls on the Boundary of Another World." He sat at equal distance from mother and her portrait, alternately looking from one to the other. As I stepped in the door, he turned to me and said, "Mrs. Underhill, if that were the portrait of my mother, and she were living, as yours now is, and could sit for another every day, I would not take a thousand dollars for it. I never saw a portrait so perfectly correct in my life, and I doubt if you could ever get another so perfect."

Our father was not as well known to the public. Situated as we were, our parents concluded that, as we were compelled to travel and submit to all investigations necessary to establish a new truth (for new it was, to us), or to submit to, or rest under the condemnation of the world at large, we must

of necessity have suitable companions. Therefore it was decided that mother and Calvin should go wherever we went.

Our father was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was a class leader at the time of his death (on the 10th January, 1865). One Sunday morning he was ready to go to church and stood in the library, waiting for my husband, who was going with him. I stood beside him when suddenly the signal for the alphabet was given. I repeated the letters, and the Spirit said, "My dear son, it is a pleasure to me to attend you to the church. I always go with you there."

His chest heaved, and with tears in his eyes he said, "Are you the Spirit of my dear mother now speaking to me?" The answer was, "Yes, I am your mother Catharine." He then asked, "Is my father here too?" Answer, "Yes, my dear son. I bless you this morning. We shall all be together in Heaven soon. "DAVID."

I asked him, "Do you think the Methodists would approve of this if you were to read it to them?" He replied, "It would matter little to me whether they did or not. I not only believe it but I know it is true, and the time will come when they will all believe it."

Mr. Underhill then went with him to church, and when they returned he said to me (holding up the little message in his hand), "This, to me, is far stronger proof of a glorious immortality than all the preachers on earth could give me."

Mother was also a member of the same church in Rochester in 1849. She was officially waited upon in Arcadia by a very young preacher (hardly twenty years of age in appearance) who had, evidently, but little experience in the office to which he had been *specially called* to save souls. He introduced himself as the "servant of the Lord," and, walking up to mother, said, "This is sister Fox, I suppose?" Mother replied, "I am Mrs. Fox." "Well, Mrs. Fox, there is a complaint against you for countenancing your children in carrying on a wicked deception. It is calculated to do much harm, and it is contrary to the religion of the Bible." He urged her to make her confession before the church, and cause her children to discontinue their unholy pursuit, and she could remain in good standing in the church. This little man was a circuit preacher, and we suppose had taken upon himself to

do the Lord's work, in his own way, as we never heard from him again; and I seriously doubt if any one ever sent him. It recalls what Sojourner Truth said to the preacher, when she was attending a woman's rights meeting in the church and a violent thunder-storm came up, with peal after peal shaking the building to its foundation, when the minister arose and proposed that they should adjourn, as he thought the Lord was angry on account of the movement, and he believed it was wicked to hold such a meeting in a church.

Sojourner arose and said to him, "Set still, chile. Don't you be afeared. I don' believe the Lord ever hearn tell on you."

Mother was never expelled from the church, but the leading members came to our side—minister and all.

A celebrated seer has publicly asserted that rapping mediums are necessarily of nervous temperament, apprehensive of evil, and usually diseased.

There has never been in our family, so far as I have been able to trace them, on either side, a taint of disease; from my mother's grandfather Rutan, who lived to be ninety-three years of age, and her grandfather on her father's side, John C. Smith, who was more than eighty years of age when he left this sphere of existence. The same is true of my father's father and grandfather, neither of whom were diseased. We have been singularly free from all manner of ailments so common in thousands of families. We had no taint of hereditary scrofula, were never subject to inflammatory diseases. Healthy, sound, and strong, not easily frightened, steadfast in faith, and never disposed to believe anything without evidence. I have very little interest in anything covered by the words theoretic speculations, or in self-induced conditions, in which many thousands who stand on rostrums and teach the anxious inquirers after truth that of which they themselves know little or nothing. My motto is: Live up to your highest light. Listen to the small voice within, and obey the dictates of your conscience. Do unto others as you would be done by. Follow the golden rule. Go worship where

and what your conscience, not pride, leads you, and you need not fear to meet your God.

Justice as well as reverential duty has prompted my gracing the title-page with the portrait of my mother, rather than follow the customary practice of placing upon it that of the author, by way of personal introduction to the eye of the reader. Though, as has been seen, our father had but little part to play beyond that of consenting spectator in the early history of Spiritualism, yet my mother's part in it, and services to its cause, were of the highest value and importance. Her strength, moral and mental, as the central figure of our family group before the public, largely supported us in our mission, in which she always accompanied and protected us; nor, after she had once yielded her consent and acceptance of the "duty," did she ever begrudge her time and her labors thus withdrawn from the private life of domesticity, which would have been infinitely her preference.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROCHESTER (*Continued*).

“REPEAT THE LORD’S PRAYER”—FIRST MONEY ACCEPTED—MUSCULAR QUAKERISM—LETTER FROM GEORGE WILLETS—LETTER FROM JOHN E. ROBINSON—CAUTION AGAINST CONSULTATION OF SPIRITS ABOUT WORLDLY INTERESTS.

To resume the narrative interrupted at page [74](#).

We left Corinthian Hall about ten o’clock P.M., and returned with Mr. and Mrs. Post, to their hospitable Quaker home.

We had passed the fiery ordeal. It had been a wearisome, exhausting trial. We needed rest, and it was thought advisable for us to remain there a few days. Many people called at our house on Troup Street, and, when they were informed of our absence, subsequently called at Mr. Post’s to see us, but were refused admittance under the circumstances which imposed the necessity.

Before we left this home of our kind and dear friends, mother and Kathie returned. (The latter had been to Mr. Capron’s, in Auburn, and returned with mother to Rochester.)

Mother had not heard of the public investigation, and thus was spared all the anxiety and torture of mind which we had undergone. She declared that if she had been there she would not have permitted it.

We were consoled by the reflection that we had fairly gained the victory, and cleared ourselves from the charges of deception; and that was our first and chief desire. We believed we had done our duty, and rejoiced that we had been so truly, so kindly and so nobly supported, and so honorably acquitted. Mother was rejoiced at our success and began to feel more resigned. Many persons continued to call, and all were anxious to learn from us and the Spirits something more than they were able to get through popular report or the newspapers. We often refused to see them, and declared we would not again subject ourselves to the criticisms of those

who knew little or nothing of the subject, and were in general so bitterly hostile and prejudiced against it.

Oh, how little did we know of all that was before us! We had just opened the door to the public curiosity and interest; and it was not for us to discriminate *who* should enter therein. The people came from every direction. We knew not what to do. Judge Hascall came to spend an evening with us, bringing with him a large party of his friends, viz., Judge Summerfield, Hon. J. Hedden, Andrew Stewart, Mr. Duncan McNaughton, Judge Chamberlain, Mr. McKay, and Mr. McVean. One of these parties was known to his friends as an extreme infidel in religious matters.

Several of the parties named had visited us before, and they had urged Mr. McNaughton to spend the evening with us. He tried to excuse himself, but they insisted, and he finally consented to do so; they clearly understood that he was not to take any part in the investigation. They arrived at about eight o'clock P.M. Judge Hascall introduced the gentlemen as his friends and neighbors from Genesee County, N. Y. They were all distinguished men, holding high positions in their several pursuits.

No sooner had we taken our seats at the table, than the Spirits spelled out, "My dear son, repeat the Lord's prayer." Each member looked at the others inquiringly, but no word was spoken except to ask "Who?"

The rappings answered, "My dear son, ha'e ye forgotten your pair auld mither? O my son, repeat the Lord's prayer." Mr. McNaughton was a very tall man, with a strong Scotch accent. The rapping still continued to call upon him to repeat the Lord's prayer. He looked from one to another, but said nothing. His friends urged him to comply with the Spirit's request; but he was disgusted, and thought it was a trick which his friends were playing upon him, and as they were very jolly, he would not make himself ridiculous by resenting it: but still no further manifestations came, under the then state of things.

His friends told him that if he wanted to witness anything further he would have to comply with the request of the Spirit. After much persuasion, he reluctantly commenced in a very low, indistinct manner to mumble something that sounded like "Our father, which art in heaven." By this time

a universal roar of laughter broke from the company. Still, the Spirit urged him to go on, and he began again with little better success.

His friends knew full well it had been many a day since he had prayed with his “dear auld mither.” The Spirit then spelled that “*all* should join in repeating the Lord’s prayer,” and we all united in its repetition. The responsive rappings of approval were heard all over the room—on the table, chairs, floor, and wall. Mr. McNaughton looked astonished. The table danced with evident joy, and we were obliged to move back. There it stood, upon one foot, fairly dancing. Mr. McNaughton exclaimed boldly, in his Scotch dialect, “Exthraordinary! Exthraordinary! I begin to understand it now.” The laughter was over. The Spirit of his mother said, “My dear son, do you remember how we used to repeat the Lord’s prayer together, when you were a little laddie?” “Yes, mother. Yes, I comprehend it all. I am converted to the truth of Spiritual manifestations.”

The company remained until ten o’clock, and the manifestations were very satisfactory. They felt more than gratified, and, to use their own words, said, “We cannot go away without giving you some remuneration for the time you have kindly spent with us.” Mr. McNaughton had just lost a lovely daughter, and she gave him sweet assurance of her undying love and her immortal existence.

This is the first instance in which we had ever been offered payment for our time. They offered it in kindness and good faith, believing it was justly our due. But to us it seemed humiliating. We had not needed such aid, as my brother furnished us with provisions from the farm, and, with what I still had left of that received for teaching, I had enough for present purposes; and I fully intended to return with mother, and live at the old home. Still our friends insisted that we should not refuse their kindly intended gift. This first money was received on November 28, 1849.

I will here introduce, for love and veneration to his memory, a letter written about this time by our excellent Quaker friend George Willets, of Rochester, to Mr. E. W. Capron, who handed it over to me. He was one of the noblest of men. And Quaker as he was (he was one of the “Progressive Friends,”

commonly called Hicksites), I once witnessed a scene in which a just and righteous indignation caused him to cast off his coat, in readiness to deal in very mundane fashion with an unworthy and misbehaving member of one of the “investigating committees.” “I’ve never fought a man in my life,” he said, “but I will not stand by and see thee insult these children.” The assailant wilted down. The provocation was such that I am sure the angel who may have charge of the short record of Quaker sins, after writing it “dropped a tear on the words and blotted them out forever.”

LETTER FROM GEORGE WILLETS.

(About end of 1848.)

Dear friend, E. W. Capron:

It is with some reluctance that I furnish you with the following statement. Not that I am afraid to tell the truth, but that the world, as I conceive, is not ready to receive such truths yet. *Ridicule* will probably be heaped upon me; but when I consider that it is the ignorant only who use that weapon, perhaps I can afford to stand up and say, “Let the storm come.” All who know me can say whether I have been truthful from my youth up, yea or nay; and the strongest language that I can use is to say that the following statement is *strictly and entirely true*.

In the summer of 1848, I had concluded, from the best judgment that I could bring to my aid, that it was best for my family to remove somewhere among the wilds of the West. Accordingly I took a tour of observation, and finding some land in Michigan, that suited me better than any other, belonging to a gentleman living in Rochester, I stopped on my return, in order, if possible, to negotiate for it. I stayed with my friend and relative, Isaac Post, and while there he told me of certain sounds being heard in the city; and that they displayed intelligence, and purported to be made by “Spirits,” or persons invisible to us. I was really sceptical about any such things, but at his solicitation went to examine the matter. The persons with whom these sounds seemed to be, I had never seen nor heard of before, and my friend was careful not to tell them who I was, or where I had been. It seems that the question was asked whether there was any communication for me, and the direction from the sounds was, that three persons be

magnetized; two of whom were present, and one was sent for from a neighboring family. I did not know the name of any person present, and I was also certain that none of them knew me. After the three persons were put in the clairvoyant state, one of them said, "We have got to go to Michigan." They all agreed that they had got to go there, and on my account. They did seem all to go there, and began to describe places and things which I had seen, and at length came to a piece of land which they said was the place they came to look at. They then described the land so accurately, which I had stopped in Rochester to buy, that I began to wonder who had told them. They all, with one accord, then said, "But he must not go there. His father says that he had better not go." As they said this, there came a loud sound close to my chair, and *I sat some distance from any other person*. They spoke much of my father, and what his mind was, and at each time that same sound was heard. Up to this time I had not spoken a word, but found the big drops of perspiration starting from my face. I gathered courage, and thought I would dispel that illusion directly. I said, "As you assume to know my father, and what his mind is concerning me, *perhaps* you can tell his name." They all seemed to look steadily for some time, then commenced and spoke slowly and deliberately these letters: "W-i-l-l-i-a-m W-i-l-l-e-t-s." At each letter the loud sound that I first heard was again heard, and felt immediately under my feet. I never was so astonished in my life, and involuntarily said, "What does all this mean?" The sounds then said, by the alphabet being called over, that they had better be awakened, and the first loud sounds said, "I will talk with George, and tell him all about it." The direction was for Mr. Post, myself, and a little girl, thirteen years old, to go by ourselves. And here I wish it distinctly understood, that all which I shall relate as obtained from those sounds, was in the presence only of my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Post, myself, and the little girl spoken of. As what follows all purported to be from my father, I will say that his name was William Willets, a member of the Society of Friends, widely known at Westbury, Long Island, where he lived until nearly sixty years of age, and subsequently at Skaneateles, Onondaga County, where he died in 1841. The communication by sounds then went on to say that it was my father who was present and talking with me; and three hours were consumed at the first interview.

In saying to me what his counsel was, it always assumed to counsel and advise, but never to dictate. He said that it was not best for us to go to Michigan, and gave various reasons, among which were that we should not enjoy ourselves in a new country, and that my health would not be competent for the task of clearing up new land; and that he *foresaw*, if we did go, that we should come back again, and would be less in number than when we went. I then asked what was best to do. The answer then was, "Come to Rochester." I replied that I knew of no business that I could do in Rochester. The sounds said, "I will tell thee when thee comes." I asked if I might know now. The answer was, "No, no business is needed until thee comes, and then I will tell thee." The sounds then said, that after a time it would be best for me to buy some land. I asked where. The sounds then spelled out the name of a man whom no one present knew, and said that he owned fifty acres of land on such a street adjoining the city, and such a distance from the centre of the city; that he would sell any part. I asked the price that would be asked. The sounds were heard and counted by three of us,—one hundred and fifty times in succession,—to tell us the number of dollars per acre that would be asked. The sounds said that we had better go the next day and see if this was so, and said that we should not see the man until ten o'clock, though we might look for him as early as we pleased.

In the morning I looked in the Directory and there found the name spelled out to us, and went to his residence at seven o'clock, and was informed that he was gone to a distant part of the city, and would not be home until twelve o'clock. We then went to find him, and had some difficulty in doing so, but after talking with him five or six minutes, looked at the time, and it was *seven minutes past ten*. This person said that he owned fifty acres on the street told us by the sounds, and that he would sell any part. When I asked him the price, he showed me a map with the price of each lot marked, and taking the number of acres said by the sounds to be best to buy, and averaging the price, it was the price told us by the sounds, within six one-hundredths of a dollar per acre. I then went home to my family and pondered over these strange things. Many were the conflicts in my own mind, and I heard the cry from all quarters of "humbug," "deception," "fraud;" but I could not believe that I wanted to deceive myself. Three months I thought of these things deeply, and *I could not go* to Michigan. I concluded, if it was deception, it would do the world some good to find it

out. The first of December, 1848, I moved from Waterloo to Rochester. A few days after getting here, the little girl spoken of came round to our house, and said that the "spirit" had directed her to come; for what purpose she did not know; we inquired what it was, and this was the communication: "I told thee if thee would come to Rochester, I would tell thee where thee could find employment: in four days from this time I will tell thee. In the meantime the anti-slavery folks are going to hold their fair; would it not be well for thee to help them?" No one was present at this time except my wife, the little girl, and myself. The four days went by, and again, without solicitation, and without thinking the time was up, the girl came again. The communication was, "Apply to William Wiley, Superintendent of the Auburn and Rochester Railroad, to-morrow at two o'clock, at his office, for a situation, and thee will have one before this week is out." This was Thursday. I was a stranger to Mr. Wiley, and I called on Mr. Post, and told him the direction, and asked him if the next day he would go with me. That evening he, happening to be at the depot, inquired if Mr. Wiley was at home, and was told that he was in Boston, and, by a letter just received, would not be at home till Friday night. I was told by the sounds on Wednesday to apply on Thursday at two o'clock. Thursday at half-past one, instead of going to the railroad office, I went round where these sounds were heard, and said, "How is this?—I am told to apply to William Wiley, and he is in Boston." The sounds said: "*Go to his office now, he is there.*" I called for Mr. Post and walked immediately there, and *found Mr. Wiley in his office.* He said that he had returned sooner than he expected to when he wrote the letter. Mr. Post said that I was a relative of his, and wished employment; and Mr. Wiley replied that they were all full, with abundant applications, and could give no encouragement whatever. We walked back, thinking deeply, and I went where the sounds were heard again. I inquired, "How is this?—Mr. Wiley has no place for me!" The answer was: "*Thee will have a place on the cars, and will know it before the week is out.*"

On Saturday night, at dark, I met Mr. Post, and he asked if I had heard anything from Mr. Wiley. I replied, "Not a word." At eight o'clock on that same evening Mr. Post called at my house, and said that Mr. Wiley had just been at his store, and said that he had a place for me, and wished me to call at his office on Monday morning. As Mr. Wiley did not tell what place I

was to fill, I again asked the sounds what it was; and they said it was to go as baggage-master between this place and Auburn. On Sunday morning I wrote to my friend James Truman, of Waterloo, stating that I should pass through that place on Monday following, in the capacity above stated, *before I knew from Mr. Wiley what place he wanted me to fill*; and he can probably testify to that fact. One month after I had been running on the cars, I learned that the person whose place I took had done things worthy of a dismissal, *previous to my being directed to make application*, which did not come to Mr. Wiley's notice till *the day on which I received the appointment*. These things have only been known to a few friends; you and the world now have them. I have many communications, penned down at the time they were received, purporting to be from my father, all of the most elevating character, inciting me to goodness, purity and honesty of heart, and ever pointing to the endless progression of man. In conclusion, I may say that I have examined the matter attentively for one year and a half, and have had abundant opportunities to do so, and am prepared to say, although the sounds may cease to-day, and never be heard again, *they have displayed a remarkable degree of intelligence, and were not made by any person visible to us*.

(Signed) GEORGE WILLETS.^[7]

Before proceeding further I desire at this point to insert in this volume an interesting letter, addressed to the Rochester *Daily Advertiser*, by our friend Mr. John E. Robinson, also, like Mr. Willets, a well-known and distinguished member of the Society of Friends.

The controversy on the rapping and the general spiritual manifestations after the public investigation could no longer be suppressed. It became a subject which elicited much comment in the public prints; but in relation to which the Spiritualists had nothing to fear. Their opponents, generally, wrote without ever having examined it; and graded the vehemence of their opposition by the strength of their fealty to the teachings of their leaders. One of these acknowledged leaders was Chester Dewey, D.D., of the Rochester Collegiate Institute, who, without seeking to investigate the subject, claimed to recognize it as a fraud in its inception and wicked in its designs; and thus recorded his opinion in the public press at Rochester. His

letters to the Rochester *Daily Advertiser*, at the time, drew forth the following rejoinder by Mr. Robinson, of that city, which was published in the columns of that paper:

“THE RAPPING MYSTERY.

“MESSRS. EDITORS: There has been a vast deal of ink shed upon the above-named subject, and much of it to but little purpose, except to demonstrate the willingness of individuals to show up before the world the least attractive features of their intellectual and moral characters. Far the greater number of paragraphists who have essayed to enlighten the world on this subject, and protect this community in particular from *humbug*, as they are pleased to term it, have made up their various articles of exceedingly cheap material. Ridicule, the fool’s argument, has formed the chief staple of their lucubrations. Denunciation, unsparingly poured out, has been heaped upon the heads of those most immediately connected with this singular phenomenon, and an unwarrantable and unmanly meanness, which has led the writers, almost without exception, to traduce the character of the Fox family, and has taught us how easy it is for men to forget their manhood and stoop to a point at which they can lay claim to but little of the nobility of human nature.

“I, for one, can find an apology for the penny-a-liners who have poured their puerile effusions *at* the knocking mystery. They do but cater for a public sentiment and public ignorance in this matter; and their bread-and-butter demands of them that they shall not wave their inky wands beyond the line of that opinion. But there are some for whom we cannot make this apology. I notice in your paper of 23d inst. a communication over the signature of C. D. The writer of said article lays claim (and not a groundless one) to the reputation of a man of wisdom. He is known among us as the expounder of laws natural and divine. His picture, so he tells us, hangs from the walls of the Athenæum, and looks down complacently upon its visitors as a teacher of the exact and occult sciences. The community in which he lives has nourished him during a long lapse of years, has accredited to him the prerogatives he has claimed, and has looked up to him, as one clothed with authority, to enlighten it upon all abstruse subjects. And yet, with the knowledge (which he must possess) that if anything be spoken of it must be spoken of understandingly,—that a man in his position utterly disregards

the safety of his reputation who rushes to record an opinion without ascertaining that it is tenable, and that he has facts to sustain him; this self-same C. D., this Solon of the closet and pulpit, without a particle of evidence, in the absence of all personal observation, rushes in the hot haste of blind folly to the press, and tells the “good people” that the phenomenon in question is no phenomenon at all, but only a sheer humbug! a miserable delusion, cunningly contrived, but fit only to deceive such fanatical fools as have been chasing shadows from time immemorial, down to the advent of Mormonism.

“This word *humbug* is in great request. It is of modern origin, and the moderns are making the most of it. Everything new, while going through its incipient stage, is denominated ‘humbug.’ Everything and everybody a whit in advance of the age or its intelligence is looked at askance by the gaping crowd, and ‘humbug’ is the ready watchword. The community’s acknowledged leaders, and whose antics, at times, should have taught them that

‘A little learning is a dangerous thing,’

are asked by their too credulous disciples to give them their opinion on some new and startling development in physics or man’s intellectual nature, and immediately these ‘learned Thebans,’ scorning the patient toil and honest purpose of the true student, turn their blear eyes upon the interrogations and shout Humbug! Humbug!

“In such cases their visual organs are of about as much service to them as the sun is to that burrowing animal which shuns the light of day. When will men, even whose gray hairs seem to ask us to expect better things of them, learn that bareface assertion weighs not as evidence with those who choose to think for themselves? Ours is a thinking age, and requires something more than the bold *say so* of any man to convince people that a thing *may* or *may not* be. We live at a period, too, and in the midst of minds which have learned that much that was received as unadulterated truth by the past, upon which the dust of buried centuries had gathered and seemed to hallow, has been proved erroneous by the light of advancing knowledge and the searching analysis of science. And who shall say where that knowledge is to

stop? Is there to be no new unfolding of man's intellectual powers? Is he ever to remain in the comparative ignorance he now is in respecting the relations which he, while here in this life, sustains to the spiritual world? Are the laws of his being and its attributes as yet entirely revealed to him? Is the physical of this world of so much importance that the astounding developments of this and the coming cycles of time are to be confined entirely to that, to the exclusion of man's higher and more ethereal nature? These questions I leave your correspondent C. D. and his coadjutor J. W. H. to answer for themselves in their more reflective hours.

"C. D. says 'the wary and eagle-eyed are kept out, and excluded from opportunity of investigation.' Now, to be perfectly plain, this remark borders very much upon misrepresentation. *It is not so.* And if the gentleman would have 'the good people' understand that he is thus denied, I would undeceive them. Mr. Dewey has on more than one occasion been urged by those who would have afforded him every opportunity for investigation, to test the reality of the said phenomena. He could have had, and may have, associated with him in such investigation, men whom he or others may select, as his equals in every respect, to aid him; and before he has the temerity to repeat his uttered cry of humbug, and brand again, with most unchristian readiness, as deceivers, individuals whom he does not know, I call upon him to avail himself of the senses which God has given him for that purpose. He need feel no repugnance to visiting so obscure a locality as Troup Street. His equals (to say the least) have been there before him, and he would not have to tarry long in that region to meet with visitors who possess more intelligence, a wider charity, greater modesty, and a better purpose than he has manifested in his communications.

"A man's practice is the touchstone of his faith, and I want no better evidence of the practical infidelity of any one, than to know that while he preaches for so much the square yard the doctrine of an after-life, he scouts anything which comes to us in the shape of tangible evidence of the soul's immortality.

"Mr. Dewey says he will be 'glad to see the truth advanced, lead where it may.' In this I join him, and such motive must be my apology for trespassing upon your columns and patience.

“Respectfully yours,

“JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, February, 25, 1850.”

[7] I feel bound to call attention to the fact that the directions narrated in this letter were *volunteered* by the Spirits to Mr. Willets, not sought by him, and they were all strictly correct. They led to this good and serviceable friend being established in Rochester, where he became very useful to us and to the nascent Cause to which the Spirits had called and devoted us. But I am anxious to caution the reader against the error of consulting Spirits for information or direction about *matters of worldly interest*. They will probably get answers, but from mocking and deceptive Spirits, who step in when the good and true ones decline to intervene. It is not the mission of good Spirits to mingle in affairs of mere non-spiritual interest. Beware of what is called “business mediumship,” and of directions respecting fortune-making or fortune-telling. Never forget that there are tricksters and liars out of the flesh as well as in it; which is little to be wondered at since so many of that character are daily passing out from the one condition into the other, when they remain for periods often prolonged, *earth-bound* by their own selfish viciousness. We should never do more than ask good Spirits to guide us by their kindly influences, and then do the best in the situation that we can according to our best lights of conscience and judgment. Nor can we ever transfer to Spirit counsellors our own moral and mental responsibilities.—
A. L. U.

CHAPTER IX.

ALBANY AND TROY. 1850.

EXCURSION TO ALBANY—DELAVAN HOUSE AND VAN VECHTEN HALL—REV. DR. STAATS AND THE JUDGES—HIGH CLASS OF MINDS INTERESTED—PRESIDENT ELIPHALET NOTT—PECUNIARY ARRANGEMENTS—EXCURSION TO TROY—TROJAN LADIES—MOB ATTEMPTS ON LIFE OF MARGARETTA.

EXCURSION TO ALBANY.

We were directed (by the spirits) to “go forth and let the truth be known.” We had already passed through a terrible experience, and feared to make another such hazardous attempt; but the fiat had gone forth. We had debated the question a long time before we could consent to subject ourselves to another public contest. However, there was no alternative. We were compelled to “do our duty,” regardless of consequences, so far as it was in our power.

It was the first of April, 1850, when the Rev. R. P. Ambler and Mr. D. F. Coman, of Springfield, Mass., called on us for an evening séance. They came with an introduction from our friend Apollus Munn. Mr. Ambler was a Universalist minister, had preached in Albany, and was much respected there. They were greatly astonished by the evidence they received during the séance; and it proved to them clearly that their communications were received from spirits, or from some power entirely beyond our knowledge. Various circumstances point to the conclusion that these arrangements had been planned and directed for us by our spirit friends and guides.

We had been informed by the spirits that we should have a proper person to lecture for us; and were told that we should first go to Albany, engage a public hall, and allow the spirit-rapping to be heard by the audience. We did not, however, dare to attempt such a venture until we had made another experiment in our own city (Rochester). Only five months previously we had left Corinthian Hall, triumphantly indeed, but amid a howling mob. But they had been kept at bay and overpowered by superior forces, and we tried by the public, and not found guilty.

Once again we engaged a hall, at our own expense, and gave notice to the public that Mr. Ambler would deliver a lecture, and “the three sisters would accompany him on the platform.” The hall was crowded. The lecturer was eloquent and the audience pleased. The rappings were profuse. Public opinion had changed since the first lectures on the subject. *Friends* rushed to the platform to congratulate us on our triumphant success.

Many good wishes for our happiness and prosperity in our great enterprise were showered upon us; and we little dreamed that we had given our last public entertainment to our true and tried friends in Rochester. We did not even imagine that we were then leaving our dear old home for a new one in a new city, when the proper time should arrive. There was much and arduous consultation respecting the mode in which we should go forth into the world on the travels and toils that lay before us.

Our father had been interrupted in all his business arrangements, and could not possibly leave home, and Calvin, who had grown up in our family (a son and brother by adoption), was the best personal protector we could have. We left with our father’s sympathy and blessing.

We reached Albany the last of April, 1850. We engaged a suite of rooms in the Delavan House. Mr. Ambler was our lecturer, and Mr. Coman our business man—mother, Maggie, Katie, and myself, with Calvin as our escort. We engaged Van Vechten Hall. It had been previously announced through the papers that “the Fox Family” would appear at the hall, with Mr. Ambler, who would deliver a course of lectures, preparatory to our giving séances at the Delavan House.

Our career was now commenced. After all our resolving not to go any more before the public, we had been forced to let the world know what was revealed to us, and what was meant not for us alone.

Our rooms were thronged by the *élite* of Albany and of many other places adjacent. Our success was great, as the spirits had promised. We received both public and private parties from all parts of the country.

The spirits had performed their parts admirably for nearly two weeks, when I received a note from the editor of the *Albany Morning Express*.

(It will be remembered that at one of the Rochester investigations, a Second Advent minister had deemed it his duty to rise in public and express his idea that all this was of diabolic origin, and that we, the mediums, ought to be sent to prison. But the good old days of Cotton Mather and of the hangings at Salem were past, and after the conscientious but narrow bigot resumed his seat, no further notice was taken of the good man or of his suggestion. I may remark in passing, that the spirits who extorted from Mr. MacNaughton the Lord's Prayer, which he had been taught in childhood to repeat at the knees of his "puir auld mither," and had converted him to Spiritualism and a belief in the immortality of the soul, would seem to have been strange emissaries of Satan.)

At Albany we met a somewhat similar experience, both in the attempt made against us and in its results. A certain respectable minister, I do not know of what denomination, named Dr. Staats, was so far exercised in his mind by the reports of our meetings at the Delavan House, that he applied to the courts for a warrant for our arrest. I had the surprise of receiving the following note from the highly respected editor of the *Morning Express*:

"ALBANY MORNING EXPRESS,
"May 13, 1850.

"MRS. FISH: I have just this moment been called upon by the judges of the court before whom Rev. Dr. Staats would have brought you, had he been able so to do, who say they would be pleased to call on you this afternoon, at four o'clock, as they will then be at leisure. Can you accommodate them? I think it will be a grand move to have them witness the demonstrations. I would call, but am so busy this morning that even —— is out of my mind.

"In great haste,
"Yours respectfully,
"JACOB C. CUYLER."

At precisely the appointed time the expected party of judges and lawyers arrived, numbering seventeen, all men of distinction. They were just and honest men, with open, judicial minds, seeking only the truth, and not the gratification of hostile prejudices. The proprietor of the house, Mr. Rozelle, was ill in bed; but he rose, dressed himself, and went down to meet the

judicial party before they left his house. They said to him, when they left, “It will take wiser judges than we are to pronounce against them.”

The judges came frequently to see us afterward; and thus, through the Rev. Dr. Staats’s efforts to injure us, and have us arrested for “blasphemy against the holy scriptures,” a strong army was raised up for our protection. And this result we found was invariably the case through all our subsequent public career.

Wherever and whenever an attempt was made to show to the world that it was not true, however hostile and powerful the men engaged against us, we always—without a single exception—were brought through our difficulties in triumph, although, at times, we could not see how we were to escape the entanglements often thrown around us. We placed ourselves wholly under the directions of our spirit friends, and invariably came out with safety and honor, as they told us we should, if we but acted our parts faithfully.

Before the time arrived for us to leave Albany, we had been deluged with letters, by reputable parties, from all parts of the country, urging us to come and afford them an opportunity for themselves to investigate. Of course we could not comply with all these requests, as we could at the time only give attention to the principal cities.

During our stay in Albany our rooms were thronged with anxious investigators from all the neighboring towns and cities. We usually met the higher order of intelligences; as the conceited nabob and the equally conceited representative of the (morally) lower classes, were seldom attracted to subjects beyond their comprehension and above their sympathies.

My books of registration plainly show the class of minds which became interested in Spiritualism at that early day. I shall preserve them. They should be placed in some historical library, so that generations yet to come may realize the fact that Spiritualism was first sought after by the most enlightened and progressive minds of the nineteenth century.

I will not here record the names of my attached friends and constant visitors (with but two exceptions) of that most interesting period—two remarkable for their advanced years as well as for their high personal distinction, the

Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Nott, President of Union College, Schenectady, and Mr. Edward C. Delavan, the owner (though not the proprietor) of the house at which we resided. The latter was nearly, if not quite, an octogenarian, and certainly cut a somewhat remarkable figure by the side of his young wife and their baby of ten months. On one occasion he was so delighted with some communication, addressed to him by his pet name of childhood, from his long-departed mother, that he was overflowing in his expressions of gratitude, and he forced into my hand a twenty-dollar gold piece. The not less venerable Dr. Nott once laid his hand on my head and said, "My child, I am not far from the time when I shall go to the world of spirits, of which you reveal and prove so much; and you must, naturally, long survive me in the present life; but if it shall be in my power I will strive to be one of your guardian spirits."

This is the proper place to state the pecuniary arrangement dictated to us by our spirit friends for the support and prosecution of this mission to the world, which they had imposed upon us. Our public meetings were held in Van Vechten Hall, then the principal one in Albany. Our suite of rooms in the Delavan was the best in the house. Of course our expenses were very heavy; often amounting to \$150 a week. Our regular charge was \$1 each person, and, for a private séance of an hour, \$5 for two or more persons. These figures had been prescribed to us. We never heard of any complaints of dissatisfaction, on the part of our visitors, with the evidences which they used to receive; and no language would suffice to tell of the hundreds of assurances of delight and gratitude, which were the better part of our compensation for the time thus absorbed, and for the fatigue and exhaustion of these labors under the direction of our friends in the spirit life.

EXCURSION TO TROY.

It is with regret that I dismiss so briefly, as has been done above, our experiences in Albany, where we began in May, 1850, what may be called the first stage of the fulfilment of our mission. I might fill this volume with my reminiscences and notes of them.

It was on May 24, 1850, that we left Albany and went to Troy. Many Trojans had visited our rooms in Albany, and urged us to spend a few days in Troy before going to New York. We consented to do so, much against our

own wishes, as we had made our arrangements to go from Albany direct to New York. We were kindly received at the Troy House, and our rooms were thronged as elsewhere. Our success was gratifying to us all. But we were not long permitted to enjoy such peace and prosperity. A murmur arose among the "women," whose conduct toward us in Troy was cruel and unchristianlike. They insinuated that if the mediums were men their husbands would not become so deeply enlisted in this unpopular, and, seemingly, weird subject. They adopted the absurd theory of toe and knee rapping. One lady especially distinguished herself by her intellectual antics in this her line of procedure. (Her husband was much younger than herself, handsome and prosperous.) She became violent in her denunciations. I well knew that, with the aid of Heaven, we could easily prove such accusations false. We met our combatants on their own premises. A committee of "investigators" was gotten up, composed of three ladies and two ministers. We submitted to all of their suggestive whims, and came off, as usual, triumphant. The course and result of this committee of investigation induced many persons to visit our rooms who had never before been interested in the subject. We made many life friends in Troy, and left promising to visit them soon again (which we did a few months later).

The evening before we left we were honored by a band of music in front of the Troy House. The proprietor, Mr. Coleman, and General Viele came to our rooms and announced the fact, saying, "Ladies, this is expressly for you." He accompanied us to the balcony, where, with uncovered heads, the crowd saluted us with their hearty applause of approbation. The following evening we took the night boat from Albany, and were soon on the beautiful Hudson wending our way to the city of New York.

But as this chapter is so short, I may as well, at the expense of chronology in my narrative, anticipate a few months, to introduce here a serious adventure which befell my young child-sister Margareta, or Maggie, at this same city of Troy, or rather West Troy, in the following month of November, 1850. It is a curious illustration of the desperate bitterness of feeling which arose in some portions of the more ignorant classes in some of our American communities.



Margareta Fox Kane

In it we see a striking revival of the old Salem (and mediæval) spirit of animosity against the so-called “witchcraft;” a spirit which was perhaps stimulated by the same mistaken and misguided religious zeal which some couple of centuries before had hurried to the stake, the scaffold, or the nearest pond or river, many a poor victim to the unhappy and misunderstood gift of what we now know as mediumship. In the month of November, 1850, a mob attempt was made to destroy the life of Margareta while visiting at the house of Mr. R. M. Bouton. The mob was composed of a very low order of society, and were urged to do the work by prompters, who kept themselves in the background. Though not on the same scale of dimensions in numbers, mother and I at a later day concurred in recognizing in the riotous mob in New York, in July, 1863, features in the conduct of the men and women (the latter seemed not less savage than the former) that

curiously reminded us of the terrible scenes of West Troy. They had evidently been put up to regard this communication with spirits as devilry which it was right and proper to crush out even by taking our lives. They doubtless supposed, that by destroying our lives the whole matter would be put to rest. Accordingly her (Margaretta)'s every movement was watched, so that it was not safe for her to leave the house unattended. Finally the house was forcibly attacked; but being well barricaded and garrisoned the 'fort was held' and the assassins were not successful. The following letter from Mr. Bouton will explain the facts:

"WEST TROY, November 13, 1850.

"MY DEAR MRS. FISH: We are endeavoring to make arrangements for Maggie to go to another place. If she has mentioned the name of the place to you, keep it a secret as you value her life. A deep plot is laid to destroy her. My house is beset every night by a most determined murderous mob; and we guard her every moment. We think if we can place her where we wish to, she will be safe. I shall defend her and her reputation at the risk of my fortune and my life. I will advise you of our progress; suppress the name of the place, if you can. I write with difficulty, not having rested for several nights. Five villanous-looking fellows are watching the house night and day. She has never left my house unattended, which has foiled them thus far. On returning late from East Troy, a few nights past, with my wife, her sister, Maggie, and myself, in our family coach, when we reached the river we found no boat. The five men above mentioned were there, and they tried to persuade my driver to go by the way of the long Troy bridge (a *glorious* place for murder). We did not go, but they followed us home, and after we had retired attempted to break into the room occupied by Margaretta and my sister-in-law. They were furious on being defeated, and threw stones against the house and fired through the windows. I have procured means of defence, but we cannot sleep nights, and get very little rest during the days. They will, no doubt, return again to-night, but they will meet a warm reception, as many of our friends from East Troy will be with us. Last night Mrs. B. and Maggie went to the door of a shed in the rear together; but the fiends were on the watch and fired at them, with angry exclamations at there being some one with her. They were all large, strong men."

A postscript to this letter, dated the next day, says:

“As I feared, the men did return last night, and broke into the house; but we were prepared for them, and they did not effect any thing. Come immediately, if you can.”

The mob increased on the following night (Saturday), and on Sunday I received five telegraphic despatches to come to Troy, as follows:

“ROCHESTER, November 16, 1850.

“This despatch has been received from West Troy for MRS. A. LEAH FISH.

“Send your mother here, or come yourself, by Monday night. It is of vital importance. Answer by telegraph at once.

“R. M. BOUTON.”

On receipt of this telegram I immediately telegraphed to know its meaning, and received the following in reply:

“ROCHESTER, November 16, 1850.

“This despatch has just been received from West Troy for MRS. A. LEAH FISH.

“You must be here by Monday night, 18th inst. It is of *vital* importance.

“R. M. BOUTON.”

I then telegraphed back to Mr. B. begging him to explain the situation of my sister, when immediately I received the following:

“ROCHESTER, November 17, 1850.

“This despatch has just been received from West Troy.

“MRS. A. LEAH FISH:

“Your sister is alive and well, but in great danger. Safe at present.

“R. M. BOUTON.”

I started for Troy on the first train East the next morning. When I reached Schenectady I had to change cars for Troy.

I had just taken a seat, at about the middle of the car, when a rough-looking man sat down beside me, and commenced interrogating me as to where I was going, etc. I endeavored to be civil, but I suspected him of having something to do with the mob. After a while he left and held a long conversation with two men, near the front of the car, very like himself in appearance, and soon returned, taking his seat beside me again. I had moved to the other end of the seat, and maintained my position, thereby compelling him to press through in front of me with some difficulty. When again he attempted to speak to me I took up my satchel and left the seat entirely to himself. He *again* followed me, but this time I braced myself up and called the conductor (who had been watching his behavior all the way), and requested him to “compel this man to leave,” which he did immediately.

There were very few persons in the car; I think not more than seven in all. It was evident that he had a design against me; but he expected to meet an older person, and was thrown off his course by my youthful appearance. He had doubtless expected to meet mother. They had made inquiries of a passenger who had taken the car from Schenectady, and who afterward told Mr. B. that those men said they were expecting to meet a lady from Rochester; but that she was older than the lady on the car, etc.

It had been arranged that I should stop at the Troy House on my arrival at East Troy. It was eight o'clock P.M., and very dark. As I stepped out of the car on to the platform, I saw a carriage standing in front of the hotel, and supposed it was for me, as had been previously arranged. At this moment a gentleman stepped up, and after a close scrutiny said to me:

“I am right, it is Leah; I know you by your resemblance to Maggie,” and motioning me to silence.

Another gentleman stepped on my other side, and they guarded me to the carriage each with a drawn revolver. On entering the carriage I saw three loaded pistols lying on the seat in front of me. It is difficult to say which I

most feared, the mob or the pistols. The religious telegraphic operator had evidently revealed the correspondence between Mr. Bouton and myself, as there was no other source through which it could have been made known that I was expected.

A number of disorderly persons followed the carriage and crossed the ferry with us. No attempt was made to disturb us; but on reaching Mr. B.'s house we found it surrounded by a reinforced mob. I had been instructed how to conduct myself on our arrival. I was told that two or three gentlemen would rush from the door and suddenly carry me in. Accordingly, when the carriage stopped close to the door steps I found myself in the arms of three strong men, who landed me safely. I found Maggie sick and nearly paralyzed with fright. There were strong-armed forces for protection on our side. We had not been in the house ten minutes when several shots were fired and stones thrown, breaking everything in their way. We crouched beneath the furniture, and lay on the floor to escape the bullets, expecting at every moment some stray shot or stone would strike us. (Our hiding-room was in the interior of the house.) The mob threatened and did all in their power to destroy us; but, knowing the gentlemen inside were so well prepared for them, they retired for the night. They, however, continued their watchfulness until we left the place. Mr. Bouton's house stood in the outskirts of West Troy, near a lumber yard, a capital hiding-place for a mob, and I am not sure there were any policemen there at that time. Poor Maggie's nerves were terribly unstrung. She would start in her sleep and cry out fearfully, believing she was still besieged by the mob. She was too ill to be taken home, and I managed (with the aid of friends) to get her to Albany, where we remained several weeks at the Delavan House. During our stay in Albany, the identical men who met me and followed me from Schenectady to West Troy were prowling about my home in Rochester. All the circumstances connected with the affair show conclusively that there was a deep-laid scheme to destroy us, and that these men had been appointed to accomplish that object; but, like every other attempt at violence against us, they met with nothing but discomfiture.

CHAPTER X.

NEW YORK. 1850.

“THE ROCHESTER KNOCKINGS AT BARNUM’S HOTEL”—HARD WORK—OUR VISITORS—A POISONED BOUQUET—HAIR OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON I.—HAIR OF JOHN C. CALHOUN—INVESTIGATION AT RESIDENCE OF REV. RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, BY THE LEADING LITERARY CELEBRITIES OF NEW YORK.

FIRST VISIT TO NEW YORK.

We arrived in New York City on June 4, 1850, and had engaged rooms at Barnum’s Hotel, corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane. (This proprietor must not be confounded with the great showman of that name.)

Horace Greeley was our first caller. He advised us to charge five dollars admission fee. I told him that would be altogether too much; but he feared greatly for our safety, and thought this exorbitant sum would keep the rabble away. I told him I thought it decidedly better to follow the directions of the Spirits, and trust in Providence for protection and success. He announced our arrival in the *Tribune*, and published our rules of order. The editors of the *Tribune* and many other papers were in our rooms daily. Mr. Ripley used to say to us: “Ladies, you are the lions of New York.” Mary Taylor, in a Broadway theatre, sweetly sang “The Rochester Knockings at Barnum’s Hotel,” as a popular topic of the day. Many things in stores, on sidewalks, and newspaper advertisements, were paraded and labelled with the words “Rochester Knockings.”

What a time, to be sure, we had of it during that first visit, of nearly three months, to the great metropolis! Our party was seven in number. Our parlor was a large room opposite to the main one of the hotel, from which it was separated by a wide corridor. A long table with thirty seats occupied the centre of it, and we gave three receptions each day, for which our advertised hours were: 10 to 12 A.M., 3 to 5 P.M., and 8 to 10 P.M.; but the midday meeting would often lengthen out till we had barely time to get ready for dinner, and the evening one to midnight. The public parlors served as ante-rooms, in which visitors waited their turns to be admitted by one of our

attendant gentlemen. Private sittings were often extorted from us by importunity, which would begin at the earliest hours before breakfast. With what degree of exhaustion of muscles, nerves, mind and spirit, we would reach our beds (in our rooms on the floor above), where sleep was often slow to come to our over-strained systems, may be imagined by my readers. The mere pressure upon us of the three successive crowds would, alone, have been a strain hard to bear; but every individual had his or her colloquies to be held with their respective Spirit friends. The burthen of it fell upon us all, but most heavily upon our dear mother, who took it so deeply to heart when she knew we were so unjustly suspected and so severely tested. She was of course always present with us, but only as a spectator and for protection. Ministers of all denominations, members of all professions, legal, medical, literary, and commercial, were among our guests, and many of them were frequent visitors. The occasions were rare when the slightest want of courtesy, respect, and kindness occurred to wound or displease us; and the only thing approaching an indignity we had to complain of among ourselves, was the frequency with which committees of ladies would retire with us to disrobe and reclathe us, the holding of our feet, etc.

Among the thousands of strangers who streamed through our rooms, I, of course, could know or remember the names of but few individuals; and many an one had his or her designation by which we used to recognize them, as—the White Spirit, or the Black, or the Gray, the Count, the Slick Wig, the Old Oriental, the Hippopotamus, etc., etc. By the way, the Count was also an elderly gentleman with white hair and angelic eyes, a foreigner, who at parting made me a present of a set of old china of extreme rarity, for which I have since refused a dealer's offer of a thousand dollars, and which I still employ at parties and fêtes, and particular occasions, and always with a kind thought of the dear old donor. The summer season of travel, of course, brought many Southerners to our rooms, as well as visitors from other cities of the Union.

We again passed through an ordeal of special investigation by a large committee of the first men of New York, in scientific and literary, as well as social distinction, which took place at the residence of the Rev. Rufus W. Griswold, for some account of which, and the signal triumph in which it

resulted, I refer to a letter which will be found [further on](#), and which was extensively republished.

Only one very painful thing occurred: an anonymous present made to me of a large, superb bouquet of flowers, the smelling of which nearly cost me my life. I was thought to be at death's door; and a week had passed before I fully recovered from the effect. Spirits told us that it had proceeded from the malignity of a hostile quarter, and that the bouquet was poisoned.

I have always had a peculiar sensitiveness to poison; and could not even now, in the open air, pass near to certain growing plants, such as poison ivy, without suffering sensibly from their vicinity.

There was another occasion on which evil was not only intended, but attempted, by some who falsely believed they were doing God service by breaking up the "pestilent Rochester knockings." We, too, had our case of a "prophet" (Isaiah) sent to curse, but who remained to bless. Our "prophet," of whom this was true, was none other than the famous Captain I. Rynders, well known as the Captain of the Empire Club—a Democratic party organization of "fighting men," the counterpoise to a corresponding body on the other side of politics. These rival corps had, originally, for their business the breaking up of the meetings of the adverse party, or to defend those of their own party against similar attacks from the opposite fighting corps. Captain Rynders, though a rather slender man, was one of such pluck, energy, and resolution, that his very name came to represent a real power in New York. His politics, in which he was very zealous, made him (as most men of that day were, on both sides) very hostile to "the Abolitionists," many a meeting of whom the Empire Club had broken up after the most summary of fashions, namely, through windows as well as doors. One day three men, one of them of Herculean proportions, with his shirt-collar wide open, sailor fashion, on a brown sunburnt neck, entered our parlor, after payment of their regular fee outside, and took their seats together; the Hercules next to me. His appearance was every way formidable. A certain slight commotion was manifest in the company on their entrance. I soon received from three different friends in the room (Mr. Greeley, George Ripley, and another) little billets warning me against "the most dangerous man in New York"—whose appearance "portended evil," and telling me to be "extremely careful" of all I should say and do, etc. One

lady bent over me from behind, handed me a bit of paper which spoke of “black danger clouds,” and a row as being imminent from “those men,” and then made her escape into one of the more remote parlors of the hotel. But they sat quietly as observers. There were several clergymen in the company, one of them being the celebrated Dr. Phelps, of Stratford, Conn. There were at the table also two elderly, tall, thin, and pale Quaker maiden ladies, a little ghostly perhaps in appearance, one of whom presently addressed to the Spirits the question, “Which is the more correct, the Bible or Andrew Jackson Davis’s Revelations?” To this came many raps, which were differently understood around the table, according to the various opinions. It made quite a sensation. I rose and said that those raps were not an answer to the question, but a call for the alphabet, which I proceeded to repeat aloud as usual. The answer returned was: “The Bible contains many true and beautiful things, and so also does Davis’s Revelations,” a reply which Dr. Phelps considered a good and wise one. I presently invited one of my three neighbors (not the Herculean one) to the door, which I opened, and he was made to hear loud rappings on the wooden panels, and also on the marble flooring.

My real object was to conciliate him as being one of the party of “danger clouds,” though he was not the one who had been the object of my terror. “What is the meaning of this?” he said. “Have *you* anything to do with the Rochester knockings? I thought those two white old maids were the ones. I was sent here by a religious society to break it all up, and drive it out of New York, as I did last week with Fred. Douglass and Julia Griffith, and their sets of Abolitionists.” I told him he had been very wrong in doing so, and that those ladies were strangers here, as he and his friends were. “What, are *you* the Rochester knockers?” “Yes.” “Why, I thought you were older. Ain’t you afraid of me? What, these children!” “No, I am not a bit afraid of you,” I repeated, though in my secret heart I was dreadfully afraid of the other man. “Well, I am Captain Rynders—haven’t you heard of me?” “Yes, I have, but I am not afraid of you.” He took a seat at the table, and I invited him to ask some questions of some friends of his in the Spirit world. He asked a brother of his where he had died—“In California,” was the correct reply. “Of what disease?” To this also he got a reply, which, with a strong blow of his fist on the table, he admitted to be correct.

Captain Rynders was now our friend, and a good and gallant one he proved. He made the *Herald* publish a long account of it in our favor; the only occasion of its doing anything of the kind. He said that nobody should molest us; that he saw no reason why it should be done, and he emphasized this with a strong blow upon the table. He was indeed surprised that we were the mediums; he had supposed them to be the old Quaker women over there (alas, poor good souls!). My relations soon became equally comfortable with his big friend also, of whom I had been so afraid. A letter for me was brought in and laid on the table between him and me. I noticed that he seemed to observe the direction on it somewhat closely. I presently handed the letter over to mother, saying, "Here is a letter from our dear friend Maria Rogers." Said my big neighbor, "Why, where did you ever know Maria Rogers?" "In Albany, at the Delavan House, where her husband had some business position. She is one of the sweetest women I ever knew, and I love her dearly. She was also very beautiful." "She is all that you say," was his reply, "and she is my own darling sister." The letter proved to be an invitation to spend Sunday with her at the Oceanic House. I had no further fear of her big brother, who, together with Captain Rynders, would certainly have pitched all the rest of the company out of the window in our defence, had it been necessary. Such was the conversion of our "prophet," from the cursing for which he had been commissioned, to blessings. I have since been assured by those who knew him, that Captain Rynders was really a good man at heart, with other manly qualities besides his courage, notwithstanding his animosity against the Abolitionists of that period, and others against whom the energies of the Empire Club had been directed by his party. I have some reason to believe that he has been a happier man from that time than before. I was sincerely glad to see him a few weeks ago, when he called on me, by my request, to compare notes upon our reminiscences of this adventure, and I was indeed astonished to hear so young a looking man avow that he was now eighty years of age.

At all our séances the general character of the manifestations was that all present heard the explosive sounds or "knockings," whose significance resided in their correspondence with the letters of the alphabet; while each in succession had the opportunity of communicating with his own friends in the spirit life. Nor do I believe that a single person passed through the experience of one of those meetings who was not satisfied, in his own

sincere mind, that we had nothing of physical relation to their production, and that no conceivable mundane means could have produced them.

Though in our own domestic experience remarkable phenomena of the physical order had often been produced by the Spirits, such, for instance, as the rising of objects in the air, including our own persons, etc., yet nothing of this kind occurred at these meetings, beyond the phenomenon of the sitters being touched, sometimes caressingly, by invisible hands, or having their garments pulled, or their chairs or the table moved—which were frequent experiences to our visitors.

I cannot afford the space for numerous individual incidents of interest which occurred at those meetings, but will mention one, which is not likely to be forgotten by some of the witnesses to it, who may perhaps read this page. A stranger came one day, of evident distinction and advanced years, French, though speaking English; I have a vague impression that he was a diplomatist. He had with him a friend. He produced a folded paper or envelope, and asked if the Spirits could tell him what it contained. The answer promptly came, “A piece of the hair of the Emperor Napoleon.” This naturally arrested the eager attention of all the company. I trembled with doubt and fear of a failure. The old gentleman opened the paper and held up a small piece of hair, and, with tears in his eyes and quivering lips, said—either he had been one of those who accompanied Napoleon on his voyage to St. Helena, or that he was a friend of the physician who had accompanied him. After this lapse of time I am not certain which, but something was said about the physician. He told how on an occasion of his hair being cut by the barber, the fallen pieces had been religiously gathered up, and this was one of them. Turning to his friend who had come with him, he said, “I did not need this evidence, but this test is evidently intended for you;” and then explained that in the morning his friend, who was an entire unbeliever, had said, in reference to their intended visit to us, that if we were subjected to that test, and if it should be told what were the contents of the envelope, he would be a believer too. I remember that Mr. Greeley and Mr. Ripley, of the *Tribune*, were present. If this should fall under the eye of any survivors of that scene, I should be pleased to hear from them. None present can have forgotten it.

There were a number of somewhat similar cases of treasured locks of hair being thus identified by those who had worn them in life, but though there are many whose hair is thus preserved by faithful memories, there has been but one Napoleon the Great.

However, I will further add that if there was but one Napoleon I., there was also but one John C. Calhoun. One day a Southern gentleman was at the table, and, having heard of the above incident respecting the great Emperor, produced and laid down his pocket-book, asking to know one thing it contained. "Hair of John C. Calhoun," was the reply. He acknowledged its truth, and exhibited the lock.

During this our first visit to New York occurred another "investigation" by a number of the most eminent literary and commercial gentlemen of that city, at the residence of the Rev. Rufus W. Griswold. It included such men as J. Fenimore Cooper, George Bancroft, Rev. Dr. Hawks, Dr. John W. Francis, William Cullen Bryant, Nathaniel P. Willis, Dr. Marcy, and others. It had its origin with the Dr. C. D. Griswold, M.D. (our friend at Rochester, mentioned on a former page), who came down to New York expressly to propose it to us, telling us that the high position of his brother, Rufus W., would enable him to unite for that purpose the best elements which the great metropolis could afford. We were only too glad to comply with so kind and friendly a suggestion. In the wilderness of my papers I do not find the full records of that interesting occasion, of which no full formal report was ever issued; but I well remember that it was highly satisfactory to ourselves and our friends. All the testings desired, such as making us stand on cushions, etc., were exhausted. I recollect that Fenimore Cooper addressed an immense number of questions to Spirits (my impression is a hundred and fifty), and received correct replies. I find among some newspaper scraps a long editorial in a Sunday paper, by its junior editor, written in the full vein of hostile persiflage usual at that time with the press, dependent for existence on its subscription lists, the following as its conclusion:

"Since writing the above, we have read in the *Tribune* an account of an interview between the Spirits' interpreters and Mr. J. Fenimore Cooper, Mr. George Bancroft, Rev. Dr. Hawks, Dr. Francis, Mr. Wm. Cullen Bryant, Mr. N. P. Willis, Dr. Marcy, and other literary celebrities, at the rooms of the

Rev. Doctor Griswold. The responses given to several of these gentlemen, as reported in the *Tribune*, were most extraordinary; and yet—infernal that we are!—these replies have not shaken our obstinate incredulity.

“Our senses are the only witnesses we will consent to trust in relation to phenomena which, if really supernatural, would upset, among other things, the Christian Religion,^[8] and the verdict of our senses upon all the performances which have come under our observation.”

Any reader desirous of examining the *Tribune*'s report above alluded to, can easily find it in the files of that paper for 1850. I content myself, for brevity's sake, with the following extract from Mr. Capron's volume on “Spiritualism: Its Facts and Fanaticisms,” etc. (1855), page 172:

“But curiosity had so far obtained the mastery of bigoted opposition as to lead many of the most eminent men of the city to give the subject a fair investigation. The result was, as elsewhere, the making of many converts; and these were not from among men of inferior intellects or of unbalanced minds.

“Not long after the arrival of the mediums, a number of literary gentlemen assembled at the house of Rev. Dr. Griswold, an Episcopalian clergyman, in Broadway. Neither of the sisters Fox had ever been at the house before, and the meeting was called for the purpose of testing, as far as they were able, the validity of these alleged manifestations. Among the company were J. Fenimore Cooper, the novelist, Mr. George Bancroft, the historian, Rev. Dr. Hawks, Dr. J. W. Francis, Dr. Marcy, Mr. N. P. Willis, Mr. Wm. Cullen Bryant, the poet, and Mr. Bigelow, of the *Evening Post*, Mr. Richard B. Kimball, Mr. H. Tuckerman, and Gen. Lyman. These gentlemen were well known throughout the country, and the report was well calculated to carry much weight with it, let it be on which side it would. The result was highly satisfactory to the mediums and their friends. On this occasion Mrs. Fox and her three daughters were present. Mr. Tuckerman was among the first to interrogate the Spirits. Among his questions were the following in regard to an individual whose name he had not spoken, but had simply in his mind:

“‘Did he live in New York?’ No answer. ‘In Baltimore?’ ‘In Cambridge?’ ‘In Boston?’—Three distinct raps, which is the sign of an affirmative answer. A negative reply is indicated by silence. Mr. T. continued, ‘Was he

a lawyer?' 'A merchant?' 'A physician?' 'A clergyman?' Knocks. 'Was he an Episcopalian?' 'A Presbyterian?' 'A Unitarian?'—going over the names of the principal sects. No answer. At the suggestion of a gentleman, Mr. T. asked 'Was he a Christian?' Knocks. Mr. T. then asked the age of the person in a series of tens. 'Was he twenty years old at the time of his death?' 'Was he thirty?' 'Forty?' 'Fifty?' 'Sixty?' Knocks. 'Has he left a family?' Knocks. 'Children?' Knocks. 'Five?' 'Three?' 'Two?' Knocks. 'Did he die in Boston?' 'In Philadelphia?' 'In Albany?' 'In Northampton?' 'In Bennington?' Knocks. 'Did he die of consumption?' 'Of fever?' 'Of cholera?' 'Of old age?' Knocks.

"The person in Mr. Tuckerman's mind was the late Dr. William Ellery Channing, the eminent and liberal Unitarian divine. He lived in Boston, and died in Bennington, Vt., while on a journey.

"Dr. Francis having fixed in his mind the name of an individual, the 'rapping' spelled out B-u-r—when several of the company exclaimed, spontaneously, 'Robert Burns.' This was the true answer; and after an interesting interview with the bard of Scotia, the doctor declined asking any more questions.

"Mr. James Fenimore Cooper then asked, 'Is the person I inquire about a relative?' 'Yes,' was at once indicated by the knocks. 'A near relative?' 'Yes.' 'A man?' No answer. 'A woman?' 'Yes.' 'A daughter?' 'A mother?' 'A wife?' No answer. 'A sister?' 'Yes.' Mr. C. then asked the number of years since her death. Fifty knocks were given, and the number unanimously so announced by the company. Mr. C. now asked, 'Did she die of consumption?' and naming several diseases to which no answer was given. 'Did she die by accident?' 'Yes.' 'Was she killed by lightning?' 'Was she shot?' 'Was she lost at sea?' 'Did she fall from a carriage?' 'Was she thrown from a horse?' 'Yes.'

"Mr. Cooper here discontinued his investigations, and informed the company that just fifty years ago that present month he had a sister thrown from a horse and killed, and that all the answers had been strictly correct."

Mr. Ripley, one of the editors of the *Tribune*, a man of candor and great intelligence, drew up the report of the whole proceedings, of which the above is but a short extract, and in conclusion he says:

“The evening was now far advanced, and it was not thought desirable to continue our colloquies any further. At the suggestion of several gentlemen, the ladies removed from the sofa, where they had sat during the evening, and remained standing in another part of the room. The knockings were now heard on the doors, at both ends of the room, producing a vibration on the panels which was felt by every one who touched them. Different gentlemen stood on the outside and inside of the door at the same time, when loud knockings were heard on the side opposite to where they stood. The ladies were at such a distance from the door, in both cases, as to render no countenance to the idea that the sounds were produced by any direct communication with them. They now went into a parlor under the room in which the party was held, accompanied by several gentlemen, and the sounds were then produced with great distinctness, causing sensible vibrations in the sofa, and apparently coming from a thick hearth-rug before the fire-place, as well as from other quarters of the room.

“Such are the most important facts which we can recall of the manifestations of the evening. We believe we have stated them without any coloring whatever, as they appeared to every one present; but, with regard to their origin or their nature, we are as much in the dark as any of our readers.”

I will add to the above but a few lines. After Fenimore Cooper, and his responsive friends in the Spirit life, had occupied the floor, so to speak, for a long time, calls upon him began to arise as to whether any of his answers were correct. Of course he alone could know, since they were in the form of raps. Old Dr. Francis, who had sat with his chin resting on his big cane, and his eyes intently fixed on Mr. Cooper, as had been the eyes of all the company, began knocking impatiently on the floor, which example was followed by others, as in the case of an impatient audience at a theatre. At last Mr. Cooper gave satisfaction to their curiosity, now wound up to a high pitch, by saying: “Gentlemen, every single answer has been correct.” This was of course no small relief and satisfaction to us.

And it was a still greater satisfaction when, after his death in September of the following year, I received a visit from Mr. Cooper’s nephew, with a note from the great novelist, one of the last things written by his prolific pen, and a message from him on his death-bed, substantially as follows: “Tell the

Fox family I bless them. I have been made happy through them. They have prepared me for this hour.”

[8] This is a mistake or misrepresentation frequent with those who regard dogmatic “orthodoxy” (according to the title it claims) as the true and the only “Christian Religion.” All Spirits indeed reject the dogmas of the eternal hell-fire, of total depravity, of vicarious atonement, of anything but One Supreme Spirit or God, and of the literal plenary inspiration of the Bible; but a vast body of the most enlightened Spiritualists (I believe the bulk of them) devoutly cherish *the Christianity taught, lived, and died for by Christ himself*; and a pamphlet by a well-known and popular Spiritualist is rightly entitled “Christ the Corner-Stone of Spiritualism.”—ED.

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN TO ROCHESTER.

LETTERS AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES RESPECTING OUR NEW YORK CAMPAIGN—LETTER FROM AMY POST—LETTERS FROM JOHN E. ROBINSON—ARTICLE FROM A SUNDAY NEWSPAPER—FROM THE NEW YORK DAY-BOOK—LETTER FROM DR. C. D. GRISWOLD—LETTER FROM JACOB C. CUYLER—ARTICLE BY HORACE GREELEY—POEM FROM THE SUNDAY DISPATCH.

Such was our first campaign in New York, through all the hot months of that summer of 1850. Toward the close of September our friends, as well as ourselves, recognized the necessity for us of some rest and recuperation, and we decided to return to Rochester. But before being allowed to do so, our kind and devoted friends, Mr. and Mrs. Greeley, insisted on our spending a fortnight with them at their home in Nineteenth Street. We also spent a week with other friends at Greenpoint. But this did not afford much relief to our overwrought brains and bodies, because Mr. Greeley's hospitable house was a centre of visiting to the literary circles of New York, and Spiritualism and its manifestations, for the satisfaction of their visitors, were almost as much the order of our days as had been the case at Barnum's Hotel, among countless more. Bayard Taylor was at that period very earnest in his investigations, and was a daily frequenter of the house. At last we were suffered to tear ourselves away from New York; and ah, what sighs of relief we breathed when we got back to our dearly beloved Rochester, where we resumed our former happy domestic life, in which we all divided our days, going at pleasure to and fro, between my house on Troup Street and the farm, the homestead and father's house, now a sort of adjunct to the latter; every one of which dwellings was always an open house to any one of the family.

This affords a convenient point at which to introduce a few out of the many letters from valued friends referring to our time and experiences in New York. I give the first place to one from that best, sweetest, and noblest of women, Amy, wife of Isaac Post, friends in the double sense of intimacy, and the denominational one, for both she and her husband, who were all but

second parents to me, were, as they still are, perfect specimens of the ideal Quakerism.

“ROCHESTER, N. Y., May 30, 1850.

“DEAR LEAH: I have very often thought of you since you left our goodly city, and have as often desired to communicate with you, but I hardly know where to direct a letter to find you; though I might have known that your movements would be slow, for strange, indeed, it would be if you did not find people enough, in every place you visited, interested in the remarkable phenomena that attend you, to keep you a long time. It is almost useless to say that we always rejoice whenever we hear of your prosperity, either temporally or spiritually; and while we do exceedingly miss you and feel your loss, we are thankful that you are affording *others* the privilege of witnessing what we have so often enjoyed. When will you find a stopping place? Sometimes I think *not this side of Europe*, but perhaps my ideas are too boundless. You, and the good angels that are with you, can better tell; but wherever you may go, my heart and good wishes go with you. John E. Robinson kindly read to me some parts of thy letter. I was very grateful for thy kind remembrance of us, and much pleased to hear, from thy own pen, of your comfortable situation, company, etc.

“Please present my love to thy mother, Calvin, and both the dear girls. Willet says, ‘I want to see Leah and Margaretta.’

“Thy affectionate friend,
“AMY POST.”

The following two are from a true and lifelong friend (also in the twofold sense), John E. Robinson, of whom I could not, with either justice or truth, speak in terms any less strong than those above applied to my beloved Amy and Isaac Post.

LETTER FROM JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, Friday, June 21, 1850.

“DEAR FRIEND LEAH: Your anxiously looked for letter came to me Thursday morning last, and gave me a great deal of pleasure in the reading. It was worth more than all the newspapers I have seen in a twelvemonth, because it gave me an interior view of your temporary home, and a sketch of several things which I wanted to know something of. It was all of interest to me, from the top of the first page to the last line of the tenth; and I promise not to scold you any more, for I observe much of it was written during late hours of the night, when you could not help but be worn with fatigue. The only wonder is that at such time you could find room in your memory for me.

“By the way, Leah, what think you Mr. Jones told me? a bit of gossip about you and a millionaire, somewhere about Troy, or Albany. He told it as a special secret, and left me to make the most of it. It is capital. When do you *go off*? I shall be expecting a delicate note on satin paper, addressed to me, tied with a love-knot of matrimonial ribbon, stating when you will be ‘at home.’ Very well, do as you think best. It’s no use for me to cross your path when you get fairly ‘on a train,’ and, so far as my advice is concerned, I think you are smart enough in such matters, and can only say to you, as the lawyer said to the young man who taught him a lesson in roguery, ‘You need no lesson from me.’

“I was pleased with the account of your ramble in Hoboken, but wish you had taken some other day for the excursion, as the one in question always brings there such a crowd of the ‘lower ten.’ I hate crowds! though even in them there is a difference. Commend me to a mass of Sunday-clad peasantry rather than a crowd of the lower strata of New York—or the equally unpleasant sham aristocracy of Rochester.

“I remember those shaded walks of Hoboken. They are among the beautiful things and pleasant places, the memory of which is stored away in my attic story. I suppose you will see all the points of attraction before you turn your steps homeward. You will not go further eastward, I suppose. If you should go to Boston, go by way of Newport, and visit its beach. That famous beach, at the hour of early morning or just at evening twilight, is one of the grandest sights I ever looked upon. I won’t attempt to describe it to you; but, if you *can* see it, the memory thereof will not die out from your mind. The eye and the ear have kindred offices. They are, both of them, organs

through which the soul within us takes cognizance of beauty. The magnificent stave of music which has once trembled on the tympanum, is forever prisoned in the spirit—‘a thing of beauty;’ and so each glorious form of nature on which the eye has rested, while the spirit drank in its inspiration, remains ‘a joy forever.’ And *this* we call Memory. Why do we call it so? Because it is one of those mysterious powers of the human soul for which we have no other name.

“But I am forgetting what to say to you.

“Your particular mention of a number of your visitors is very agreeable to me. What a pity I cannot accept your invitation, and spend a week with you. You must remember everything you see and hear, and tell me all when you come home. I am very glad you like Mr. Hopper. He is a queer fellow—when he has a mind to be. He can veil the greatest amount of fun under the most serious face, of any one I know. He carries a ‘band of music’ under that Quaker physiognomy of his. I have often been talking to him seriously, and stopped short to tell him I could not read him. I did not know whether his thoughts were mine or exactly the opposite. His remarkable father, Isaac T. Hopper, is one of the noblest-hearted beings in this wide world. His whole life has been marked by acts of most perfect benevolence and devotion to the cause of Truth and Humanity. I was pleased with N. P. Willis’s article in *The Home Journal*, though written in his peculiar vein, and regret to learn that he has been subjected to such an outrage at the hands of the actor Edwin Forrest. I know nothing of Willis’s morals, but should suppose him above anything mean, or what would render him justly amenable to the censure of those who have long admired him as a leading journalist and charming writer. It is a sad, sad day for a man or woman who have made for themselves a home in thousands of hearts, and ministered to us in our holiday hours, when he or she stoops from that admired eminence, and becomes a thing for scorn to point its finger at. I will not believe *this* of Nathaniel Parker Willis—the author of a thousand gems of thought which he has scattered up and down in my memory like spring flowers.

“Our daily press is just what it was. You cannot expect anything else from papers with little talent, and no courage, at the editorial helm.

“If you come across such a man as Horace Greeley will recommend as one of his own stamp, tell him Western New York wants a journalist who is up and dressed and afraid of nobody; and if he will come out here, and pitch into ’em, he will make his fortune and serve the country. I’ve a thought in my mind, and will give it to you for what it is worth.

“Soon after the meeting at Doctor Griswold’s, I saw in the *N. Y. Evening Post* (what was very proper—so far as it went, because it did not charge *you* with originating these phenomena, but only disclaimed belief in their Spiritual nature), a sort of disclaimer evidently by one of the persons present who took the privilege of speaking for the others (or most of them). Now the fact is that, if anything which has engrossed a large share of public attention is really worthy of serious investigation, the *result of such investigation* is equally worthy to be made publicly known. And as the prominent minds in New York can most effectually do this, they, or those of them who have had the opportunity to arrive at fair conclusions, ought to be willing to state that result in explicit language, over their proper signatures. It would be but a simple act of justice to you; a satisfaction to the multitudes who are prevented, by a thousand considerations, from seeing you; and no dishonor to them. Before you leave, if it meets the approbation of your best friends, I would have it done. It would give you a *vantage ground*, from whence you could all look down upon the miserable scribblers who have been eking out *their* existence by abusing *you*. Write soon, and tell me what has transpired since your last letter.

“My love to you all.

“Yours truly,
“J. E. ROBINSON.”

JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, July 28, 1851.

“DEAR FRIEND LEAH:

“Your welcome letter came to me last Tuesday. I have been very anxious to hear from you. You write so seldom, and I am always anticipating your letters long before they reach me. I am sorry to learn that you have been

afflicted, but frequently wonder you are not all sick from the effect of continued application to the duties which devolve on you. I sympathize with you often in your thousand and one perplexities of mind and body. It gives me pleasure to know that the friends stand by you through all trials; and you will, I doubt not, find in your mind that appreciation of them that will secure a pleasing recollection when you shall have left them.

“You say that ‘you all wish to come home, and will probably return *soon*.’ Now, I wish I could believe that word has any significance in such connection; but it has become such a misnomer, in Spiritual things, that it is a great sinner.

“Sometimes I shut out the reality of things around me, and fancy you all here again. For the moment, I am pleasingly deceived, and again I stand within the charmed circle of the Rochester Seeresses. I hear your bursts of laughter, and look deep into your dark eyes to read what manner of thought is passing behind the Spirit windows. You are glad to see me. Maggie and Kate also give a like evidence. But I am only dreaming; you are away, and as far off as you were two months ago. I have little expectation of seeing you in less than two months; there are reasons which will keep you away so long, notwithstanding you speak of coming home. But I don’t wish to hasten you. You know what is best, and will act accordingly. I should be sorry if you should do anything that you would afterward regret.

“The most familiar Spiritualists—if that term is proper, now hold weekly sociables here. We have met but twice as yet, but design continuing them each Sunday evening. The last Sunday and this we met at the house of Mr. Granger, and passed the hours very much to our satisfaction. There were present Mr. and Mrs. Granger, Mr. and Mrs. Post, Mr. Hammond, Mr. W. A. Langworthy, Mr. Jarvis, Mr. Edward Jones, George Willets, Mr. Rich, and the writer of this. The design is to have these meetings tend to the mutual improvement of those present. They partake more of a social and conversational than what would be called a religious character; opportunities for the interchange of views in reference to Spiritual things. It is similar to the association in Springfield, which Mr. Munn alluded to when here. By the way, Mr. Munn has sent me the prospectus of a weekly paper—*The Spirit Messenger*, to be issued at Springfield next month. His motive is not speculation, as any one may well judge who knows what an

up-hill business the advocacy of advanced truth is in this our age. You and your friends in New York must send on to him a list of subscribers. I hope it will be sustained by the many who are seeking for light on this and kindred subjects of deep interest. If, as intended, it covers the field heretofore occupied by the miraculous, it ought to be sustained.

“Your house on Troup Street has been closed so long it will require seeing to before you go into it. You ought to send word several days before you reach here, in order that it may be properly ventilated. If you can do so, some of your friends will attend to it.

“As ever, your friend,

“JOHN E. R.”

ARTICLE FROM A NEW YORK SUNDAY NEWSPAPER.

The following is anonymous from a Sunday newspaper, the name of which I am not now able to give:

“We paid a visit on Sunday last to the Rochester ladies (at Barnum’s Hotel), so celebrated in this world, and in the world of Spirits, for the extraordinary revelations made to them through the remarkable knockings or sounds which have excited so much attention.

“They appear to be intelligent persons, and there is little, if anything, in their manner that looks like simulation or imposture. We are a perfect heretic in all such beliefs, and never did have faith in anything that we could not understand. As to ghosts, spectres, witchcraft, or Spirits from the other world, we have never believed in any of them, consequently it cannot trouble us if we are occasionally deceived; and we are seldom vexed at being hoaxed in anything. We have attained a period of such wonderful discoveries in science and the arts—we accomplish so many extraordinary triumphs and unaccountable enterprises in the present age—that our motto is ‘nil admirari.’ Let us see all that is to be seen as quickly as possible, before we shake off this ‘mortal coil.’ After steam and the telegraph, we are ready to believe anything. The Spirit who makes knocks for these young ladies seems to be a familiar one, for it has followed them from Rochester

and knocks in every part of Barnum's Hotel, corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane.

“The sounds, on the occasion of our visit, seemed to proceed from several parts of the room, near the table and in the next apartment. We thought with Hamlet, ‘Be thou a spirit of hell or goblin damned,—Bringest thou airs from heaven or blasts from hell,—Be thy intents wicked or charitable,—Thou com'st in such a questionable shape, that I will speak to thee!’

“The first idea that struck us was to inquire of our old friend, Tom Paine.

“We wrote down his name and the names of several cities, and asked where he died. The Spirits knocked ‘at New York.’ We then inquired how old he was when he died. The familiars knocked seventy times. This was pretty near. We asked if he voted for the death of Louis XVI.? It rapped ‘No.’ The old sinner! This was perplexing and strange, yet it made no impression upon us. A clergyman whom we have known as possessing a clear, strong mind, brought in his pocket a family daguerrotype, and respectfully requested the Spirits to state how many figures were in it, when the number was rapped correctly. He then asked how many of the six had died, and the number was again rapped correctly. We saw the table at which we sat and the door opposite vibrate with the knocks, and yet we saw none that we could suspect of collusion. It is evident, however, that the minds of all present must harmonize, and there must be quietude and union of the nervous fluid to develop striking and wise answers to questions—particularly of a domestic character. The young ladies moved about the room, apparently independent, and it was clear that *they* were not knocking, *whoever was*; and as to concealment and emissaries in a large bustling hotel, with bells ringing, waiters running about, chambermaids and lodgers constantly on the move, it is entirely out of the question. So we came away utterly disbelieving in all supernatural agency, and, at the same time, unable to say how any human means could be used without detection. The powwowings and witchcraft which prevailed so long in New England among our ancestors are now at an end. Our homes are no longer disturbed with an unaccountable noise, as of old; our children do not vomit crooked pins and tenpenny nails; nor have we either magic or sorcery. We no longer have those spirits which the Rosicrucians tell us inhabit the elements: sylphs, gnomes, nymphs, and salamanders. Yet, grave and earnest men

have, of old, believed in witchcraft, and many at this day believe in this Spiritual communion with the dead, as well as in these mysterious knockings.

“We, however, are not of that number; but would not censure or condemn those who are. The world is curious—these knockings are curious—and these young ladies are worth seeing, and the mysterious worth hearing. Then let them pass for what they are worth.”

ARTICLE FROM THE N. Y. DAY-BOOK BY ITS EDITOR, R. N. SIMPSON.

“*The Rochester Knocking Girls.*”

“O ho! you are all coming into it are you?”

“It is somewhat amusing to see editors of papers, distinguished men, literary characters and others coming into the belief of Spiritualism, or mysterious knockings; eating their own words and swallowing Spirits, girls, knockers and all. We say that it is amusing—it *would* be amusing, were it not disgusting to see men, who pretend to possess an ordinary share of intelligence, so completely stultify themselves—as many of these characters have.

“More than six months ago these knockings commenced in Rochester, and a committee, composed of the most respectable citizens of that city went into a thorough examination of the cause of them, and reported to the world the result of that examination. In that report they tell us all and more than we have heard or seen since the girls have been in this city, and conclude by exonerating the girls from practising deception or fraud in any of their exhibitions.

“After reading that report, the writer of this went to Rochester and visited the girls: the result of that visit he published in the *Day-Book* with just as much expectation of his statements being believed as if he had said that the cars ran off the track, or that he crossed Seneca Lake on board of a steamboat. What was his surprise to find that not one in twenty believed a word of them. *The Journal of Commerce, The Courier, The Express, The Christian Intelligencer*, and in fact all the papers in the city amused themselves and their readers by making fun of the whole matter. When we

met a friend he would accost us with, 'Well, you have been to see the Rochester knockings, have you?'

"'Yes sir,' would be our answer.

"'Well, what do you think of them?'

"'I think just what I have written and published!'

"'Stimson—you don't pretend to believe in that humbug?'

"'I believe that I heard the knockings, and that the girls had no direct agency in making them.'

"An incredulous stare full in the face, the cheeks filled with wind, and a sudden bursting into a wild ironical laugh would follow, and the friend would turn away with, 'Well, Stimson, I am used up; if you are so easily humbugged as that I have nothing more to say.'

"This manifestation of utter disbelief in the whole thing, we must acknowledge, nettled us a little, and we concluded to 'shut up,' and deny that we believed in anything. We began to doubt that we had been to Rochester at all, and as for seeing the girls or hearing the knockings, we were ready to swear as bravely and boldly as Peter (and with the same truth) that we knew nothing about them.

"Well, time passed on, the papers had their fun, and the girls are here. What say *The Journal of Commerce* and *The Express* now? Do they call it all humbug? O no! some of our great men have been to see and hear for themselves, and instead of calling it humbug swallow it without gulping. Of course *The Journal of Commerce* can't go against the great men, and *The Express*, never having had an opinion of its own, follows on the back track as tamely as an ass colt."

LETTER FROM DR. C. D. GRISWOLD, M.D.

The Rappings in New York.

"*To the Editor of the Evening Mirror:* Now that a considerable number of 'the wise men of the East,' even of Gotham, have been permitted to hear the veritable 'rappings' which so confounded the 'foolish' and 'credulous'

people of the 'West,' I do not see that they are any more successful in discovering the machinery, wire-work, or other means of collusion to which these phenomena have been attributed (by those who have never witnessed them), than were their western neighbors. All, or nearly all those who have investigated this matter with any honesty of purpose, have found it far exceeding their conceptions. There is often a truthfulness and exactness in these communications which are perfectly astounding, and when failures do occur they can readily be accounted for if it is admitted that they are addressed to an intelligence which reads the most secret thoughts. What is the nature of this intelligence which tells us our thoughts when sincere, and regards them not when called for with a trifling or dishonest purpose? Can it be the keen-sighted perception of the parties interested? Can it be explained by the principles of mesmerism, or is it supernatural? These are the questions to be answered. Those who cannot control their thoughts from the observations of others, may be satisfied with the first; those who do not take into consideration the physical demonstrations, may consider the second an explanation; but to explain all, it may be doubted, as some do, that the power exists in the supernatural world. This is anything but an age of reason. 'Opinion' has gained the ascendancy and sits upon 'reason's throne,' and with an assurance incompatible with everything but ignorance, despises 'facts' and evidence. Strange and mysterious as this matter is, many of the phenomena are settled 'facts' which plainly contradict the vague 'opinions' set afloat by those who know little of what they talk or write about. Take, for instance, a note—published in *The Evening Post*—by a person who was present at the interview for the investigation of the subject, at the rooms of Dr. Griswold, in which he says that 'all the persons present on that occasion (whom he has since seen) are of the opinion that the phenomena, or knockings, were electrical, and the answers accidental.' These may not be his precise words, yet they embody correctly his expression; but they are incorrect in fact, and in their implication; as all of the persons then present have not been consulted, far less have they given an unanimous opinion as above expressed.

“Before any one adopts the 'opinion' that these sounds are electrical, would it not be well to show how they can be produced while the three persons on whom they are attendant are insulated several feet apart; how electricity can be so harnessed to tables, chairs, and other things, as to move them about,

or hold them in their places so that no human arm can stir them, or produce a concussion equal to what would require the force of a strong arm to accomplish and with the aid of a heavy instrument; without saying anything of the still more wonderful manifestations indicating intellectual direction. Any one who can give the rationale of all this, upon electrical principles, will undo some of the established and known laws, and discover to the world not only the means for converting this subtle agent into *an intelligent* motive power, but also to give it the skill of a masterly engineer.

“The assumption that the correct answers given to questions that evening—though not remarkable, comparatively—were ‘accidental,’ bears absurdity upon the face of it. Such ‘opinions’ throw no light upon the mystery, but leave it still more inexplicable to the general intelligent mind.

“Of thousands who have now witnessed these phenomena, almost every one at first regarded the idea that these parties were not directly the operators, as most preposterous. But since what is called a ‘public opinion’ has become pretty well established, the rest of the world fall in, and see nothing very strange in them—after all. And thus it would be with the next point, or the claim of Spirituality, were it only understood that the immaculate judge, ‘public opinion,’ had decided in its favor. Such is the value of *opinion* in a large sense. If the truth is told of other days, mankind valued their opinions, and kept them to themselves. But not so now. The article is known to be valueless; and each one seems desirous of getting rid of his stock. At no age of the world did *charlatanism* make more rapid strides than it does at present; so that, it seems, the same traits of character which render us the subjects of deception, make us slow to embrace truth; and for the reason, as I conceive, that ‘facts’ and ‘evidence’ are less an element in the ‘foundation’ of opinions than are prejudices, preconceived notions, personal interest, and the fear of being laughed at.

“The philosophy of the Sunday Press upon this subject has sustained the well-known character of those journals; to say the least, they have been very spirited. Religion which has been arrayed against God, is the devil’s weapon, and *The Herald* borrowed it for the first onset; ‘seriously’ fearing that this subject would be made to overthrow the good results which sound education and true Christian piety might accomplish. Pray, what would *The Herald* have to fear from such a result? Its premises would be exempt from

any change by such a revolution, and it would, no doubt, add to its subscription lists.

“There is one cheerful inference to be drawn from *The Herald’s* position with regard to this subject; that is, that the devil has no meddling with the matter. By the way, this calls to mind another distinguished individual—Dr. David Meredith Reese—who has the advantage of a longer name, if not quite so notorious, the great expounder of humbugs.

“He has promised to show up the deception upon the first opportunity, and people would have great confidence in his experience. Come forward, doctor, and redeem your pledge; or take back your unmanly imputations; but, for the credit of the thing, do not say that you believe in its verity.

“C. D. GRISWOLD, M.D.”

LETTER FROM JACOB C. CUYLER.

The following is from the editor of *The Albany Express*, before mentioned in connection with the visit of the judges and lawyers at Albany.

“ALBANY MORNING EXPRESS OFFICE,
“June 9, 1850.

“MRS. FISH:

“After reading an account of your meeting at the house of the Rev. Dr. Griswold, in Broadway, New York, accompanied as it was by many very satisfactory, and I trust convincing, manifestations, I have experienced a species of gratification which I can call nothing more nor less than revengeful. Those who have scoffed and scouted the idea of ‘Spiritual communications’ were modest enough in their prejudiced opinions to style me fanatic and chimerical; and some, more unscrupulous than their brethren, even hinted that no respectable paper would devote its columns to the dissemination of such doctrines throughout the world. But ‘Truth is mighty, and will prevail.’ Choosing rather that time should vindicate the ‘Spirits,’ than that our own feeble efforts should act as their defender, we have waited with some anxiety the result in New York City. When, therefore, we learned that such men as Mr. Cooper, Mr. Tuckerman, Dr. Frances, and others of like stamp, had received such demonstrations as are

recorded in the public journals of that city, I took the liberty of adding some considerable to my diminutive stature. I walked about with all the assurance of a millionaire, and just at the nick of time, whom should I come in contact with but the unbeliever Hastings, of *The Knickerbocker*. Triumphantly I held up before his astonished gaze the record, and exultingly asked him whether those men were fools, lunatics, or fanatics? I had him there, and all he could say in reply was—*Humbug*.

“Well, that was as much as I expected, and laughing at his stubborn ignorance I left him.

“I see that even Bennett, of *The Herald*, has somewhat changed his tone, and that he speaks quite favorably of the affair. He will be compelled to do more than all this, I hope, before long, or many weeks roll over his head. The press generally in New York, I am happy to see, are acting very kindly toward you, and I only wish that all may receive entire satisfaction in their investigations. With us, all remains as usual. Many who seemed to manifest but little interest in the affair while you were here have, since your departure, evinced a desire to see and investigate. So will it be everywhere, and among all classes. The Switch still speaks of ‘Yaupy’^[9] and the Spirits with contempt; but I believe ‘Yaupy’ suffers nothing from his efforts. He still seems to be in the enjoyment of health, and although *seldom known to smile*, he can laugh with more freedom than is his usual custom.

“Do you think of stopping in our city before you return to Rochester? I hope so.

“I have heard that Margaretta has been unwell since your arrival in New York, but presume her recovery is complete. Present my kind regards to your mother and Maggy and Catty.

“Hoping to see you in New York before you leave, I remain

Yours respectfully,

“JACOB C. CUYLER.”

ARTICLE BY HORACE GREELEY, PUBLISHED IN THE TRIBUNE.

“Mrs. Fox and her three daughters left our city yesterday on their return to Rochester, after a stay here of some weeks, during which they have freely subjected the mysterious influence by which they seem to be accompanied, to every reasonable test, and to the keen and critical scrutiny of the hundreds who have chosen to visit them, or whom they have been invited to visit.

“The rooms which they occupied at the hotel have been repeatedly searched and scrutinized; they have been taken without an hour’s notice, into houses they had never before entered; they have been, all unconsciously, placed on a glass surface concealed under the carpet, in order to interrupt electric vibrations; they have been disrobed by a committee of ladies, appointed without notice, and insisting that neither of them should leave the room until the investigation had been made, etc., etc., yet we believe that no one to this moment pretends that he has detected either of them in producing or causing the ‘rappings;’ nor do we think any of their contemners has invented a plausible theory to account for the production of these sounds, nor the singular intelligence which (certainly at times) has seemed to be manifested through them.

“Some ten or twelve days since, they gave up their rooms at the hotel, and devoted the remainder of their sojourn here to visiting several families, to which they had been invited by persons interested in the subject, and subjecting the singular influence to a closer and calmer examination than could be given to it at a hotel and before casual companies of strangers, drawn together by a vague curiosity, mere rational interest, or predetermined and invincible hostility. Our own dwelling was among those thus visited, not merely submitting to but courting the fullest and keenest inquiry with regard to the alleged ‘manifestations’ from the Spirit world by which they were attended. We devoted what time we could spare from our duties, out of three days, to this subject, and it would be the basest cowardice not to say that we are convinced beyond a doubt of *their perfect integrity and good faith* in the premises. Whatever may be the origin or the cause of the ‘rappings,’ the ladies in whose presence they occur do not make them. We tested this thoroughly and to our entire satisfaction.

“Their conduct and bearing is as unlike that of deceivers as possible, and we think no one acquainted with them could believe them at all capable of

engaging in so daring, impious, and shameful a juggle as this would be if they caused the sounds. And it is not possible that such a juggle should have been so long perpetrated in public, yet escape detection. A juggler performs one feat quickly and hurries on to another; he does not devote weeks after weeks to doing the same thing over and over deliberately, in full view of hundreds who sit beside or confronting him in broad daylight, not to enjoy but to detect his trick. A deceiver naturally avoids conversation on the subject of his knavery, but these ladies converse freely and fully with regard to the origin of these ‘rappings’ in their dwelling years ago, the various sensations they caused, the neighborhood excitement created, the progress of the developments—what they have seen, heard, and experienced from first to last. If all were false they could not fail to have involved themselves ere this in a labyrinth of blasting contradictions, as each separately gives accounts of the most astounding occurrences at this or that time. Persons foolish enough so to commit themselves without reserve or caution could not have deferred a thorough self-exposure for a single week.

“Of course a variety of opinions of so strange a matter would naturally be formed by the various persons who have visited them, and we presume those who have merely run into their room for an hour or so and listened, among a huddle of strangers, to a medley of questions—not all admitting of very profitable answers—put to certain invisible intelligencies and answered by rappings or singular noises on the floor, table, etc., as the alphabet was called over or otherwise, would naturally go away perhaps puzzled, probably disgusted, rarely convinced. It is hardly possible that a matter ostensibly so grave could be presented under circumstances less favorable to conviction. But of those who have enjoyed proper opportunities for a full investigation we believe that fully three-fourths are convinced, as we are, that these singular sounds and seeming manifestations are not produced by Mrs. Fox and her daughters, nor by any human being connected with them.

“How they *are* caused, and whence they proceed, are questions which open a much wider field of inquiry, with whose way-marks we do not profess to be familiar. He must be well acquainted with the arcana of the universe who shall presume dogmatically to decide that these manifestations are natural or supernatural. The ladies say that they are informed that this is but the beginning of a new era or economy, in which Spirits clothed in flesh are to

be more closely and palpably connected with those which have put on immortality; that the manifestations have already appeared in many other families and are destined to be diffused and rendered clearer, until all who will may communicate freely and beneficially with their friends who have 'shuffled off this mortal coil.' Of all this we know nothing and shall guess nothing. But if we were simply to print (which we shall not) the questions we asked and the answers we received during a two hours' uninterrupted conference with the 'rappers,' we should at once be accused of having done so expressly to sustain the theory which regards these manifestations as the utterances of departed spirits.

"We believe it is the intention of the ladies to shun henceforth all publicity or notoriety as far as possible. They do not expect or wish to make gain of the 'Rappings;' they have desired to vindicate their own characters from the gross imputations so freely cast upon them; believing that, that effected, they hope to be permitted hereafter to live in that seclusion which befits their sex, their station, and their wishes. We trust they may be permitted to do so.

"H. G."

A POEM.

The following clever verses (published in *The New York Sunday Dispatch*) were from the pen of a gentleman who had been a vehement opponent, but who, being an honest and good man, had not been able to resist the evidences of the truth of "the Communion of Spirits." In inserting them, the Editor exercises his prerogative in disregard of the objections and vain veto of the author who was the subject of them.

When first Leah Brown
Became talked of through town,
 And compared to the famed witch of Endor,
I thought 'twould be best
To apply the old test,
 And to fagot and fire to send her.

In my zeal orthodox
To trap this sly Fox,
 A terrible pit-fall I planned,
But she every one foils,
I was caught in her toils,
 And, I own it, completely trepanned.

'Tis no wonder her spell
Should on every one tell,
 And worm out our secrets by scores,
Her eye's such a piercer,
I never saw fiercer.
 It made me leak out through my pores.

'Twas plain she saw through me,
Though Heaven beshrew me,
 If I even myself could divine.
In my visage dyspeptic
She saw but a sceptic,
 Her own was the reflex of mine.

For my doubts it was clear
I was soon to pay dear,
 To this point all her efforts were pitched,
And I own it with shame,
She has managed that same,
 For now I am fairly—*bewitched*.

[9] Yaupy is Low Dutch for Jacob; the writer of the letter originally employed it as a *nom de plume*.

CHAPTER XII.

BUFFALO. 1850-51.

URGED TO RETURN TO NEW YORK—VISIT TO BUFFALO—ATTEMPT BY A PRETENDED FRIEND TO FRIGHTEN US AWAY—THUNDERBOLT FROM THE BUFFALO COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER—THE “FEMALES”—KNEE-JOINT THEORY—OUR REPLY CHALLENGING INVESTIGATION OF IT—THE DOCTORS’ DAY—MRS. PATCHEN’S PECULIARITY.

We all returned to our home in Rochester, but immediately started for the old homestead (Arcadia, Wayne County), where for about a month we enjoyed the society of our dear friends to our hearts’ content. After this it became necessary to go back to Rochester, where we received urgent letters from New York, insisting on our return to that city, now that we had had what our friends there thought a sufficient period of repose and holiday. These invitations we refused, whatever might be the conditions offered; but this soon brought upon us a visit of Judge Edmonds and others, *in person*, who insisted, in the name of all our friends, as well as in that of our “duty,” that some of the family at least should return with him to New York. This finally led, after much persuasion and deliberation, to our consent that Katie, accompanied of course by mother, should do so, and Maggie remained with me at my house in Troup Street, Rochester. At New York mother and Katie were to reside successively with our principal friends in the great city.

We left Rochester for Buffalo the 16th of December, 1850, at the earnest solicitation of many friends there. It was our intention on leaving home to be absent about two weeks, but, like the Spirits, we could not calculate our time. When we had been there about two weeks, we began to think of turning our steps homeward; but our friends would not consent to our leaving them so soon, as the crowded séances and the continued increasing interest seemed to demand our presence still longer. We remained, and soon found why we were detained. About this time two of the Buffalo doctors called on us, viz., Dr. C. B. Coventry and Dr. Charles A. Lee. To my certain knowledge, Dr. Austin Flint never appeared in our presence until after he had made the wonderful discovery of “knee-ology,” which is fully

explained hereafter. Dr. Coventry appeared gentlemanly at all times and places; but Dr. Lee proved himself to be a wily, deceitful man. He certainly professed, to us, to be greatly surprised at what he witnessed in our presence; and I was myself afterward surprised at the manner and tone of the subsequent attacks upon us in which he united.

The first intimation we had of the thunderbolt which was being forged to be hurled upon us by the Buffalo doctors, from what they seemed to consider as an Olympic height of professional authority, was a visit which I received one morning from Dr. T. M. Foote, formerly U. S. Minister to Bogota, and at this time editor of *The Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*. He professed to come as our friend, and with a gentle blandness and confidential tone advised me to leave Buffalo at once, suggesting that the first train would leave in about two hours; that the whole thing was now found out and exposed, and that he came to save us from being mobbed out of the city. I suppose now that our oily friend in his own evil heart imagined us to be really frauds, and that I would probably be frightened into flight; or, at any rate, give evidence of conscious guilt in the mode of receiving such a friendly warning. For a moment or two I scarcely understood his meaning; but then I asked, with my best haughtiness, what right he had to come to my door, at our private hours, without sending up his card; and I stepped back into my room, shutting and locking the door in his face, and at once rang the bell, more violently than was perhaps lady-like, but so as to bring the porter very promptly to the door, near which my visitor was still standing. I told the porter to beg Mr. Rogers, the good and kind proprietor of the house, to step up, and to him I complained that *that man* had dared to come to my door, within my private hours, without first sending up his card for permission; that he had insulted me, and that I begged he might never be admitted again under any circumstances. Of course I knew well enough who “that man” was, for he had often been at our rooms, and had entertained us with stories of the tricks of legerdemain he had witnessed in South America. He was here an important and potent personage, being an ex-diplomatist and editor of an evening paper. From his other title, I suppose he must once have also been of the same profession as the three M.D.’s whose attack on us was already in type in his columns, as I soon afterward knew by the news-boys’ cries of “The Rochester Knockings! Great Exposure of the Rochester Knockings!”

If the Rochester knockings were an imposture, nobody was more imposed upon by them than myself, and nobody could have had a greater interest in learning how they were produced. I therefore sent out to buy a copy of *The Commercial Advertiser* of February 18, 1851, still damp from the press, in which I read the following authoritative scientific account of the way in which, for now nearly three years, my little sisters and myself had been wearing out our knee-bones to impose upon the world, our family, and ourselves! And this is what I read:

“TO THE EDITOR OF *The Commercial Advertiser*:

“Curiosity having led us to visit the rooms at the Phelps House in which two females from Rochester—Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox—profess to exhibit striking manifestations from the Spirit world, by means of which communion may be had with deceased friends, etc.; and having arrived at a physiological explanation of the phenomena, the correctness of which has been demonstrated in an instance which has since fallen under our observation, we have felt that a public statement is called for which may perhaps serve to prevent a further waste of time, money, and credulity (to say nothing of sentiment and philosophy) in connection with this so long successful imposition.

“The explanation is reached, almost by a logical necessity, on the application of a method of reasoning much resorted to in the diagnosis of diseases—namely, *the reasoning by exclusion*.

“It was reached by this method prior to the demonstration which has subsequently occurred.

“It is to be assumed, first, that the manifestations are not to be regarded as spiritual, provided they can be physically or physiologically accounted for. Immaterial agencies are not to be invoked until material agencies fail. We are thus to *exclude* Spiritual causation in this stage of the investigation.

“Next, it is taken for granted that the *rappings* are not produced by artificial contrivances about the persons of the females, which may be concealed by the dress. This hypothesis is excluded because it is understood that the females have been repeatedly and carefully examined by lady committees.

“It is obvious that the rappings are not caused by machinery attached to tables, doors, etc., for they are heard in different rooms, and in different parts of the same room in which the females are present, but always near the spot where the females are stationed. This mechanical hypothesis is then to be excluded. So much for negative evidence, and now for what positively relates to the subject.

“On carefully observing the countenances of the two females it is evident that they involve an effort of the will. They evidently attempted to conceal any indications of voluntary effort, but did not succeed. A voluntary effort was manifested, and it was plain that it could not be continued very long without fatigue. Assuming, then, this *positive fact*, the inquiry arises, how can the will be exerted to produce sounds (rappings) without obvious movements of the body? The voluntary muscles themselves are the only organs, save those which belong to the mind itself, over which volition can exercise any direct control. But contractions of the muscles do not, in the muscles themselves, occasion obvious sounds. The muscles, therefore, to develop audible vibrations, must act upon parts with which they are connected. Now, it was sufficiently clear that the rappings were not *vocal* sounds; these could not be produced without movements of the respiratory muscles, which would at once lead to detection. Hence, excluding vocal sounds, the only *possible* source of the noises in question, produced as we have seen they must be, by voluntary muscular contractions, is in one or

more of the movable articulations of the skeleton, from the anatomical construction of the voluntary muscles. This explanation remains as the *only alternative*.

“By an analysis prosecuted in this manner we arrive at the conviction that the *rappings*, assuming that they are not spiritual, are produced by the action of the will, through voluntary action on the joints.

“Various facts may be cited to show that the motion of the joints, under certain circumstances, is adequate to produce the phenomena of the rappings; but we need not now refer to these. By a curious coincidence, after arriving at the above conclusion respecting the source of the sounds, an instance has fallen under our observation, which demonstrates the fact that noises precisely identical with the *spiritual rappings* may be produced in the *knee-joints*.

“A highly respectable lady of this city possesses the ability of developing sounds similar, both in character and degree, to those professedly elicited, by the Rochester impostors, from the Spirit world. We have witnessed the production of the sounds by the lady referred to, and have been permitted to examine the mechanism by which they are produced. Without entering at this time into a very minute anatomical and physiological explanation, it is sufficient to state that the muscles inserted into the upper and inner side of the large bone of the leg (the tibia), near the knee-joint, are brought into action so as to move the upper surface of the bone just named laterally upon the lower surface of the thigh bone (the femur), giving rise, in fact, to a partial lateral dislocation.^[10] This is effected by an act of the will, without any obvious movement of the limb, occasioning a loud noise, and the return of the bone to its place is attended by a second sound. Most of the Rochester rappings are double. It is practicable, however, to produce a single sound by moving the bone out of place with the requisite quickness and force, and allowing it to slide slowly back, in which case it is noiseless.

“The visible vibrations of articles in the room, situated near the operator, occur, if the limb, or any portion of the body, is in contact with them at the time the sounds are produced. The force of the semi-dislocation of the bone is sufficient to occasion distinct jarring of the doors, tables, etc., if in contact. The intensity of the sound may be varied in proportion to the force of the muscular contractions, and this will render the apparent source of the rappings more or less distinct.

“We have witnessed repetitions of experiments, in the case just referred to, sufficient to exhibit to us all the phenomena of the sounds belonging to the Rochester rappings, and, without further explanations at this time, we append our names in testimony of the facts contained in the foregoing hastily penned exposition.

“AUSTIN FLINT, M. D.,	}	University of Buffalo.
“CHARLES A. LEE, M. D.,		
“C. B. COVENTRY, M. D.,		

“FEBRUARY 17, 1851.”

I had been so indignant at Dr. Foote’s first intimation to me of what was coming, that if, when I slammed the door in his face, it had happened to come in contact with his nose, which he had so impertinently and hypocritically attempted to intrude into our rooms, I fear I should not have much regretted the accident; but anger evaporated over the perusal of this precious scientific performance; which was certainly enough to make me

smile aloud over its absurdity. I saw at once that we could have nothing to fear from it, even though, at the first blush, its solemn professional air and tone might impose upon the ignorant and gratify the bigotry of some hostilities. I knew that the first sincere investigation, with special reference to this new and comical knee-joint theory, must at once explode it and cover its authors with confusion. I published the next day, in all the daily papers, the following card. It will be remembered that I was now alone in Buffalo with Maggie; mother and Katie being at New York.

“TO DOCTORS FLINT, COVENTRY, and LEE:

“GENTLEMEN—We observe, by a communication in *The Commercial Advertiser*, that you have recently made an examination of a ‘highly respectable lady of this city,’ by which you have discovered the secret of the ‘Rochester impostors.’ As we do not feel willing to rest under the imputation of being impostors, we are very willing to undergo a proper and decent examination, provided we can select three male and three female friends who shall be present on the occasion.

“We can assure the public that there is no one more anxious than ourselves to discover the origin of these mysterious manifestations. If they can be explained on ‘anatomical and physiological’ principles, it is due to the world that the investigation be made, and that the ‘humbug’ be exposed. As there seems to be much interest manifested by the public on that subject, we would suggest that as early an investigation as is convenient would be acceptable to the undersigned.

“A. LEAH FISH.

“MARGARETTA FOX.”

The learned professors, being thus challenged, could do no less than accept, and a meeting was arranged, which took place at the Phelps House. Indeed, for the next fortnight we may be said to have surrendered our whole time to investigations, our rooms being open freely and gratuitously to meetings of the public, or of committees appointed by them, consisting of gentlemen selected from “the pick” of Buffalo. The three doctors had the first evening in their own hands; though there were present Mr. Rogers, the proprietor of the hotel, and I think two or three gentlemen friendly to us, and many other

promiscuous gentlemen. I remember particularly the presence of two steamboat men (idle, of course, at that season), Captains Rounds and Walker. This is fixed in my recollection because of a little incident in regard to which I have never been sure which of them was the (kindly) guilty party. They both felt a pity—natural to good and kindly men—for two young creatures thus baited, as it were by cruel enemies; and as we, Maggie and I, sat together on a sofa, and after long waiting no raps came, one of them rested his arm on the back of the sofa and actually, with his knuckles, made behind me three raps which were not a bad imitation. Perhaps he was not more than half conscious of what he did, like the boy who denied that he had whistled in school and said “it whistled itself.” But I knew the raps not to be genuine; while the kindness of heart of the author of them at such a moment of trial excited in me something perhaps a little hysterical, for I cried, or rather sobbed out—“O, for pity’s sake, don’t do that. If God and the good Spirits have deserted us we will abide the consequences; but don’t let there be any false rapping.” Good Mr. Rogers was so much moved and excited (he had been before wiping streams of perspiration from his forehead) that he staggered as he stood, and some friends assisted him out of the room; and I understood that he actually fainted.

But the good Spirits had inspired me well; for I was afterward told that it produced the best effect on all present. From this I presume that I must except the doctors, whom professional dignity and pride committed to their new theory; and who, probably under the materialistic bigotry of modern science, were all in arms against us and the Spirits. The spontaneous genuineness of it was clear evidence that there was nothing but honesty in us, whatever mystery might be under these strange manifestations—mysterious to ourselves first and most of all.

It was certainly a severe and cruel ordeal for us, as we sat there under that accusation, surrounded by all these men, authorities, some of them persecutors, while the raps, usually so ready and familiar, would not come to our relief. Some few and faint ones did indeed come—some nine or ten. The doctors say in their account that it was while they intermitted the holding of our feet. Such was not my impression, but I attach small importance to that. It will be seen herein that the first *Doctors’ day* was followed by many more, in the presence of committees of all that was highest and best of authority in Buffalo, in which not only did the raps

abound, alike when our feet and knees were held and when they were not, but other manifestations of the presence and action of our Spirit-friends which far transcended the significance of raps. We are now familiar with the fact that Spirits often refuse to act in the presence of those who bring to the occasion, not a candid and fair spirit of inquiry for the satisfaction of an honest scepticism, but a bitter and offensive bigotry of prejudice and invincible hostility, which does not really seek, but rather repels the truth, and but little deserves the favor of its exhibition to them by the Spirits.

Neither men nor Spirits care always to cast their pearls away upon unfit and unworthy recipients. Our Spirits knew well what they could and would exhibit on the following days to the public of Buffalo and the world, through better channels of higher authority.

The three doctors published their account, the animus of which appears in the one circumstance that we are never mentioned but as “females”—a small fact, but enough to show how some males may be M.D.’s without being gentlemen.

The following extracts from their account of it will present the whole of its substance:

“The two females were seated upon two chairs placed near together, their heels resting on cushions, their lower limbs extended, with the toes elevated and the feet separated from each other. The object of this experiment was to secure a position in which the ligaments of the knee-joint should be made tense, and no opportunity offered to make a pressure with the foot. We were pretty well satisfied that the displacement of the bones requisite for the sounds could not be effected, unless a fulcrum were obtained by resting one foot upon the other, or on some resisting body. The company waited half an hour, but no sounds were heard in this position.

“The position of the younger sister was then changed to a sitting posture, with lower limbs extended on the sofa, the elder sister sitting, in the customary way, at the other extremity of the sofa. The ‘Spirits’ did not choose to signify their presence under these circumstances, although repeatedly requested so to do. The latter experiment went to confirm the belief that the younger sister alone produced the rapping. These experiments were continued until the females themselves admitted that it was useless to continue any longer at that time, with any expectation of *manifestations* being made.

“In resuming the usual position on the sofa, the feet resting on the floor, the *knockings* soon began to be heard. It was then suggested that some other experiments be made. This was assented to, notwithstanding the first was to our minds amply conclusive. The experiment selected was, that the knees of the two females be firmly grasped, with the hands so applied that any lateral movement of the bones would be perceptible to the touch. The pressure was made through the dress. It was not expected to prevent the sounds, but to ascertain if they proceeded from the knee-joint. It is obvious

that this experiment was far less demonstrative to an observer than the first, because, if the bones were distinctly felt to move, the only evidence of this fact would be the testimony of those whose hands were in contact with them. The hands were kept in apposition for several minutes at a time, and the experiments repeated frequently, for the space of half an hour or more, with negative results; that is to say, there were plenty of *raps* when the knees were not held, and none when the hands were applied, save once; as the pressure was intentionally somewhat relaxed (Dr. Lee being the holder) two or three faint single *raps* were heard, and Dr. Lee immediately averred that the motion of the bone was plainly perceptible to him. The experiment of seizing the knees as quickly as possible, when the knocking first commenced, was tried several times, but always with the effect of putting an immediate *quietus* upon the *demonstrations*.

“The proposition to bandage the knees was discussed. The experiment was objected to, on the part of the friends of the females, unless we could concede that it should be a conclusive test experiment. We were not prepared with appliances to render the limb immovable, and therefore declined to have it considered such a test.

“This was the experiment anticipated, and one which, we presume, the females thought would end in their triumph. A bandage applied above and below the patella, admitting of flexion of the limb, will probably prevent the displacement, as we have but little doubt had been ascertained by the Rochester females before an examination was invited. Should it become necessary to repeat experiments in other places, in furtherance of the explosion of the imposition, we would suggest that the bandage be not relied upon.”

“Had our experiments, which were first directed to this joint, failed, we should have proceeded to interrogate, experimentally, other articulations. But the conclusion seemed clear that the *Rochester Knockings* emanate from the knee-joint.”

The name of the lady referred to, who had some extraordinary formation of the joint in one of her knees, was Mrs. Patchen. (At the close of this chapter the reader will find some letters from her to me.) She could produce a peculiar, unpleasant, crunching sound by pressing her knee forward against some resisting object, and then kicking, as it were, upward her foot by a movement which lifted her dress and was obviously visible to persons present. But it was with great effort and very painful to herself, and the consequence of her having exhibited it to a committee at our rooms was that she was confined for about a week. The way her peculiar case had come to their knowledge was this: One night, when her husband had returned late from one of our meetings and stated the cause of his delay, she told him, in joke, that she could make raps with her knee-joint, and that he should rather pay her than us. She could also make them in bed, having a side-board on which she could press the knee. The next day her husband mentioned this to Dr. Austin Flint, who happened to be his family physician. The medical

eagerness to rush forth with their address to the public above quoted, with little if any investigation, is shown by the fact that it was on the following day that the scientific tirade against us, signed by the three doctors, appeared in *The Commercial Advertiser*. It is most charitable to suppose that they never really heard Mrs. Patchen's peculiar sound, because it was manifest to all who afterward heard it at our rooms, that it bore no resemblance to the knocking of our invisible friends, since otherwise there is no escape from a still more discreditable alternative.

Mrs. Patchen was greatly annoyed at the use to which this rare peculiarity of hers had been perverted. She came to see me and expressed her deep regret, even before we recognized each other as old school-mates; and the following letters, written after she had heard and witnessed for herself (the originals of which I still possess), sufficiently speak for themselves. The date of the doctors' attack was February 18, 1851.

“SATURDAY, March 8, 1851.

“MY DEAR MRS. FISH:

“Can you and your sister possibly make it convenient to come to my house this afternoon? If not, do come this evening without fail. You will confer a great favor by so doing. I want to see you both very much.

“Your ever dear friend,
“MRS. PATCHEN.”

“P.S. I did not send your little satchel, as I wanted you to come and see me yourself. Please send an answer by the little boy.”

“BUFFALO, March 21, 1851.

“DEAR FRIENDS, MRS. FISH AND SISTER:

“I have been anxiously waiting to see you at our home again.

“The Phelps House is so crowded I could not see you privately for a moment. I do want to see you very much. I have heard so much of your ‘manifestations’—not yours, but the manifestations of the Spirits. They are very mysterious; it is very singular. My husband was at your rooms last

evening, but he thought it not best for me to come in such a crowd. I wish you could disengage yourselves for one afternoon or evening as soon as you possibly can. I never before felt so deeply interested in the subject. I cannot possibly wait a week. Please send word when you will come.

“Faithfully yours,
“MRS. PATCHEN.”

This is the lady through whom Dr. Flint endeavored to expose us to the world as humbugs and impostors.

[10] This article was also published in the Buffalo Medical Journal for March, 1851, with a note saying that the *editor* had *taken the liberty* to “correct an error in the account of the displacement of the joint which produces the sounds.” That correction was of the sentence we have italicized, and the editorial correction reads as follows:

“Without entering, at this time, into minute anatomical and physiological explanation, it is sufficient to state that, *owing to relaxation of the ligaments of the knee-joint, by means of muscular action and pressure of the lower extremity against a point of resistance, the large bone of the leg (the tibia) is moved laterally upon the lower surface of the thigh bone (the femur), giving rise, in fact, to partial lateral dislocation.*”

By comparing the portion italicized, in this note especially, it will be seen that the “doctors disagreed” very materially, making, in fact, two different statements.

CHAPTER XIII.

BUFFALO (*Continued*).

INVESTIGATIONS UPON INVESTIGATIONS—A MEETING AT THE PHELPS HOUSE—MANIFESTATIONS WITH BELLS, ETC.—MR. ALBRO'S REPORT—A DEATH SCENE—LETTER FROM ME TO THE "COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER," AND HOW I FORCED ITS INSERTION—ARTICLE FROM THE "BUFFALO DAILY REPUBLIC"—LETTER FROM MR. GREELEY—MR. E. W. CAPRON—DEPARTURE FROM BUFFALO.

But the three doctors were not to have it all their own way—not even with the assistance of a fourth, who was now the ex-diplomatic editor of their organ, and whom I spare from mention of what had been, in former times, his last exercise in Buffalo of the honorable profession to which he had been of but little honor. Whether he is still living in the flesh, or has gone to learn for himself, in the Spirit world, all the truth of Spiritualism, I do not know. They had put all Buffalo on the boil, and our rooms were crowded with hosts of indignant friends. For about a fortnight they were open and free to the public, without money and without price, whenever fresh parties came or were brought who desired satisfaction on any point glowing out of the then raging doctoral controversy. Different committees of investigation and re-investigation were appointed, for which services the first and best men and women of Buffalo would be chosen. I will particularize two, with omission of some merely prefatory matter from the second of the two, the reports of which are taken from Mr. Capron's book, quoting from the Buffalo papers.

A MEETING AT THE PHELPS HOUSE.

"A company, consisting of J. L. Reynolds, F. Rumsey, Dr. W. R. Scott, H. Cummings, Dr. G. E. Hayes, Capt. A. Walker, C. C. Bristol, James Dunkin and wife, J. S. Chadwick, S. Albro, and J. Stringham, met at the rooms of Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox, at seven and a half o'clock last Monday evening. Two large hand-bells and one small one had been provided for Spirits to manifest their presence with, if they should choose to make use of them. The bells were placed under the table, and the company were seated. Rappings immediately commenced, manifesting the presence of the

representatives of the Spirit-country. We resolved to ask no questions, and wait for voluntary manifestations. Alphabet called, spelling, 'Sit close, and you may see some new manifestations.' All drew near the table, and waited in silence. After waiting some time, the small bell commenced ringing. The mediums' feet had been placed in the custody of two gentlemen who had not been there before, and their hands were continually on the table. The largest bell now commenced ringing, and, while ringing, moved 'round, traversing the whole area under the table. Two bells rang at once. Afterward the whole three united in a kind of chime. The largest bell was placed on Dr. Hayes's foot, and bore on it with a pressure of six times its weight. He put his hand down and touched the bell. He received other manifestations in the presence of an active agent. The medium told him to ask if it was a Spirit. He did so, and was answered by a pinch of his toe, signifying the affirmative.

"'Is it the Spirit of my brother?' *Answer*, 'Yes.' He wrote the names of his deceased brothers, and it designated its own name by pinching his toe. 'Does the Spirit wish to communicate with me?' 'I will communicate with you at home, when all is calm.' Here silence prevailed for a time. The bells commenced ringing, and occasionally one would fall upon the floor. Alphabet called, spelling, 'Move back a little from the table.' All moved back except Capt. Walker, who made several efforts to obey, but found his chair fast. He looked to see if it was not fast in the carpet, and tried to raise it, but it refused to move upward, backward or forward. Alphabet called, spelling, 'Sit close to the table.' All drew their chairs close to the table, and Capt. Walker embraced the opportunity to see if the order had not loosened his chair; but he could not stir it.

"Now the Spirit commenced performances with bells; sometimes ringing them all at once, and sometimes placing them on the feet of one, and on the knees of another. Sometimes they would fall on the floor, and sometimes hit the under side of the table. This ceased, the alphabet was called, and the spelling was, 'Look.' We looked, and the three bells stood in a right line, about eighteen inches apart. We resumed our positions, and the operations of ringing, pressing feet, and throwing down bells, went on again. Again we were called to 'look,' and the two large bells stood upright, but the small one was missing, and could not be found. One of the company suggested that we look under the larger bells. The largest bell was lifted, and the

missing one was found under it, standing erect. The play then went on, till we were again told to 'look,' and the small bell was found under the large one, lying on its side. So it continued for some time, placing the bells in various positions, and calling on the company to 'look.'

“In answer to a question asked some days previously,—‘What is the use of these demonstrations?’ the Spirits said, ‘They are made to prove that the mediums have no agency in it.’ And the question asked by Mr. Stringham, ‘May I leave the table while the others remain, that I may look under and see the bells ringing?’ was answered, ‘What do you think we require you to sit close to the table for?’ When Spirits make these physical demonstrations they are compelled to assume shapes which human eyes must not look upon.

“When the above-named performances were finished, loud concussions were heard and felt on the under side of the table. They became louder and louder, till the brass candlesticks were made to bound up six or eight inches from the table. The candles were repeatedly thrown out of them, and we were compelled to hold them in our hands. These concussions were equal to those a man could make with a large nail-hammer, while lying on his back and striking with all his strength. We expected the bed of the table to be split in pieces, and Mrs. Fish became alarmed, turned pale, and begged us to leave the table. We did not comply, and the concussions were continued for full fifteen minutes. At the close of this very noisy exhibition, the alphabet was called for, and the spelling was, ‘We are all done for to-night.’ They were not importuned to continue the performances, and we arose from the table.

“The table was turned up to see what impressions were made, and a great number of deep indentations, in the hard cherry-wood, manifested the force with which the middle-sized bell had been thrust against it. Dr. Hayes took the bell and struck the table with the battered iron point which comes through the wooden handle, and made like indentations, though nothing like so deep as those made by the performers. Any one might have examined the table, and found the evidence.

(Signed) “ONE OF THE COMPANY.”

This, coming as it did from, and being endorsed by, respectable citizens, was a strong opposing argument against the knee-joint theory. Every one could see that either these persons had formed a conspiracy to deceive the public, or the professors were proved to be the “humbugs” themselves. Still another report appeared in a few days, which rendered the explanation of the professors still more ridiculous. It was from the pen of a well-known citizen of Buffalo, who had been appointed by a company to prepare it. I give it as it appeared in one of the Buffalo papers.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION.

“MR. MAYNARD:

“Having been deputed by a select company, who visited the two sisters, Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox, at their room in the Phelps House, on Friday evening last, to report what we there saw and heard, it becomes my duty to ask you to give place to this communication in your columns.

“The company consisted of Dr. Scott, C. C. Bristol, J. Stringham, F. Rumsey and lady, Mrs. Bradley, Mrs. Stevens, and myself.

“When all had assembled we took seats around the table. Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox, the two ‘mediums,’ were requested to take seats on a sofa which stood between the table and the wall. Dr. Scott and myself were seated, by arrangement, on the right and left of these two ladies, and they were requested to put their feet on ours, and to keep them there, which they did. The purpose of this arrangement will be understood by the reader. When all was still, the Spirits (I use the word assentingly) commenced such a clatter of rappings that there seemed to be quite a company of them. This, we were told, was to manifest their presence and their willingness to be consulted.

“The confusion of sounds ceased, and the alphabet was called for by five distinct raps, which it appears is the invariable signal. Mrs. Fish called the alphabet, and the letters designated by the rappings made the following words: ‘Get a better supply of paper before you get engaged, and let your minds run in one perfect channel. In that way you will soon be able to get satisfactory demonstrations.’ A supply of paper was procured, and all were seated and still again. Two small bells had been placed under the table, one at each end. When all was quiet, the signal for the alphabet was given, and

the spelling which followed was, 'All sit close to the table and to each other. Move the bells.' The bells were then moved to near the centre of the table. Alphabet called again. 'Put your hands on the table.' All obeyed the mandate, and immediately the bells commenced ringing. They rang for a few minutes, and again the alphabet was demanded. The spelling was, 'You will perceive, by what you have already heard, that a great and mighty development is about to be made to mankind.' At this moment a rap was heard at the door, which was made by a gentleman who wished to come in, but who retired on being informed that it was a private party. Some remark was made by the younger of the two mediums, in relation to the interruption, which affected the other to tears. A considerable interval of silence followed, and we began to fear that our entertainment would not be resumed; but the call for the alphabet proved that we had not been deserted by our invisible friends. The spelling was, 'We want you to cheer up, dear children. All sit close. Hands on the table.' Now the bells commenced ringing again, moving all round under the table, giving forth tones the most musical, mellow, and soothing. The ringing ceased, and the alphabet was called. The spelling was, 'This is done to harmonize you all.'

"Question by the acting medium.—'Do the Spirits wish us to be in a happy state of mind?'

"Answer.—'Yes.' Then followed, 'I want you all to reach out your feet, except the four on the sofa.' This was done, and immediately Mrs. Stevens said something had taken hold of her feet. She was directed to ask if it was a Spirit, which she did, and received an affirmative answer. 'Is it the Spirit of my father?' 'Yes,' was replied, and the respondent continued, 'we are glad you came here.'

"Following this was a harsh, grating sound, not unlike the friction of a saw which is pushed slowly through a board, and drawn back quickly. This was continued but a short time, when the alphabet was called for, and the spelling was, 'I breathed so when I was dying.' Then the same sound of grating was heard, and it continued like one laboring in the last moments of life. These breathings became shorter and further between, till a seemingly ineffectual attempt, like a hiccough, closed the drama, and the death-scene was complete.

“Hereupon the alphabet was called for, and the following address was spelled: ‘Such is the end of man’s existence on the earth; but he suddenly awakes to a glorious immortality. This, my dear friends, is demonstrated to relieve mankind from the dread of changing existence. The appearance of suffering is not real; therefore I exhort you to look forward with joy for the happy transition from earth to heaven. You have need of great watchfulness and care that you may be permitted to enter the society of the blest. Done.’ What was very remarkable in the delivery of this address, as the medium read the alphabet, the letters were designated sometimes by raps, as usual, and sometimes by ringing of a bell. The latter method was used, I think, quite as much as the former. During the whole delivery the feet of the lady-mediums rested entirely on those of Dr. Scott and mine, and their hands constantly rested on the table. This, as it seems to me, puts to rest any question of their agency in producing the sounds. Mrs. Stevens, during the whole of the communication by ‘Spirits,’ felt a pair of large and powerful hands grasping her knees, the pressure of which, she avers, was quite painful. She also felt a weight in her lap, which was equal to that of her father while living. His name was Asa Ranson. The female portrait which hangs in the Common Council room is that of his daughter, and a sister of Mrs. Stevens. The latter lady says that the death scene which was enacted in our presence was a perfect representation of the reality which she had witnessed.

“At the conclusion of the address, it was asked by the acting medium, ‘Are the Spirits *all* done?’ No reply was made. It was then asked, ‘If we put paper under the table, will the Spirits write?’ *Answer by the alphabet*, ‘We will make marks on paper.’ A piece of paper was then taken and passed around, to be examined by the company. All saw that it was without mark or scratch of any kind. A scratching sound was then heard under the table, and also the sound that is noted when paper is torn. The alphabet was called, and the spelling was, ‘Look.’ The paper was taken out, and found to be torn in pieces and scratched as with a nail, or some dull instrument. It was then asked, ‘If we put paper and pencil under, will the Spirits write?’ Three raps were given as answer in the affirmative, and the alphabet was called. The spelling was, ‘Keep your pencil.’ Another piece of paper was then handed round. We all examined it closely, and found it all fair and clean, without the least mark whatever. It was put under the table by the last

examiner, and the scratching commenced. Directly the alphabet was called for, and 'Look' spelled out. The paper was taken out, and found to be scratched as before, and torn a little; but the Spirit had fulfilled its promise. It had written—for the figure 7 in plain pencil-mark stood on the untorn part of it. The figure was found to be just one inch long, and seemed as if made by the hand of a farmer, or mechanic, who aimed at plainness rather than elegance in his chirography. I have the paper in my possession, and will exhibit it to any one who wishes to see it.

“I had forgotten to mention that during the communications from Mrs. Stevens’s father, she read the alphabet part of the time, and received answers by a rap on her foot. She was too much excited to continue, and the alphabet was read by the medium.

“When the last paper was brought out from under the table, we all expressed a desire to know what was meant by the character 7. Our deliberations on that subject were soon cut short by a call for the alphabet, and the meaning was spelled out as follows:

“‘Seven of this party will be mediums. Do not ask which. We are done for to-night.’ *Question.* ‘Will the Spirits answer no more questions?’ *Answer.* ‘We are done for to-night. Move away from the table.’

“There were many other incidents during the sitting. The lady-medium who sat next to Dr. Scott had her dress pulled and held fast, and she invited the doctor to try and see if he could release it. He made a strong effort, but gave it up for fear of tearing it. Several others had their feet handled and their clothes pulled. I felt a palpable pressure against the inside of my leg, and a pinch of my ankle, while a bell was ringing close to my feet—no person being near me but Miss Fox, and she had both her feet on one of mine, and both her hands on the table. This is a faithful statement of facts, for the truth of which, as far as they relate to the sitting on Friday evening, I refer the reader to all the persons whose names are given above. I refrain from conclusions and comments, and close with the simple declaration that I am much puzzled and astonished.

(Signed) “S. ALBRO.”

I may also be allowed to introduce a published letter of my own, containing some important statements which have never been contradicted. It was from no spirit of fairness or liberality that the editor inserted this letter in his columns. Mr. Rogers (the proprietor of the house) told me that he had heard from him words for which he was liable to a suit by me for slander, and that he would back me in such a suit. All that was most honorable in Buffalo also stood by me. I took my letter down to the editor at the dinner table (he boarded at the hotel), and told him he must publish it that afternoon, and also retract his slanders, or I would have him forthwith arrested. This was aloud, in presence of all the company at the table. He submitted without resistance, and smoothed down the slander by explaining it away, and by saying that he had spoken only in jest. He published, and I was satisfied—as were also all my friends.

“BUFFALO, March 14, 1851.

“TO THE EDITOR OF *The Commercial Advertiser*:

“I gladly avail myself of the privilege you have so courteously extended to me to defend myself through your columns against the aspersions which, if suffered to pass unheeded, might bring temporary disgrace upon the cause in which we are engaged as involuntary though willing instruments of a higher power. Some time since, you gave place in the columns of your paper to a statement, made by Professors Lee, Flint, and Coventry, which they put forth to the public as an exposition of the ‘Rochester Knockings.’ The positions which they assumed we knew to be fallacious and unsupportable, and we at once challenged a fair and impartial investigation, believing that it was not in the nature of these gentlemen to seek our conviction of fraud contrary to evidence which I knew must convince every candid mind. It is true that when our feet were placed on cushions stuffed with shavings, and resting on our heels, there were no sounds heard, and that sounds were heard when our feet were resting on the floor; and it is just as true that if our friendly Spirits retired when they witnessed such harsh proceedings on the part of our persecutors, it was not in our power to detain them. Dr. Lee says he heard two sounds when he held Margareta’s knees. I counted five at one time during that operation, two at another, and three at another, which made ten instead of two. But I do not consider this circumstance of any importance whatever. The spirit in which they engaged

in the investigation was too palpable to be mistaken, evincing too great a determination to carry their points to admit of the possibility of a conviction. They had heard sounds made by limber *joints*, and because one person could produce one kind of sounds, made by knee-joints, they would have the community believe that all the sounds heard in our presence for the last four years were produced by thumping or snapping the *knee-joints*.

“As professional men, whose reputation is dear to them, I would like to have them tell your readers what condition our poor joints would be in by this time, after three years’ constant service in this almost ceaseless operation. I will not call this quackery, but will be content to leave it to the public to pass judgment on their professional erudition. Two of the professors made little or no investigation. They were in our room but a few minutes previous to the appearance of the article in your paper.

“Professor Lee, however, was in to see us frequently, and at several times expressed great surprise, affirming, with great apparent candor, that the sounds were truly astonishing. He witnessed the answers that were received by Mr. Chase, which were all correct and very astonishing; yet he did not attempt to account for them. Now, if Dr. Lee can account for the correct answers that are given, as well as how the sounds are produced, it will gratify me very much, and I will try to account for some of the large ones. Mr. Chase called again, a day or two after that, and could get no correct answers; but this was no matter of surprise to me after his having been in close communion with *Dr. Lee*; for we are taught to believe that Spirits associate by affinity, and if that be true, he was no doubt led into a different society of Spirits by associating with *him*.

“I do not believe the Spirits of my dear departed friends could manifest themselves in their presence, and I would not willingly call on them to mingle in such society. The word ‘Impostor’ grated very harshly on my ears, and I struggle very hard to overcome the feelings which such a cruel charge will naturally excite in every human bosom where honor finds a lodgment; but, in spite of all my endeavors, I still feel like other mortals; and this feeling prompts me to demand justice at the hands of a discerning public, and especially those who have witnessed the entire success of the same experiments which proved a total failure with our Esculapian knee-buckles.

“The committees, which have frequently met since the affair with the M.D.’s, have witnessed all the experiments they attempted, and can testify to their entire success.

“One day, in presence of a number of persons, the same cushions were brought out, and we took seats, elevated, with our feet upon them, resting on our heels, when the sounds were distinctly heard by all present. Captain Rounds and Judge Burroughs were present on that occasion.

“Our feet were held from the floor by Dr. Gray and Mr. Clark, in presence of the whole committee, on the evening of the investigation made by the medical gentlemen (after they left); and the sounds were distinctly heard, which was allowed by the committee to be a far more satisfactory test, as they could distinctly hear the sounds under their feet, and feel the floor *jar* while our feet were held nearly or quite a foot from the floor. The whole committee consisted of Dr. Gray and lady, Mr. Clark and lady, Mr. Everet and lady, Mr. Stringham, Mr. Bristol, and two gentlemen invited by the professors.

“Most of this committee were persons we had never before seen, but we are informed they are persons whose testimony can be relied upon. I would like to have Drs. Lee, Flint, and Coventry club their professional lore and perceptive acumen, and inform the public how bells are rung, and gongs made to ring out tunes, untouched by human hands; for, if you have any confidence in your own citizens, they can tell you what I now affirm is true. I will not be particular to mention the names of all the persons who have witnessed these striking phenomena, but I will refer you to the following: C. C. Bristol, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Stringham, Mr. Stephen Dudley, Mr. L. Ramsey, Mr. Pond, Mr. Gould, and Mr. Tallmadge; and they can refer you to dozens of other respectable persons, who have witnessed the same.

“While these manifestations were going on, many of the persons above-named have held us both so fast by the feet that we could not stir without their knowledge.

“They (the Doctors) have attempted to explain one of the least important points; and, as we know, have signally failed. Now let them proceed to the more difficult points, or manfully acknowledge their failure and our innocence of fraud.

“As Dr. Lee is the editor of the *Medical Journal* which is published in this city, and as he saw fit to publish the injurious report against our moral integrity, which was made by the visiting committee of M.D.’s., we hope he will manifest the sense of honor which his standing in society warrants us in looking for, by publishing the contradiction, which must now be evident to him, and thereby make the reparation as apparent as the injury. This would be just, if not magnanimous.

“Yours, etc.,
“A. LEAH FISH.”

To the above narrative of the Buffalo doctors’ affair I append an editorial article from *The Buffalo Daily Republic*:

“THE PROFESSORS AND THE ‘KNOCKINGS.’

“I think it was nearly three weeks ago that it was given out in a very authoritative tone, and, if I am not very much mistaken, the newly returned Minister from Bogota was the oracular organ used on the occasion to proclaim to the ‘humbugged’ citizens of Buffalo, that in twenty-four hours we should hear no more of the knockings. The news flew about the city with the rapidity of lightning, that the end of the ‘rappings’ was nigh, that an awful explosion was about to take place. A lady had been found who produced noises with the knee-joints. The University of Buffalo had examined the lady’s knee-joints, heard the noises, and pronounced them identical with the sounds produced by the Rochester ladies, and, what was still more awful and astounding, the University of Buffalo were about to print their report in the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*. Who could withstand such a shock?—It was conceded on all hands that if the ladies could endure the University and the *Commercial Advertiser*, they need never fear any natural catastrophe. True to the prediction, out came the ‘report.’ Three wise men had spoken, yea, three *professors*, professors even of *Materia Medica*, *Physiology*, and of *Principles and Practice of Medicine*. Be it remembered, too, that the University was under the guidance of that good man, Millard Fillmore, as Chancellor, and Dr. Thomas M. Foote, late Minister to Bogota, as one of its council men—thus uniting to the collective wisdom of the professors the great head of the nation, and speaking through

his immediate organ, the *Commercial Advertiser*. Buffalo was the great battle-ground and the University the great adversary chosen to annihilate this already too wide-spread imposture. Now, do not understand me as attributing any unkind motive to those gentlemen professors; I have no doubt they were actuated by a nice sense of duty which they owed to science and to their fellow-beings to make the exposé. I could not say a word against Dr. Lee or Dr. Coventry, if I wanted to; they are strangers to most of our citizens, and only come among us periodically, and I am informed that they are very much respected so far as they have extended their acquaintance here. Professor Flint has been a resident of this city for many years, and is regarded by those that employ him as an able practitioner of medicine. He conducts the editorial management of the *Buffalo Medical Journal*, in the last number of which he has devoted a large portion of its columns to the matter of these 'mysterious manifestations.' I am only sorry that its circulation is so limited as not to allow the investigating public to appreciate its strictures. He intimates that the 'report' was hastily drawn up and contains errors, and in order to do the professors justice, requests the press to recopy the article as amended. There is certainly no impropriety in all that, if the University left out some material argument, in their hurry to explode a humbug of such vast magnitude. The press can do no less than put them right. But is it a fair mode of warfare? I am exceedingly ignorant of professional etiquette in these matters, and as a friend of the manifestations, I wish to ask the unprejudiced public if it is right that the University, after having had their load and fire, should insist that because the first charge did not bring down the game, they should be allowed another shot without some preliminary arrangements? The request is modest enough, and perhaps, taken in connection with the *fact* that the University got on to its knees before the mediums, in order the more readily to detect the muscular sensation of the knee-joints of the ladies, is a sufficient offset to what might seem an unreasonable afterthought.

"The code of honor among gentlemen has settled the question, I believe, that the first fire, whether mortal or not, is sufficient evidence of courage, and that beyond that, the question of honor is merged into a malignant desire to kill. If the University is satisfied that they have exposed the humbug, why ask to bring in new proof? Is it because the ladies, instead of leaving town in twenty-four hours, have staid as many days? Is it because

the public are more anxious than ever to see and learn more of these mysterious manifestations? Is it because there is more intense interest than ever elicited, the more the subject is investigated? Is it because intelligent men are giving the matter consideration? I ask, what causes so much disquietude in the minds of the professors? Have they shot off their gun too quick? Are they sensible that public opinion is not impressed with the belief in their assertions and their exposé? Are they displeased because the ladies keep staying in spite of their mandate to go home? The University has taken up the cudgel to beat the hydra, and as fast as one head falls a dozen new ones spring out (or would if they could succeed in knocking one off). The manifestations, instead of being content with mere knocking on the floor, have commenced the ringing of bells (some large enough to tire the arms of even professors), pounding under the table, so as to leave visible manifestations, sufficient to satisfy a dozen universities of its physical ability, moving furniture, playing on musical instruments, and various other demonstrations equally wonderful and satisfactory to all who see them.”

From one of Mr. Greeley’s letters of this trying time, I extract the following: “Be faithful. Remember how short the time of life is. Submit to every lawful investigation. While you are being tested by the doctors, to prove you make the sounds by snapping the knee-joints, insist on having a committee of ladies appointed to hold your feet, and for ever silence the blasting charge of toe rapping, or it will cover you with a cloud of obloquy from which you may not recover in years, if ever.”

E. W. Capron, who stood by us in our Rochester trials and investigations, and who delivered the first lecture on the subject of Modern Spiritualism, was, at this time, editor of the Providence, R. I., *Daily Mirror*. From him I also received the following note: “I have not seen the whole of the article referred to, but to me, knowing what I do, the theories of knee-pan, or knee-joint, are equally ridiculous. There never has been a time when you could so completely kill all opposition as the present opportunity offers, if you go through the fiery ordeal and come out unscathed, *as I know you will*, for I know you are true. You have stood fiery trials before, and have always triumphed.”

After having met the several investigating committees, and submitted to all the requirements of the public at large, amidst a host of friends who came to

the Phelps House to bid us farewell, with many who accompanied us to the departing train, we left them with mutual feelings of regret, but amid their congratulations and prayers for our future prosperity.

We had come to Buffalo for a visit of a fortnight. In a financial point of view, we had never met with an equal success. Not a few of the principal gentlemen of the city sent us parting gifts of congratulation on a noble scale of munificence, as tributes of sympathy for what we had had to bear, and of gratitude for the demonstrative proofs of immortality it had been ours to bring to their experimental *knowledge*.

The day appointed for our departure our hotel apartments proved insufficient to entertain our friendly visitors who came to bid us adieu. The public parlors, being kindly assigned to us for the purpose by the proprietor, were filled to overflowing. Never can I forget that day, nor those dear and noble friends.

And thus ended the short-lived apparent triumph of “the Buffalo Doctors.”

CHAPTER XIV.

BUFFALO (*Continued.*)

LETTERS FROM JOHN E. ROBINSON AND WELCOME WHITTAKER.

During the progress of all this, our Buffalo Campaign, it is scarcely worth while to say that I received no end of letters of sympathy and encouragement. The number must have counted by thousands who had by this time witnessed for themselves, not merely the comparatively small sounds of the ordinary rapping near our persons, but sometimes great knockings, as by powerful arms and heavy hammers, on all parts of rooms and even outside of them; together with ringing of bells, moving and lifting of tables, etc.; to say nothing of the intelligent communications which identified their Spirit friends, etc. All such persons therefore knew that the Buffalo doctoral theory of *knee-joints* was impossible and absurd, and felt no uneasiness about the result of any real investigations. But many of them naturally sympathized with us under the harassing annoyance in which we were placed by the promulgation of even such a ridiculous theory, under such high-sounding "scientific" authority.

From these letters I select the following.

LETTER FROM JOHN E. ROBINSON.

ROCHESTER, February 26, 1851.

"DEAR LEAH:

"I received this evening your note (of rather diminutive proportions), written day before yesterday. Having been on the lookout for a letter for several days, it was very acceptable. It is written in a hopeful and encouraging vein, and, so far as what is expressed relates to myself, I can take no exceptions to its language. I should think it dictated in some intervening hour of quiet; one of the few which pass above and tranquillize for the time the unresting surface of your daily life. Such hours, let them be

passed when they may, come and go with all of us; and the dial finger that marks their exit, registers also the blessings which they leave upon the heart. Impulsive as you are; accustomed as you are to excitement, and possessing (as you do) a woman's fondness for the glare of the world's gilded exterior; there is a part of your nature better than the rest, which would often shut out from the chamber of its occupancy those noisy and obtrusive influences which corrode its brightness and rob it of its rest.

“That is the part of your being (the Leah) whom I would oftenest wish to have audience with; and in such hours as I speak of I would consider it a luxury equal to ‘Wenham ice’ in the torrid zone, or a shower of vertical sunbeams on an Arctic traveller—to *knock* at the door of that inner chamber, and finding entrance, to sit down at the table of your heart and commune with you face to face. I have turned down the leaves in my memory whereon the records of such brief communings have been made, and it is no small pleasure to refer to them, as I often do, during these days of denial. So seldom it is now-a-days when the Spirit I would talk to answers my signal with the words ‘at home.’

“We (your friends here) want you *and the Spirits*—who seem to think their bread-and-butter depends on their paying court (in especial) to you and yours—to come to us once in a while—like the chance sunlight that struggles through the bars of the prisoner's window to reveal the gladness of the upper world—and rub the rust from our chains.

“You ought to come home next week, at any rate, even if you are determined on going West again. And really, I think you ought to visit Cleveland and Cincinnati before long. You would find many good people in both places, who would rejoice to see you and Margareta, and who are looking out for your advent there with no little anxiety.

“Mrs. Bush read to me last evening a portion of a letter from her brother, resident, I believe, in the latter city, in which he urges her to come there and speaks of things connected with Spiritualism somewhat in detail. I observe Mr. Cogshall's book is noticed very fairly in the *National Era* (of Washington, D. C.), a journal of high character for literary attainments. I will copy the notice as follows: ‘We have read this book, and have been pleased with its style, and impressed with the sincerity of its author. Still we

do not believe. Nothing short of sight and hearing can convince us that the souls of the departed are really rapping in such an audible and startling manner on the wall which divides us from the Spiritual world—really moving chairs and tables and ringing bells, and otherwise disturbing domestic order and quiet. Yet, according to this little history, some Spirits justify themselves for their sudden incursions into our territory, by giving comfort to the mourner and sweet assurances of a love which could not die.’

“If all be an imposture, who can measure the depth of that depravity which trifles thus with the holiest affections, aspirations, and sorrows? Greeley in a late *Tribune* has a rich joke. He says: ‘Some brainless editor out in Milwaukee not long since published the fact that he had an interview with the Spirit of Captain West, of the steamer, who reported that the noble steamer struck an iceberg and went to the bottom of the ocean with all on board.’ Milwaukee is a great place! Our George (Willetts) thinks ‘that Spirit took some trouble to spread the news.’ It is presumable that it was one of the Auburn Apostolic brethren. What a pity that Spirits (some of them) are not less given to lying. However, if they are capable of falsehood (as we well know some of them are), it is better they should show their hands, else their communications might work much evil. The *good* shines out with a more glorious brightness in contrast with the darkness of its opposite.

“Enough is known already to warrant the immense interest which this subject is now creating, and I think that there is in the future (not very distant) a glad day approaching. I am sometimes disposed to be depressed. I have very little from Spirits, such as I would most wish to get communications from, and you can hardly realize the sense of neglect—so to speak—which I feel. I hope, when you return, some of my kindred Spirits—that delicate, pure-souled sister of mine, in particular (a lock of whose hair I took from among my papers yesterday and found it as lustrous as when first taken from her perishing form), may have some message to deliver to one whose love for her is immortal. Leah, I want to whisper in your ear. Turn from the table and the sceptics who sit by, and lend me your ears. Last night, when my internal senses were playing their pranks, I had a dream of you. You were at your home, and my solicitude for the kingdom had led my steps to the *capital* of the New Jerusalem. My best bow had been made to the Spirits, the last words to you had been said, and I was

about going out of the gate, when I remembered an important omission: and turning just as you were closing the front door, I cried, 'Leah! Leah!' and awoke with your name on my lips; pronouncing it once *audibly* after I awoke—just to see if you could come and answer me. But no response came, not even an echo of my voice from the walls of my room. Leah! Leah! I call again, and will you come?

“Yours in the bonds of patience,
“J. E. R.”

LETTER FROM WELCOME WHITTAKER.

TROY, N. Y., February 24, 1851.

“MRS. FISH:

“I perceive, by the Buffalo papers, that you have had the unparalleled temerity to call public attention, in that place, to the manifestations of Spiritualism; and that, too, without so much as consulting for one moment the feelings, prejudices, or *scientific accumulation* of certain of the wonderful Faculty there. Well, they pounced upon you as you might well suppose such (God forgive me!) *scientific gentlemen* would, conscious as they doubtless are, that their position on the pyramid of all human knowledge is nothing short of the very cap-stone itself. Not only have they, in most *chivalrous manner*, arrayed themselves for your disrespect, but a masterly stroke, ingeniously given, shielded the public forever against such *gross trickery and imposition* by an exposé of the whole thing!

“O! never three luckier D(og)s together than the three M.D.'s of Buffalo, who in so short a time lifted the veil and exposed to open day the 'very mechanism' by which deluded thousands have been *led astray*, first by a course of negative reasoning, the parallel of which, I venture to say, cannot be found in all the annals of philosophic research. This of itself must be sufficient to render the names of Lee, Flint, and Coventry, at least *notorious*, if not illustrious.

“But, as if one death would not be a sufficient quietus, they give the certain home-thrust (the mortal stab), in the *naked, positive proof*. Now was there ever anything equal to that? When will such philanthropy, such critical

discernment, such zeal, and such science be appreciated? And last, though not least, that highly respectable lady, ‘who, by a mental effort, can dislocate her knee-joints,’ and then make the ‘identical’ sounds so foolishly ascribed to the Spirits, must not be lost sight of in the words of overwhelming gratitude to these three M.D.’s above mentioned.

“Dear, kind-hearted soul! she must possess an unbounded share of the milk of human-kindness. No one can, for a moment, suppose that she was solicited to expose her knees to various *gentlemen* of the medical profession, for they must be sufficiently acquainted with anatomy and physiology to know all the *mechanism* at all competent to produce those sounds. It must, therefore, have been on her part perfectly voluntary—prompted purely by a most benevolent desire to expose a *humbug*. But Spiritualism will still progress, and its advocates shall gloriously ride over all adversity, for God is omnipotent.

“If contemptible meanness, united with unmitigated scoundrelism, can be found on this earth, it resides in the black heart of him who coins epithets designed to rob defenceless females of their spotless reputation, which is ever of more value to them than life itself.

“I felt, therefore, most indignant while reading the two articles in the *Commercial Advertiser* of the 17th, and the *Courier* of the 18th, both of which I believe to be palpably libellous; and for which, I have no doubt, any able lawyer would tell you a suit for slander would bear most beautifully.

“I thought to advise you to proceed against these libellers forthwith; but when indignation gave place to mingled contempt and pity, I came to the conclusion that if you could follow the example of Him whose persecutors were the objects of his latest petition—‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do’—it might perhaps be best in the long run. But it is not always easy to determine the exact point where forbearance ceases to be a virtue.

“A friend from Syracuse told me the other day, that a sum of money (he did not say how much) had been subscribed for the purpose of having you visit that place. I will meet you if I can.

“Yours,
“WELCOME WHITTAKER.”

LETTER FROM JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“THE CITY OF THE NEW DISPENSATION,
“March 12, 1851, Anno Spirituum, 3.

“DEAR LEAH:

“What a woman you are! Why don’t you write to me? You know how anxious your friends are to hear from you, and you promised to write often and to send *papers* frequently. Only *one* paper have I received from you. Everybody whom you care a fig for here in Rochester asks me about Buffalo and *you, and you*. But I am not *posted up* and cannot tell them of your triumphs or escapes from the hands of the many-headed hydra whom you have slain so often. Not having a line from you a week ago, in answer to my last letter, I thought you intended to return last Saturday, but no train of cars, which I have heard of, brought you as a part of its living freight, and *we* (that is I) are ‘a-wearied’ because you answer not our call to ‘come.’ Now I *command* you, in the name of all the gods of the heathen mythology, to come to us, either *spiritwise* (on a sheet of paper of ample dimensions), or *bodily* (as would most effectually comport with our comfort and desire), by an early departing train from our sister city, whose queenly dignity, in thus aspiring to rob us of our Spiritual flame—the guide of our uncertain steps—we are getting jealous of. I received a good letter from your witch sister, my darling little Katie, this morning. She writes with much cheerfulness. Says she has commenced another quarter at her school (in New York). She says also she is ‘crazy’ to see me! You know just about what is intended to be understood when she thus addresses me (her friend and adviser); but Cathie is fast learning to be a woman, and my prayer is that she may escape the bitter trials through which you and your mother have been called to pass. She adds: ‘We had a telegraphic despatch from Maggie, saying she would be here last week Saturday; but she don’t come, and we have given up looking for her.’ She says: ‘Give my love to Leah and Margareta, and tell them I want to see them.’

“George Willets and myself went over to see Clara (your housekeeper) yesterday. She is getting along tolerably well, but appears unwilling to

remain much longer alone. She is evidently afraid—thinks the Spirits annoy her at nights. More than half of that is (of course) imagination. Why not come home, and go again, *if you must*, westward? But here I am asking you questions and you do not answer them. Busied as you are, and tired as you must be, most of the time, it is too much of a task for you to write to me; and I don't know but George is right in saying, 'Leah has found so many new loves that the winds blowing eastward come not freighted with a thought of *us*.' Since the above was written an old friend from the country has called in to see me, and one of his questions was, 'Well, do your views remain the same in regard to the rapping?' 'Yes,' I said, 'I have had no occasion or cause to change them.' 'Why, Doctor Flint's statement has explained the whole thing,' he said, and added, 'He writes very plausibly and conclusively on the subject.' Now, this friend and relative of mine is a most excellent man, and I thoroughly appreciate him as a good member of society, an excellent husband and father, and an honest man; but the light which illumines the pathway of his intellect is not set on a very high hill! Leah, I ought not to write to you, wouldn't if I could avoid it, and beg pardon of propriety for thus making a virtue of necessity.

"Mine to you—not forgetting Maggie and Calvin.

"Yours,
"J. E. R."

CHAPTER XV.

EXTRACTS FROM D. M. DEWEY'S HISTORY.

LETTERS FROM REV. CHARLES HAMMOND AND JOHN E. ROBINSON.

Before I proceed to our next field of operations, which was Ohio, I may take the opportunity afforded by the interval to extract from a volume entitled, "D. M. Dewey's History of the Strange Sounds or Rappings Heard in Rochester and Western New York," two letters, by the Rev. C. C. Hammond, and our good friend, John E. Robinson, which will be found well worthy of perusal.

LETTER FROM REV. CHARLES HAMMOND.

"ROCHESTER, February 22, 1850.

"MR. D. M. DEWEY:

"DEAR SIR—In compliance with your solicitation, I will proceed to lay before you a brief statement of what has fallen under my observation, in regard to the 'mysterious sounds' and 'demonstrations' purporting to be made by intelligent Spirits, who once inhabited an earthly tabernacle.

"In the early part of January last, in company with other persons, I gained an introduction to the family in this city in whose residence these sounds had been heard. They received us politely, and seemed rather more cheerful than what I had supposed would be natural for those who were hourly exchanging communications with the Spirits of the revered dead. A company of twenty or more persons had assembled—the 'three sisters' came into the room—the sounds were heard—and through the medium of the alphabet, they, and about half of the company, were directed to retire to another apartment. Our company in the absence of the 'three sisters,' whose presence is generally deemed essential to these Spiritual communications, were all seated closely around an ordinary dining-table, when one of the ladies, bowing her head, inquired, 'Will the Spirit answer questions now?'

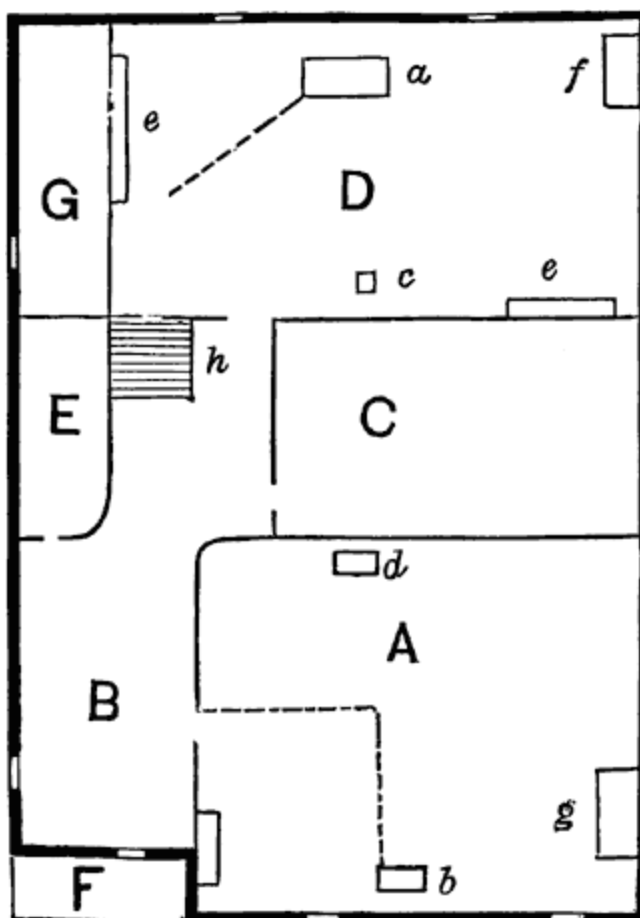
No response being made, I felt the disappointment of the lady, and was half inclined to smile at the ludicrous scene, when the searching glance of her suspicious eye falling upon me, bade me maintain my usual gravity and respect toward the company, and the occasion which had called us there. After several ineffectual attempts to get responses the sounds were heard, and the company generally were privileged with answers to their respective interrogatories. I availed myself of the opportunity, but gained no other satisfaction than a prompt assurance that all my 'test questions' should be answered when I should come there again. I went away sceptical, though unable to account for the 'sounds,' which caused the floor occasionally to vibrate under my feet.

"On my next visit I was much more successful. During the interval I had prepared my mind with certain questions, touching events unknown to the family, and of a remote date. The sounds told me my age precisely, though my appearance is such as to indicate a difference of eight or ten years. The names of six of my nearest deceased relations were given me. I then inquired, 'Will the Spirit, who now makes these sounds, give me its name?' Five sounds directed me to the alphabet, which I repeated until the name of 'Charles' appeared, which answered to an infant child whom we consigned to the grave in March, 1843. To my inquiries, it gave me a true answer in regard to the time it had been in the Spirit-land, and also the period since my eldest sister's death, which was nearly eighteen years—the latter fact not being recollected then, I found it true by dates on my return home. Many other test questions were correctly answered; and yet, notwithstanding that the origin of these sounds seemed inexplicable, I was inclined to impute them to mesmerism or clairvoyance. However, as the Spirit promised to satisfy me by other demonstrations when I came again, I patiently awaited the opportunity.

"On the third visit, I was selected from a half-dozen gentlemen, and directed by these sounds to retire to another apartment, in company with the 'three sisters' and their mother.

"It was about eight o'clock in the evening. A lighted candle was placed on a large table, and we seated ourselves around it. I occupied one side of the table, the mother and youngest daughter the right, and two of the sisters the left, leaving the opposite side of the table vacant. On taking our positions

the sounds were heard, and continued to multiply, and became more violent, until every part of the room trembled with their demonstrations. They were unlike any I had heard before. Suddenly, as we were all resting on the table, I felt the side next to me move upward; I pressed upon it heavily, but soon it passed out of the reach of us all—full six feet from me, and at least four from the person nearest to it. I saw distinctly its position—not a thread could have connected it with any of the company without my notice, for I had come to detect imposition, if it could be found. In this position we were situated, when the question was asked, ‘Will the Spirit move the table back where it was before?’ And back it came, as though it were carried on the head of some one, who had not suited his position to a perfect equipoise, the balance being sometimes in favor of one side and then the other. But it regained its first position. In the mean time the ‘demonstrations’ became louder and louder. The family commenced and sang the ‘Spirits’ Song,’ and several other pieces of sacred music, during which accurate time was marked on the table, causing it to vibrate; a transparent hand, resembling a shadow, presented itself before my face; I felt fingers taking hold of a lock of hair on the left side of my head, causing an inclination of several inches; then a cold, death-like hand was drawn designedly over my face; three gentle raps on my left knee; my right limb forcibly pulled, against strong resistance, under the table; a violent shaking, as though two hands were applied to my shoulders; myself and chair uplifted and moved back a few inches, and several slaps, as with a hand, on the side of my head, which were repeated on each one of the company, more rapidly than I could count.



Ground Floor of Troup St. house. But note that the rear room D is not on that level, but in that of the Second Story: there being under it a corresponding dining-room: while above A and C, and level with D, were bed rooms; and h is the Stair connecting the two stories. A, Front Parlor. B, Hall. C, Bed-room. D, Sitting-Room (on floor above). E, Bed-room. F, Stoop. G, Store-room (lighted from the roof). a, Table moved in presence of Dr. Hammond. b, Table moved, see lines. c, Stove. d, Large parlor stove. ee, Lounges. f, Bureau. g, Piano. h, Stairs to sitting-room D.

“During these manifestations, a piece of pasteboard, nearly a foot square, was swung with such velocity before us as to throw a strong current of air in our faces; a paper curtain attached to one of the windows was rolled up and unrolled twice; a lounge immediately behind me was shaken violently; two small drawers in a bureau played back and forth with inconceivable rapidity; a sound, resembling a man sawing boards and planing them, was heard under the table; a common spinning-wheel seemed to be in motion, making a very natural buzz of the spindle; a reel articulated each knot

wound upon it; while the sound of a rocking cradle indicated maternal care for the infant's slumbers. These were among many demonstrations which I witnessed that evening, amid which I felt a perfect self-possession, and in no instance the slightest embarrassment, except a momentary chill when the cold hand was applied to my face, similar to a sensation I have realized when touching a dead body.

“That any of the company could have performed these things, under the circumstances in which we were situated, would require a greater stretch of credulity on my part, than it would to believe it was the work of Spirits. It could not, by any possibility, have been done by any of the party of individuals present, nor even attempted, without detection. And I may add, that near the close of the demonstrations at this visit, there was a vibration of the floor, as though several tons in weight had been uplifted and suddenly fallen again upon it. This caused everything in the room to shake most violently for several minutes, when the force was withdrawn.

“I have also tested the intelligence of these Spirits in every way my ingenuity could invent. On one occasion, I wrote a word on a slip of paper privately, placed it in my wallet, went there, and the sounds, through the alphabet, spelled that word correctly as I had written it. That word was ‘Sybil.’

“On the 20th of February, inst., the two youngest sisters made my family a visit. Here the sounds were heard, questions involving subjects wholly unknown to them were answered, a large heavy dining-table was moved several times; and on expressing thanks at the table to the Giver of all good, some six or eight sounds responded to every sentence I uttered, by making loud and distinct sounds in various parts of the room.

“Yours truly,
“C. HAMMOND.”

LETTER OF JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“D. M. DEWEY:

“SIR—As you have requested of me some recital of my acquaintance with the phenomena known as the ‘mysterious knockings’ or ‘rappings,’ as the

popular term is, the following is cheerfully placed at your disposal.

“My attention was first called to the subject, I think, by Mr. Isaac Post, in the month of October, 1848, at which time Mrs. Fish, with a younger sister, was living on Prospect Street. I had previously heard accounts of something of the kind which was said to have occurred at Hydesville, Wayne County, of this State, the former place of residence of Mr. John D. Fox and Mrs. Margaret Fox, now of Arcadia; but had considered it, as most others did, the mere offspring of excited imagination, or a trick made up perhaps for the purpose of harmless deception. You may well suppose that I sought an introduction to the singular mystery with no very credulous ear. I could not doubt the honesty of my friend Post, and from the reports which he gave of his experience thus far, I thought the contrivance must certainly be an ingenious one and well worth one’s while to unravel.

“I went in company with my friend John Kedzie. What transpired on the occasion of my first visit, I do not distinctly recollect. My curiosity, however, was only increased, and as an invitation was extended for further observation, I soon became more conversant with the mystery and those whom it seemed more particularly to attend. I soon discovered that I must utterly doubt the truthfulness of my senses—which, by the way, are not deficient beyond those of others—or admit that there were sounds produced in my presence, in some manner utterly unaccountable. They were considered to be produced by spiritual beings, but the bare fact that I heard noises and could not account for them, was no evidence to me that such was their origin. Some action of a (to me) hidden law of nature upon inert matter might do this; or it might, in some way, be the effect of animal magnetism. I wanted to know if there was any intelligence connected with, and controlling, these manifestations. That point reached, I desired to ascertain whether or not the signs of such intelligence could be imparted to me in such a manner, that I should know it was out of the power of these individuals of flesh and blood to give them.

“I had been informed that these manifestations, although partaking of the same general features, did not claim to be the production of any one particular Spirit or intelligence; but that numberless Spirits, those most naturally drawn by affinity to present themselves in the presence of visitors, had and exercised this power.

“In accordance with the hint thus given, I asked the noisy but unseen conversationist if I could have the privilege of talking with my sister—then in the Spirit-world. An affirmative answer being given, pretty soon a gentle rapping was heard, and on my asking if this was the signification of her presence, the reply was, yes. I then asked a number of questions, referring to the time when we were together in years long since past. The questions thus asked were answered promptly and intelligibly.

“Afterward the same gentle rapping was heard in the form of a call for the alphabet (five quick successive raps). The letters were called, and a sentence spelled out (unsuggested by any query), addressed to me and commencing, ‘Brother, do you remember,’ etc. I have not the memoranda made at the time and cannot recall the precise language of the communication; but the impression then made upon my mind was that it was exceedingly like my sister. They were *her thoughts*, clothed in the self-same drapery which she was accustomed to throw around them. She mentioned the disease of which her body died (consumption), and alluded to the protracted cough accompanying it. I asked if she was happy, and received an affirmative reply. She told me, in reply to my queries, that human Spirits after they leave this stage of existence enter upon a sphere in advance of the one they pass from; that they are the subjects of an universal law, that of progress, and occupy such sphere as the state of their purity and advancement, at the time of death (so-called), prepares them for, and as various in its arrangements as are the classes of Spirits; that the ‘many mansions in the Father’s house,’ are but the varied spheres, suited to the wants and conditions of their occupants.

“Since the occasions above alluded to, and many times during the past year, I have had opportunities of this kind. Very frequently when I have been at the house of Mrs. Fish, the time and attention of these manifestations have been engrossed by other visitors, and often, on such occasions, I have been exceedingly interested. In a multitude of instances I have seen individuals there, entire strangers to the family, whose questions have been answered by these invisible agencies with the utmost accuracy. I remember at one time while there, a gentleman and his wife called and begged an opportunity for a few moments. They were non-residents of the city, and desired to leave town on the morrow. The request was granted. We all took seats around the table, and permission was given the gentleman to ask

questions. To the question ‘How many children have I had?’ the reply was, *one*. ‘Is it living?’ The question being reversed, the signal intimated to the father (what was the case) that the child was in the Spirit-world. He asked the child’s age at the time of its death, and the length of time that had elapsed since its death, which queries were, as he said, correctly answered. He then asked if the Spirit of that child would be allowed to converse with him; an affirmative was given, and soon a roll of light sounds announced the presence of the little one. A signal for the alphabet was given, and the childlike Spirit spelled out a communication to its earthly parent, the effect of which, upon the father, told but too plainly the reality of the semblance. The mother then asked a few questions, such as ‘Are you very happy?’ ‘Are you often with me?’ ‘Must I cease to grieve that I have lost you, and remember that you are permitted, although unseen, to be with me still?’

“That mother left the room in tears; but they were not the outburst of sorrow. Gladness was in her heart (as she said) for the first time since she laid her darling child—her first-born—down to sleep on the bosom of its mother earth.

“I might give you a variety of instances to which I have been a witness, wherein a remarkable perception has been evinced by these agencies; but a statement of such things goes but a little way toward convincing a sceptic, or satisfying the mind of any one who has not the opportunity of observing for himself. The human mind admits with extreme reluctance the truth of things which it has been trained to believe without the range of possibility.

“I have thus given to you, as briefly as possible, what you have asked me for. My convictions are the result of patient and honest investigation, extending through a period of sixteen months. They are fixed—so far as the prime fact is concerned, that a communication exists between the inhabitants of ‘this breathing world,’ and a distinct order of intelligences invisible to the outward eye. If at any time I embrace an error, I would thank him who should point it out and demonstrate the truth. But mere argument, however ingenious, can never move my convictions on this subject. I have submitted everything to the scrutiny of such powers as God has given to the highest nature I possess, and know no better guide to lead me; and any evidence which shall change my opinions must reach me

through the same channels of the mind by which these convictions entered it.

“Perhaps it would not be out of place, in this connection, to state (what many are aware of) that the family to whom I have alluded as the ones in whose presence these manifestations occur—although by no means the only ones—have, in consequence of the circumstances, been subject of much misrepresentation, and, in some instances, of serious wrong. This might have been expected at the hands of those who are ever ready to cast opprobrium on individual character if it chance to be allied in any way to what *to them* is unaccountable, or cannot be made to serve their peculiar views and purposes. During my acquaintance with them I have never discovered the least ground for the justice of such charges. I have known them intimately nearly a year and a half, and some of my friends have been acquainted with them for many years. No one has ever suggested to me the belief that any of the family had been guilty of any departure from moral rectitude. I have uniformly been treated by them with courtesy and kindness; and they have, on all proper occasions, extended to me such facilities as were requisite to enable me to prosecute my inquiries. They make no ultra pretensions to what the world calls piety, neither do they claim exemption from the venial faults which exist more or less in all their fellow-beings. Neither do they set up the false claim (which some exceedingly soft heads have imputed to them) that they, as individuals, are inspired, or have a mission from the Deity to this world. They are *merely* the *passive media* through whom these communications are made to us, from the world of Spirits.

“Recognizing then, as I do—what to me is undeniable—that for some wise purpose, intelligences in another sphere of existence are permitted to communicate with us in this way, numberless questions have suggested themselves to my mind.

“As nothing important ever takes place in the wide realm of the Universe, *unconnected with a purpose*, what is the aim of this?

“I answer—as I did involuntarily, in the first stage of my experience—to teach mankind that what they have been harboring as a shadow, but never known, is in truth a reality; that the interior man, the sentient being

‘That stirs within and animates the clay,’

is immortal and never dies. This consideration, were there no others, is quite sufficient. But it is not to be supposed that we have yet been made acquainted with all the bearings which it is to have upon us and our welfare. If these Spiritual beings are indeed what they purport to be—human Spirits—our own kith and kin, who once walked with us on earth, and still sympathize with us; then, indeed, we may be immensely benefited by what they may unfold to us. That they *are such*, I have no positive knowledge or evidence, and none sufficiently strong to warrant the assertion. It is somewhat difficult to identify them, with our present crude and limited knowledge. The best we can do, is to judge for ourselves from the correspondences of things. If I converse with a Spirit, and its language—as addressed to me—corresponds closely with the mind of that individual, as I knew it in this life—and particularly if it alluded to occurrences known only *to myself and it*—I have an analogical evidence of its identity. On the other hand, if such Spirit gives me a communication, the sentiment and structure of which are totally at variance with my perception of the individual thus personated, I have the same kind of evidence (but no other) that the said Spirit has sought to deceive me.

“Thus you will perceive my impression to be that Spirits of various grades of intelligence and moral dignity in the scale of being, are allowed the same power; and those persons who seek intercourse with *the good*, need all the panoply of truth and sincerity to guard them from contact with the opposite.

“This admission, however, is by no means condemnatory of the whole matter. A Wisdom, exceeding man’s, allows good and evil men to live in this world; but it does not follow that, because I may occasionally chance to meet with one of the latter, I am to deny myself communication with the former. We must do the best we can in our condition; act, as well as we may, the part for which we are adapted by the attributes with which Deity hath endowed us. And if, in order to commune occasionally with a bright being of the upper sphere, I am, at times, subjected to annoyance by one of a lower order (a devil, if you please), I can well afford it, and come off best in the *finale*. These unseen devils, after all the disrespect that has been shown them, if I have met them in council, have evinced the possession of nothing *much* worse than ignorance.

“And here let me say, I am of the serious opinion that *all* the devils of the universe are not *yet* congregated in the Spirit-world. Many, alas! too many of them, are clothed with human forms, and move in our midst, visible to the common eye. They are spirits of darkness, with a moral depravity which would do no discredit to any locality ever dreamed of in a vision of hell itself. Their presence is confined to no one particular class. They enter your Senate chamber even, sometimes, and distract the councils of honest men.

“So will it be, in that strange economy which our dark vision seeks in vain to fathom, until man attains that higher stature, that more perfect being to which we must all hope he is ultimately destined.

“Respectfully yours,
“J. E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, March 6, 1850.”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OHIO CAMPAIGN.

RETURN TO ROCHESTER—ATTEMPTED BURGLARY—SUMMONS TO OHIO—“REV.” C. C. BURR—“TOE-
OLOGY”—GOLD MEDALS AND JEWELLED WATCH—FIRST PUBLIC SPEECH—COMMITTEE
INVESTIGATIONS AS USUAL—CALVIN’S ILLNESS, AND HENCEFORTH MRS. BROWN—FIRST SPIRITUAL
CONVENTION.

We reached our home in Rochester late in the evening, and, as my housekeeper was absent, we were alone in the Troup Street house that night. The friends had kindly lighted and warmed the house, and were there to receive us. After they left we immediately retired, and were soon lost in sleep. I had not slept long, however, when I was awakened by a voice saying urgently in my ear, “Get up and light your candle, quick!” Supposing that Margaretta had spoken to me, I replied, “What did you say?” but finding her fast asleep, I scratched a match, and had just time to see the form of a man who had got the lower sash raised and half his body into the room. He was, of course, a burglar, and doubtless expected to find a booty in the money which the papers had reported us to have brought with us from Buffalo. My voice and the flash of light made him start back so precipitately that he broke the window-sash while making his exit. The visit was never repeated. I may have mentioned that once before, in my former house in Prospect Street, we had been awakened by a voice bidding us to “Get up, the house is on fire.” We found that the wood-box behind the stove in the sitting-room was in flames, which would soon have been communicated to the door, within a few inches of the staircase, which was our only means of egress and safety.

On the morning after our return from Buffalo, to my great surprise, mother drove up to the door, having just arrived by the train from New York. Her first words were, “What is the matter? I have been so urgently directed to come to you, that I feared something had happened, or was going to.”

She and Katie had remained in New York, during the time of our stay in Buffalo, with the friends before named. I may here mention that Katie

attended school, all the time she remained in New York, during the day hours, and sometimes united in the séances held by the friends in the evenings. Mr. Greeley often said, on the strength of her childish letters, “Katie, I expect to see you develop into another Margaret Fuller some day, if you will only give your attention to study.” We employed private teachers for the children, at the hours not compulsorily absorbed by the public. I gladly stood the brunt of the labors for their benefit in the matter of their education. (See Mr. Robinson’s letter of March 12, 1851, p. [203](#).)

After explanations, the upshot was that mother returned the same evening to rejoin Katie in New York, taking Margaretta with her. Soon after our return to Troup Street it became necessary, to my great regret, to leave the house, as the property had to be sold for division among heirs; but I found a much larger and finer house on the corner of Troup and Sophia Streets. The fatigues of moving, following so soon upon the Buffalo inquisition, brought on a serious illness, from which I had scarcely recovered when I received such insisting summons, by letters and telegrams, from good friends in Cleveland, Ohio, that I was compelled to undertake the journey, which proved to be the beginning of what was called “the Ohio campaign.”

So did events arrange themselves, or so did other influences arrange them, to compel us to widen more and more the fulfilment of the “duty” to “go forth” which had been imposed upon us. Among the telegrams from Cleveland, received when I was on a sick bed, was this one: “Mrs. Fish, we want you to come immediately to Cleveland. It is vitally important.” To which Mr. Post replied, “Mrs. Fish is not well, and we think it would be dangerous for her to leave.” Then came another, saying, “Burr is here, slandering you and all who believe in Spiritualism.”

Still, my friends insisted on my waiting until I was stronger, when a letter came containing a partial explanation of the “Rev.” Burr’s villanous conduct toward me. He had slandered me so grossly that my friends would not allow him to go unpunished. They had arrested him in my name, and it was necessary for me to be there in person. I also received the following letters from a valued friend:

“CLEVELAND, April 25, 1851.

“MRS. FISH:

“DEAR LADY—There are *many* reasons why you should visit our city. One is, we are anxious to witness the Spirit manifestations, and another reason is, that the world-renowned *cheat*, C. Chauncy Burr, will soon be here to expose the Rochester rappings and the mediums. I wonder if he will succeed as well as Flint, Lee, and Coventry did in Buffalo! All this and more, makes it desirable that you should come at once.

“Very Respectfully,
“M. L. WRIGHT.”

“CLEVELAND, May 1, 1851.

“MRS. FISH:

“DEAR FRIEND—Yours of the 28th inst. is at hand. We are glad (as you see by the *Plaindealer* which we have to-day sent you) that you have concluded to come. You have many friends here who will make your visit pleasant, and not disappoint your expectations. As regards Burr, his tongue is no slander where he is known. We have decided the Dunham House (for many reasons) is the best, as you can have a first floor parlor with three rooms attached, and the house is as respectable as any in the place, though perhaps not quite as large as the Weddell. You will be much better accommodated. The table is first-class. Telegraph the day you will start so that we may know when to expect you, as every one feels anxious to meet you.

“With kind regards, yours truly,
“M. L. WRIGHT.”

All this decided my course and I went. And as my mother and the two girls, Margaretta and Cathy, were in New York, my married sister, Mrs. Smith, and her dear little boy Charlie, and Calvin Brown, accompanied me. Imagine our surprise when we arrived at Cleveland. A party of our true friends escorted us from the boat to the hotel, where they informed us they had arranged for a drive to a water-cure resort some ten or twelve miles in the country.

As soon as we had breakfasted and prepared ourselves, we started on our excursion. There were several carriages, and I think not more than two

persons in the company whom I had ever met before. Soon after our arrival, the ladies took us into a beautiful grove and carefully explained to me the nature of the slanders the Rev. C. C. Burr had reported against me.

I think they were somewhat surprised at the indifference I manifested. Atrocious as his slanders had been, I could not work up my mind to deem them worthy of my stooping to notice them. I said to them, "If you ladies had passed through one half the abuse I have, for the past two years or more, you would not wonder that I am personally quite indifferent to what all my enemies may say against me." However, it was well that they had prosecuted Burr, as they put him under heavy bonds, and compelled him to keep the peace, and hold his slanderous tongue.

Mother and the girls returned to Rochester about three weeks after I left for Cleveland. The children, Maggie and Cathy, were persuaded to go to Cincinnati with a lady friend of ours from Rochester, Mrs. Kedzie, who had conceived the idea of a western tour of mediumistic exhibitions, and knowing that I was in Cleveland, they stopped at our hotel to see us. Maggie could not be persuaded to go further. Cathy, too, thought it would be much more pleasant for her to remain with us at Cleveland, but inasmuch as Mrs. K. had come with them, expecting to go on to Cincinnati, I argued that having come with her, they should fulfil their engagement. Finally it was decided that sister Maria should accompany Cathy, with her little boy and Mrs. K., to Cincinnati, and Maggie remain with Calvin and myself.

I found out that the girls had left greatly against mother's wishes, and I telegraphed her to come immediately to Cleveland, which she did. Mrs. K. and my sisters remained in Cincinnati about three weeks, and stopped at Columbus, expecting to remain there some time; but when they had been there about a week little Charley was taken very ill. His life was despaired of for several days, during which time all business was suspended, and Mrs. Kedzie returned to Rochester. My sister Maria's husband arrived about that time and found the child—as was thought—hopelessly ill.

I was greatly distressed, and my friends gathered around to condole with me. Every hour brought a despatch saying, "Charley still lives." I could do nothing but walk the floor and cry in my despair. I had been the means of

bringing him from home, and I blamed myself, knowing the effect it would have on my brother-in-law and sister, if they should lose their only child, after having already lost three dear little boys. In our private room we called on the Spirits to advise us what to do. They directed us to telegraph at once to Columbus to “bring him here” (to Cleveland). We followed their directions. They started immediately, and when they arrived the child seemed in a dying condition.

I took him in charge, and *with the aid of Spirit advice* soon found him convalescing. As soon as he was able they returned home.

Floods of letters summoned us to all parts of the State. I had even to hire other persons to help in the labor of answering them. Nor shall I now undertake a narrative of our tour. As a general rule, so far as it was possible, we followed in the tracks of our arch-enemy, the “Rev. C. Chauncy Burr;” and it was often announced that when he should have concluded his course of lectures, the Fox family would succeed him and afford the public the opportunity of judging for themselves. As the Buffalo doctors had gone in for their theory of knee-ology (with what success the reader has seen), so the Burr theory may be called that of *toe-ology*; for he had conceived the brilliant idea of producing a sort of low raps, inside a *wide* boot, by striking his great toe upon the sole, as any one may do upon the table by pressing and over-lapping the middle finger by the index and suddenly releasing the latter. His brother Heman was the one who thus operated, while he himself figured as the lecturer. The head-waiter of the hotel at which Burr stopped, told me how his toes were inflamed and bloody from this exercise, and how many a poultice he had had to supply him with. The difference was always manifest between the mere underfoot uniform sounds, yielded by this miserable trick, and the variety of the “knockings” on tables, floors, doors, walls, and ceilings—now faint, now approaching the thunderous—to say nothing of the identification of the Spirits who were rapping to us, through the recognized significance and truth of their communications. Burr was at last almost hooted and pelted out of the State; and at the court-house of Painesville we were taken to see the marks of the showers of shattered eggs and muddy pieces of turf which remained to attest the reception he had received the day before.

Our progress was a course of triumph. I might fill a page with the names of the friends in all quarters of the State, including its best men and women, between whom and myself arose friendships which time will never obliterate from my heart. I will only name one who was to us in Ohio what Greeley was in New York, John W. Gray, the editor of *The Plaindealer*, and his wife, one of the loveliest and best of women.

Out of the trunks and boxes of letters, whose contents are beyond my power to explore, I have taken a few, almost at random, with no time for selection, which are given below, and from which the reader may gather some particulars of this period, which will in part supply the place of a narrative of our experiences in this, which I have called our Ohio campaign. But I must mention the interesting incidents of two gold medals having been presented, the one to myself, in Cleveland, when I was about to leave, the other to Maggie, at Cincinnati. To Katie was presented a beautiful jewelled watch and chain. I indulge myself in the pleasure of showing mine to my readers. I am unable to show Maggie's (which was oval) because it has been unfortunately lost in a trunk that was stolen. I say nothing of beautiful presents, in diamonds and other jewelry, etc. from ladies and gentlemen, who often seemed to feel that they could not do too much to show us their gratitude for the certain and realized *knowledge*, received through us, of the great truth that our loved and lost still live and love us, and that "death" is only a brief separation of those soon to be reunited forever.



The following letters accompanied my medal and Katie's watch and chain. The substantially similar one accompanying Maggie's medal seems to have

been lost.

“CLEVELAND, July 1, 1851.

“MRS. A. LEAH FISH:

“DEAR FRIEND—We the undersigned present you with this emblem as a sincere token of our love and affection.

“You have been faithful and steadfast in all your duties. You have been instrumental in bringing us to a realization of the truth of Immortality.

“May you be blessed with health and crowned with victory, and triumph over your enemies, is the prayer of your united friends.

N. E. CRITTENDEN,	M. C. WRIGHT,
D. A. EDDY,	S. D. KELLY,
DR. BIGELOW,	ANTHONY M. REYNOLDS,
JOHN W. GRAY,	A. UNDERHILL,
R. L. PAINE,	E. HINKLY, <i>Artist, and</i>
DR. UNDERHILL,	<i>Designer of the Medal.</i> ”

“CINCINNATI, O., July 9, 1851.

“MISS CATHARINE FOX:

“The individuals whose names are hereunto attached, having faith in your integrity, as a testimonial of their regard for you personally, and of the gratification they have enjoyed through you as a Medium for Spiritual communications, desire you to accept the watch and chain which will be presented to you by your friend,

MR. E. F. NORTON.

B. URNER,	JOHN D. PARK,
W. T. COGGSHALL,	JAMES GOODIN,
CHARLES H. ERWIN,	DANIEL GANO,
S. H. TITUS,	C. J. W. SMITH,
RALPH VALENTINE,	E. F. NORTON,
AUGUSTUS WATTLES.”	

I will mention one other incident in the course of our Ohio experience, as being the first occasion on which I was compelled, and mustered the courage, to address a short speech to an audience. On an urgent invitation we went to Painesville toward the last of May. We arrived there late in the afternoon. We found many friends, in the parlor of the hotel, awaiting our arrival and prepared to escort us to the Court House, to see the condition in which Rev. C. C. Burr had left it. Tufts of grass (it had been raining the previous night), bricks, broken eggs, sticks, and tin pans, with which the reverend gentleman had been saluted, were strewn all over the Court House. We advertised through all the papers that, immediately after the Burrs had lectured and entertained the public with their toe-rapping expositions, the Fox family would be forthcoming to give them every opportunity of testing the truth of the real Spirit rappings. We were expected, and everything was done to make our visit there agreeable. The Court House was cleared of all the rubbish, and at precisely eight o'clock Calvin, Maggie, my sister Maria's little boy, Charley Smith, and myself entered the Court House with crowds of friends, amid shouts of "Welcome to the Fox family" resounding from every part of the room.

Lawyer Tiffany was there to address the audience, but he was not able to make himself heard, but stood and smiled at the demonstration. The audience, with one accord, called out, "Take the platform!" Calvin accompanied us, leaving little Charley with a lady friend, but he was frightened and cried, "Take me too." He was only two and a half years old. Judge Bissell carried the child in his arms, and placed him by my side. He looked up at me and said, "Aunt Leah, will they hurt you?" I told him, "No, dear, they are our friends." The rappings were distinctly heard all over the hall as soon as quiet was restored. The audience would not be content until I spoke to them. My words were few. I thanked them for their kindness, but tears of gratitude soon choked all further utterance. This was my first public speech.

At this point, Mr. Tiffany was allowed to proceed with his lecture, which was very satisfactory to the audience.

We had engaged to go a second time to Cincinnati, as there were many there who had not had an opportunity of visiting Katy's rooms while she

was there in company with sister Maria and Mrs. Kedzie, about the 20th of July.

The cholera had broken out in the Burnett House, and we engaged rooms in the Walnut Street House, where we remained during our stay in Cincinnati.

We were frequently invited to visit our friends living in the vicinity of the city, and gladly accepted their kind invitations, as it afforded us rest, change of scene and atmosphere. We spent several days delightfully at the house of Major Gano; and also made many visits at the house of Mr. Longworth, the proprietor and owner of the great wine vaults of Cincinnati, well known to the public, and whose son-in-law, William Flagg, and his wife, were interested in us. We submitted to the examination of many committees in Cincinnati (and other places which we visited in Ohio). We remained in that city until the latter part of August. The weather was extremely warm, and we were all prostrated with heat and fatigue, and we longed to return to our home and friends in Rochester. About this time Calvin was suddenly attacked with hemorrhage of the lungs. Physicians pronounced his case hopeless. Mother and I took care of him through that fearful night. The following morning he said to us—taking each one by the hand—“Dear Mother and Leah, the only regret I feel is in leaving you, subject as you are to the persecutions of your enemies.” Then fixing his eyes on me he said, “You have been a dear sister to me. The best legacy I could leave you, as a protection when I am gone, is my name. If we were married now, your widowhood would be a great protection from the importunate intrusions to which you are so frequently subjected.” Mother wept over him as none but a mother could weep. She fully consented, and left us to decide as we both thought best. We were married September 10, 1851, on what was supposed to be the death-bed of our beloved Calvin, and thus I became Mrs. Brown. Calvin recovered, however, from that attack and lingered in tolerable comfort, until about six months previous to his death, in May, 1853.

The agitation of the subject of Spiritualism resulting from this our “Ohio Campaign,” of 1851, led to the first Spiritualist convention in the world’s history, so far as I know, which was called for and assembled at Cleveland in February, 1852, respecting which I find the following letter from David A. Eddy, bearing date of the 28th of that month:

“I enclose to you to-day a Cleveland *Herald* containing a report of our convention, the first of the kind ever known, and which may with propriety be called ‘Spiritual Convention No. One.’ It has had some effect in bringing the subject before the people, and calling out investigation. It has thrown the church into spasms. Everything in Ohio is going on as well as we could wish.”

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS CONNECTED WITH THE OHIO CAMPAIGN.

N. S. WHEELER—E. S. BROWNFIELD—CHILlicoTHE COMMITTEE—CHARLES F. WHIPPO—M. L. WRIGHT—D. A. EDDY—EXTRACTS FROM THE PRESS—“A FAIR CHALLENGE FROM MRS. FISH” AND SEQUEL—COLUMBUS COMMITTEE—D. A. EDDY—M. L. WRIGHT—INTERESTING LETTER FROM DEAR AMY POST—ARTICLE FROM THE CLEVELAND PLAINDEALER.

N. S. WHEELER.

“PAINESVILLE, O., May 7, 1851.

“MRS. FISH:

“DEAR MADAM—Great excitement prevails in our quiet little village at this time. Miss May Cronk has become quite a satisfactory medium. Her development is extraordinary. We think perhaps if you could spend about two weeks or ten days with us, your presence would afford us a fair opportunity to test the matter to our heart’s content. I see by the babble of the Cleveland papers that you are expected in that city soon; some say that you are now there. Burr is drivelling out his dolorous tale to large audiences in Cleveland; but whether his cracking joints will endure the torture much longer, has not yet been revealed. I hope for your own happiness, as well as for the successful triumph that awaits you, you may preserve your equanimity and successfully resist all distracting influences.

“We are all anxious to see you here. Come.

“Truly yours,

“N. S. WHEELER.”

NEWARK, O., May 19, 1851.

“MRS. FISH:

“Although a stranger to you, I take the liberty of addressing you on the subject of Spirit manifestations; also to give you a pressing invitation to

visit our town in behalf of a number of our citizens, as well as myself, who are as firm as the rock of Gibraltar in the faith; although a great many of us have not had the opportunity of witnessing the phenomena; and the probability is that many of us will not have the privilege of doing so unless some of our friends, who are more favored than we are, will visit our town and tarry with us a while.

“You could not but be pleased, as Newark is one of the most beautiful towns in the interior of the State; and you will find the people very pleasant and intelligent, if you can visit us. Please answer as soon as you receive this.

“Yours with respect,

“E. S. BROWNFIELD.

“P. S. I am here authorized to use the names of our friends, some of whom you will doubtless recollect; also others, for whose character and respectability I have but to refer you to Dr. Bigelow, of Cleveland, who is well acquainted with all, viz., Mrs. Boss, Mrs. Baker, Wm. Boss, Thos. Holmes, Dr. Blair, John J. Mooney, Wm. Lyon, Wm. Cunningham, and Lewis Evans, *who all join in pressing the invitation.—E. S. B.*”

CHILLICOTHE COMMITTEE.

“CHILLICOTHE, O., May 23, 1851.

“DEAR MADAM:

“You will notice by the enclosed proceedings, that the duty has devolved on us, in behalf of the citizens of this place and vicinity, friendly to the investigation of the so-called “Spiritual rappings” and “manifestations,” to extend to you an invitation that we may be honored with your company and have the benefit of your experience in the investigation of that which is to us a subject of the highest interest, and which we consider deserving the most patient and devoted attention.

“In addition to the performance of our official duty as a committee, we request you to accept from us, individually, our warmest and most heartfelt congratulations, for the dignity you have preserved, and the Christian forbearance and charity you have manifested toward your opponents, amid the many trying scenes you have encountered during the last two years, while lending your aid to the investigation of truths of a new and startling character.

“We are the more desirous that you should honor us with a visit, from having instituted some experiments ourselves, with partial success, the particulars of which have been published from time to time, to encourage the friends of the science to pursue the investigation for themselves. Circumstances, however, have not yet been sufficiently favorable to its development to enable us to gratify the public interest which it has naturally excited; and consequently a visit from yourself at this particular juncture would be particularly gratifying. We should be pleased also to learn what mode of compensation would be the most agreeable to you as a remuneration for your services. Hoping to obtain from you a favorable reply, and a visit at some early day most convenient to yourself, accept, madam, our assurances of esteem and friendship.

“JOHNSON LOFLAND,
JONATHAN MIESSE,
H. M. PINTO,
Committee.”

“To MRS. FISH, of Rochester, Cleveland, Ohio.

“A meeting of the citizens of Chillicothe and vicinity, friendly to the investigation of the phenomena known us ‘Spirit rappings,’ ‘Spiritual manifestations,’ etc., which have claimed a considerable share of public attention in the United States during the last two years, was held in the city of Chillicothe on May 23, 1851, at which Clement Pine was appointed chairman, and George Armstrong secretary.

“On motion it was resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to forward an invitation to Mrs. Fish, of Rochester, who, it is understood, is now in Cleveland, to visit our city, that the citizens may have the benefit of her presence and experience in witnessing the so-called ‘Spiritual

manifestations.' Johnson Lofland, H. M. Pinto, and Jonathan Miesse, M.D., were appointed by the chair said committee.

“Resolved, that it shall be the duty of said committee, on receiving an answer from Mrs. Fish, to call another meeting, and make known her intentions in regard to the acceptance or non-acceptance of such invitation, and in case we should be favored with a visit from Mrs. Fish, to propose such measures for her reception as may be deemed necessary.

“Resolved, that a copy of the proceedings of this meeting be made by the secretary, and transmitted immediately, together with a letter of invitation, to Mrs. Fish, by said committee.

“CLEMENT PINE, *Chairman*,
GEORGE ARMSTRONG, *Secretary*.”

The foregoing letter was sent to Massillon for other signatures of parties there alike interested.

“MASSILLON, O., June 23, 1851.

“We earnestly hope that you will accept of this invitation, and thereby give a few earnest inquirers after truth an opportunity to satisfy their minds upon a very important subject.

“C. D. SMITH, J. W. UNDERHILL,
D. M. BRADSHAW, F. KEITH,
S. HUNT, J. R. CECIL,
R. PARTRIDGE, G. W. WILLIAMS,
C. H. RUSSELL, S. HAUND,
 S. RAWSON.”

CHARLES F. WHIPPO.

“NEW CASTLE, Lawrence Co., Pa., June 9, 1851.

“MRS. FISH: My object in writing this is to invite you, in behalf of myself and many intelligent friends here, to stop, on your way to Pittsburg, and spend a few days with us.

“I have heard of your trials and troubles at Buffalo and at Cleveland, and you have had my sympathy through all. I hope and trust you will be able to stand up under these persecutions, steadfastly and firmly.

“Remember that truth is mighty and will ultimately prevail. The Rev. Rascal C. C. Burr is on the wane, and he will learn, before all is over, that ‘honesty is the best policy.’

“Very respectfully and truly yours,

“CHARLES F. WHIPPO.”

M. L. WRIGHT.

“CLEVELAND, August 23, 1851.

“MRS. FISH: My dear friend, I promised to answer the article by Green, through which you were called on to enter the arena with Mr. Clark, for examination, etc. I did so; but the Clark family came out boldly, and offered to make oath that they knew nothing of the source of the ‘manifestations;’ that the article by Green was without their knowledge and very much against their wishes. We all thought best to suppress it for the present. You can hardly imagine how much pleasure and happiness *we* have realized when in your presence. That scene in the cemetery can never die out from my memory. How can we ever forget those sweet messages from our dear ones, whose affection for us has outlived their mortality?

“Oh, come with us again and permit us to listen to those good old raps that first shook our scepticism and brought us to a realization of the truth. That message in the grave-yard, saying, ‘My dear son, weep no more, the fault was mine. No longer bow your head in vain regret and grief. I *ble*ss you, be happy.’ Then the messages from our dear children, bidding us to rejoice and weep no more, ‘We are all happy in heaven;’ and then, in answer to my mental questions they spelled, ‘We accompanied you here—this is not our abiding place—we will return with you and watch over you through the

night, and communicate with you at home.’ The promises have all been fulfilled. We have the manifestations at our own house, and the Spirit of our father is our guardian-angel now. My wife holds daily converse with him, and he tells us he ‘is happy. All is well.’ This is not belief, it is knowledge. Your friends in Cleveland are all armed and equipped, ready to defend you now and forever. It is midnight; my dear wife and children are sleeping quietly, and those of the higher spheres are watching over them. The midnight winds whistle fearfully around our dwelling, and as I write old Lake Erie lashes her shores with a fury perfectly terrific. May the good Spirits of the wave watch over the mariner to-night and pilot him safely into harbor. Our friend Gray has returned and wishes me to remember him to you. Mr. Tiffany has also returned. You must excuse him for not calling on you, as his child was very ill, and passed away to its Spirit home last Wednesday. He feels deeply interested in your welfare, and has attended to all the preliminaries in the slander case, so that you need give yourself no uneasiness in the matter. Judge Bissell complains of your not writing. Be sure and write to him immediately. He is your *true friend* and will see that *justice* is done in your case. Judge Paine also, do not forget to write to him.

“Now, Leah, *your true friends* (I need not name them) are expecting you will locate here some day, not far distant. We expect to see you in Rochester soon. My love to your mother, sisters, and Calvin, with a great share for yourself, and believe me

“*Truly yours ever,*
“M. L. WRIGHT.”

D. A. EDDY.

“CLEVELAND, O., October 28, 1851.

“MRS. FISH:

“MY DEAR FRIEND—Your letter dated at Rochester, after you had partially recovered from your severe illness, was duly received, and I answered at length; but while waiting to get hold of the precious bluff missive that appeared in *The True Democrat*, to enclose to you, some time elapsed, and when I finally got it, I found you were sojourning in Troy, N. Y. So the

letter was old, and I did not send it. I cannot find words to express how glad I am to hear that you have recovered and are able to visit a place where I know you will have so many true friends; but we will not own to any city that can produce more sincere friends than Cleveland.

“I suppose that Mrs. Eddy has informed you of Mr. Crittenden’s intention of making you a visit soon. Is it not possible for you to come here again before close of navigation? If not, you may look for me there the first of January, or about that time. We want you to come to Cleveland. We will select a house here where you will be happy and comfortable. We pity those poor wretches who are ready to persecute those who are too good to breathe the air of the same neighborhood where they reside. But never mind, you know and we know there is truth in these new revelations, and the good work is destined to lead men from darkness and doubt, into the blessed light of truth and a hope which I despaired of ever obtaining.

“Your correspondence must necessarily be very large and quite a task. The cause is gaining here daily, but we want you here again. Adieu for the present.

“Sincerely yours,
“D. A. EDDY.

“P. S. We have all signed the bail bonds for costs in your suit with C. Chauncy Burr. I presume Dr. Wright has advised you ere this. Burr is much troubled, but do not let anyone influence you to settle, on any conditions.

“D. A. E.”

EXTRACTS FROM THE PRESS.

“We learn by a telegraphic despatch from Cleveland, that Mrs. Fish, the celebrated ‘medium,’ will be here in a few days, when she will give our citizens an opportunity to hear the ‘rappings’ to their entire satisfaction. It is a singular fact, that notwithstanding the slanders heaped upon this lady by those accomplished mountebanks, the Burrs, she follows them up with a

sharp stick, and meets them face to face. It is not very manly or very dignified to slander a lady when she is not present.

“The Burrs are still giving their exhibitions of toe-ology to very small audiences in this city. Those who have heretofore believed that the rappings were all humbug, are now entirely convinced that they are not half so great a humbug as these itinerant, catch-penny lecturers.”—*Pittsburg Post*.

“*A Literary Man in ‘Trouble.’*—The Rev. C. Chauncy Burr, the man who makes ‘literature his profession,’ has been prosecuted in Cleveland, O., for slander, by Mrs. Fish (of the Fox family), who has laid her damages at \$10,000. He will now have the opportunity to prove his charge, which he always contended could be easily proved. It will be an exciting suit.”—*Providence Mirror*.

“*The Burr Burst.*—The Burrs have lowered their colors, taken down all sail, and left Pittsburg, under a good, stiff, spanking breeze. Mr. Courtney, O. S. Fowler (the phrenologist), Miss Sarah W. Taylor, S. Parker, J. P. Glass, Milo A. Townsend, Rev. Mr. Williams, Dr. Ewing, and several of the most respectable citizens of Pittsburg (so says *The Post*) are after them with three columns of cards and sharp sticks, published in the Pittsburg papers. ‘What a terrible thing it is to be a terrible critter,’ as Mrs. Partington would say.”—*Cincinnati Nonpareil*.

“Mrs. Fish and her sister have returned from a short excursion into the country, and will be found at ‘The Dunham,’ for a few days more. They have invitations from almost every city in the Union to visit them, but they are very contented in the Forest City.”—*Cleveland Herald*.

“*The Spirits.*—Miss Catharine Fox, the spirit medium, accompanied by a married sister and a female friend, will remain a few days at the Walnut Street House, where they will be pleased to meet those who feel interested in these manifestations, and who desire to investigate the subject with candor. We were present last night, with a number of friends, at an interview with the ladies, when some of the manifestations were produced by the customary rappings, which, to say the least, did not appear to be

produced by any physical effort of the medium. Miss Catharine is a very interesting girl, and looks very far from being capable of carrying out any humbug whatever. We can do no less than request our readers to examine for themselves.”—*Cincinnati Nonpareil*.

“*Personal*.—Miss Catharine Fox, one of the original mediums of the Rochester rappings, has arrived in Cincinnati, and is stopping at the Walnut Street House. The public will have an opportunity for a few days to judge for themselves in regard to things which have ‘turned the world upside down.’ As she professes to ‘call Spirits from the vasty deep,’ and Mr. Burr is here to knock them in the head as fast as they come, exciting times may be expected.”—*Cincinnati Nonpareil*.

“EDITOR OF THE PLAINDEALER:

“SIR—Cannot Mrs. Fish and the Misses Fox be prevailed on to make us a visit? The fact is, Gray, we Michiganders are wofully benighted upon Spiritual subjects. Everything pertaining to ‘the world, the flesh, and the devil’ we understand perfectly; but when it comes to getting communications from the other world direct, and seeing with our eyes, we ‘knock under.’ Our press, too, is anything but free upon these subjects, giving only one side, and concluding with the small bill of *The Herald*, that there are *no more* things in Heaven and earth than are dreamed of in their philosophy.”—*Detroit Correspondent*.

FROM THE CINCINNATI NONPAREIL.

“*A Fair Challenge by Mrs. Fish*.—It appears that the most sceptical in Cincinnati, even the editor of *The Daily Times*, have to concede that toe and knee joints have nothing to do with Spirit rappings. It has become a settled fact that Burr’s and the Buffalo doctors’ theories are the silliest humbug theories of the day. But the editor of *The Times*, in a spirit of malicious infidelity, accuses Mrs. Fish and her young sisters, Margaretta and Cathy, with having concealed about their persons some sort of intelligent machinery, which makes the raps and answers questions, whether mentally or orally put. The editor deserves a leather medal for so sage a conclusion, and should have one, had not the great demand for them among Burr’s

followers and the Buffalo boobies exhausted the stock of those ornaments and cleaned the market of supply.

“To silence this pretension, Mrs. Fish published the following challenge in the Cincinnati papers:

“A CARD TO THE PUBLIC.

“With my sisters, Margaretta and Cathy Fox, I will remain at the Walnut Street House a few days, where we shall be happy to wait upon all those who wish to satisfy themselves as to the truth or falsity of Spirit rappings. The editor of *The Times* generously acquits us of all joint snapping, and I think we can very easily dispose of his explanation. If there be even a shadow of suspicion still lurking in any mind that the sounds are made by mechanical contrivances of any character, we are willing at any moment to meet a committee of ladies, to whom we will give all fair opportunity of satisfaction. We only ask that the committee shall consist of ladies whose testimony will have weight with the public.

“ANN L. FISH.’

“This same question was raised in New York when the mediums were there, and by a coterie of ladies and gentlemen of the very first families. One of the wealthiest merchants went so far as to pledge a large sum of money, that ‘take the mediums unawares’ (*i.e.*, not dressed for the occasion), ‘and they could not induce the raps.’ Others, equally uncharitable and unbelieving, coincided with him, and they demanded a committee of investigation forthwith. They took the mediums into a room, bolted the door, and erected a platform of tables, on which they were compelled to stand. Here, piece by piece, they were disrobed by the committee, and every article of wearing apparel examined and laid aside. Not a rap had been heard during the whole time, and the girls, to use their own language, ‘feared the Spirits, as well as their friends on earth, had deserted them.’ After everything was completed and order restored in the room, Mrs. Fish, in a trembling but determined voice said, ‘Spirits, if ever you manifest yourselves to us again, do it now!’

“The raps came, instanter, like hail-stones, on every part of the stage. The mediums were overcome with joy, and every eye in the room glistened with

tears of sympathy for the sisters. There was, without, a large number of gentlemen and others waiting to hear the report of the committee; and when these facts were made known to them by their wives and others on the committee, and in tears, too, they with one accord repented of their unbelief and cruelty. These facts were published by the said committee in the New York papers, and created a profound sensation. But it seems the Cincinnati editor has forgotten this and a thousand other degrading tests, instituted by a wilful ignorance, which these ladies have since submitted to rather than lose what is of infinite value to them, their own good name.

“Will this valiant man dare accept this challenge from a woman, and his wife be one of the committee to report to him that ‘he is a fool’? We shall see.”

Committees of citizens, from various places in Ohio, were constantly coming to us; and every day brought requests to visit them. But we could only attend to a few of the larger places.

To show how widely Spiritualism has spread, and how anxious people were to have the proof of it, I give a few of the many letters of this kind we have preserved.

COLUMBUS COMMITTEE.

“COLUMBUS, O., May 22, 1851.

“MRS. ANN L. FISH:

“MADAM—The undersigned, residents of this city, in common with many others of their fellow-citizens, feeling a deep and abiding interest in the great subject of Spiritual and immortal existence, anxiously desire to witness, and investigate for themselves, the Spiritual manifestations said to have been recently made in various parts of the country, and especially the phenomena connected with yourself and your two sisters, respectfully and cordially invite you, if consistent with your other duties and engagements, to visit our city at your earliest convenience.

“LEONARD HUMPHREY, F. GALE,
WILLIAM BURDELL, PHILIP REED,
J. H. WADE, JOHN FOWLER,
N. UPTON, JOHN J. JANNEY,
J. H. COULTER, JESSE MORRIS,
T. S. BUTTOLPH.”

“CLEVELAND, O., August 27, 1851.

“DEAR MRS. FISH:

“I snatch a moment in the hurry to say we are all well, including the baby. She has got over her cough entirely, and is more interesting, if possible, than ever.

“Spiritual manifestations are gaining rapidly.

“I was in Buffalo last week: saw Messrs. C. C. Bristol, Dudley, Albro, and Hayes. They are all writing mediums, and the things they write are truly astonishing. Their hands are moved without any effort, and the evidence of its being the work of Spirits is beyond the least flickering of doubt. They all inquired (very interestedly) after you, regretting they could not have seen you on your return. Will you be likely to come this way again this fall? We sincerely hope you will find it possible to do so. Do drop us a line. How have you found things on arrival at home? Mrs. E. joins me in love to you. We remain truly your friends.

“D. A. EDDY.”

M. L. WRIGHT.

“CLEVELAND, September 8, 1851.

“MY DEAR FRIEND:

“We received yours of the 11th, and were thankful for it. You doubtless know what is going on here, as Mr. Gray tells me he sends you the *Plaindealer*. Spirits told us the truth about the Clark family, etc. You will see my article signed ‘A Friend of Truth,’ which heads him off entirely and

puts a stop to any further designs against Spiritual matters. I have another article ready; if necessary, I shall publish it. Burr is in hot water; one of his attorneys called on me a few days since, and tried to settle the matter and get it out of court, but your friends here turn a deaf ear to all his propositions. He called on me again yesterday, and asked me on what conditions I thought you would settle with him. (He not knowing that you had nothing to do with the prosecution.) I told him it could not be accomplished short of his acknowledging in every paper of the Union that he was a liar, a blackguard and a villain, paying the costs of the court, and giving you money enough to purchase a place in this city; and I did not know as *that* would do it. He is badly frightened. Everything has been properly attended to, and we have no fears of the result. Bail has been given for costs and everything is right.

“Now, my dear friend, do not allow anyone to influence you to discontinue this suit. Burr deserves to be punished to the fullest extent of the law, and for your own sake, for the sake of your friends, and for the sake of the cause in which we are engaged, permit it to go through.

“Your visit here, though not a golden one, will, I doubt not, be the most important event in your whole life. The trial will not come off in the October term, but will quite likely the next. We must all ‘keep cool.’ Now, Leah, make up your mind to settle in Cleveland, where you have so many good friends, whom you know you can trust. We intend to visit you before navigation closes, if possible.

“Remember me to Calvin, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, your mother, Maggie and Katie, dear little Charlie, and may *good* Spirits aid you in every emergency, direct you aright in all things, so that when called to exchange worlds, your earth life shall close like flowers at setting sun. So may we all live and die. My wife unites in love to you.

“Ever yours truly,
“M. L. WRIGHT.”

INTERESTING LETTER FROM MRS. AMY POST.

The letter written by a venerable Quaker lady, who has for years been a neighbor and intimate friend of Mrs. Fish and the Fox family, speaks a

language so plain that we have requested the privilege of publishing it, though not so intended by the author.—*Cleveland Plaindealer*.

“ROCHESTER, June, 1851.

“MY DEAR FRIEND, A. LEAH FISH:

“I have often thought of thee and thy company since you left your beautiful home for an Ohio city, and have been much delighted to hear you have found friends who can appreciate the value and importance of this wonderful development to mankind. When I think of the very happy change it has made in my views and feelings, regarding the present as well as the future life, I feel anxious that all the world should become acquainted with it. It is a wealth I had despaired of ever obtaining—to be convinced that we have commenced to live a life which will never end—a life whose joys, too, are enhanced by our practices of goodness. I have always admired the doctrine and wished to believe it, viz., ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have,’ etc.; and also, ‘In my father’s house there are many mansions;’ but the belief I had on this point was always accompanied with a desire for more *positive proof* of immortality. For some time before your family made me acquainted with this blessed Spirit-rapping dispensation, I had become more settled in the belief, and unreasonable but popular doctrine of there being no half-way house; but we must either go to Heaven or to Hell. But what am I writing this to thee for? Thee knows how happy I have been made, and how thankful I have been that you all have been willing to bear persecutions and revilings, self-denial and provocations, for the sake of the *Truth*, and clearing yourselves from the imputations of deception. Oh! could strangers only know as I have known the trials you have endured and the sacrifices you made the first two years, they could not be made to believe it an invention of your own, nor pursued for mercenary purposes. Thy mother has been so troubled and unhappy away from you all that I could not feel surprised at her accepting thy very kind invitation to come to you. The feelings of a mother are tenderly alive to the interests of her children. I know truly, therefore, I was very glad, for your as well as her sake, to have your own mother with you, as you have never before been without her guardian protection.

“Please give my loving regards to Margaretta and Calvin, and do all the good you can. Believe me to be thy sincere and affectionate friend,

“AMY POST.”

DOINGS AT THE DUNHAM—THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUALISM AS RAPPED OUT BY
DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

(*From the Cleveland Plaindealer.*)

“So engrossed are we in worldly affairs, that we have but little time to investigate Spiritual matters, although opportunities present themselves twice a day at the Dunham House. There are, however, a few gentlemen of leisure who are taking up this subject systematically, and looking into its mysteries earnestly. Some dozen of the most intellectual minds in the city have formed a league to jointly, candidly, and honestly investigate this phenomenon, have already had two sittings, and report ‘progress.’ We have been kindly invited by this circle to attend whenever our convenience would admit, knowing that we had the moral courage to publish what we saw and heard, without stopping to inquire whether anything similar had been published fifty years before, or without consulting the masculine grannies of the day, whether it met their approval or not. By such invitation we attended a little while last evening, and found the company had progressed so far as to discard all tests of the *medium*, of the *Spirituality* of the *communications*, and were actually (as they believed) taking lessons in philosophy from the ancient masters. After sitting a while, and hearing a great variety of rapping sounds, there was a loud knocker appeared which was simultaneously recognized, by several who had heard it before, as the signal of Benjamin Franklin. He was a long time questioned concerning Spiritual matters, sometimes answering by raps, and sometimes using the alphabet. It was in substance as follows:

“Spirit is the great positive of all existence, and matter the great negative. There is an elemental difference between Matter and Spirit. Electricity and magnetism are always connected with matter, and belong to it. The dividing link between matter and mind is between magnetism and vitality.

“There are different degrees of refinement in the electrical and magnetic media. Chemical affinities are electrical and magnetic. Cohesion and

gravitation also depend on similar principles.

“The time has not yet come when the true philosophy may be explained, but will soon. Investigation and experience will hasten it on.

“Repulsion in nature is caused by stronger attraction. The ascension of a balloon from the earth is a fair illustration of the principle of repulsion. Everything in the universe takes its appropriate place by virtue of its elemental affinities, and can occupy no other place, without changing the relations of itself and every other body in existence. The earth, as also every other heavenly body, is caused to move in its appropriate orbit by the united action of every other body in existence, and cannot be made to come in contact with other bodies; for the combining influences of all the separate bodies mark out separate paths for each. Thought is mental motion, and is conveyed from one mind to another through an intermediate medium, which is put in motion by this mental action. This medium, in its refinement lies between the nervous medium and Spirit, and exists in every degree of refinement from the nervous fluid to Spirit.

“Clairvoyance consists in insulating the mind of the subject, and in proportion as the mind is brought into clear contact with higher refinements of this medium, will the subject become clear-sighted. Biology, as used by Burr and others, is an improper term. Psychology would be a better word. The word Biology was used to make the subject a humbug. The phenomena attending Psychological (Biological) experiments, belong to the lower class of mesmeric influences—and pass from them through every degree, to perfect clear-sightedness.

“Much further information was given which we failed to note. As the doctor promised to meet the circle again, we hope to report a more complete theory. After which the circle drew up close to the table, and various rapping sounds were heard upon the chairs, the table, the floor, etc. The sound of sawing boards, driving nails into a box or something hollow, was repeated several times.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEW YORK CITY, FROM JANUARY, 1852.

COMPETING CLAIMS UPON US—DECISION IN FAVOR OF NEW YORK AS RESIDENCE—DEATH OF CALVIN R. BROWN—REMAINS REMOVED TO ROCHESTER FOR BURIAL—PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS—ALICE AND PHEBE CARY—COURSE OF TEST EXPERIMENTS AT DR. GRAY'S—THE MONDAY EVENING CIRCLE—RULES OF SÉANCES.

I have sketched our experiences thus far at Rochester, Albany, Troy, New York, Buffalo, and Ohio generally; after which I returned to Albany and Troy, a second time, by the earnest entreaty of friends—taking Glens Falls on the way, where I remained with my uncle John and Calvin; my mother and the girls being at that time in Cincinnati for the second time.

A fortnight after this I returned to my pleasant home in Rochester (corner of Troup and Sophia Streets). I now considered that we were fairly entitled to repose; and thought that, after the publicity given to the Spirit manifestations, through the press, and the thousands of our visitors, including persons from all parts of the Union, the *duty* imposed on us had been reasonably and, as I deemed, sufficiently discharged.

But it soon became evident that isolation had now become impossible. Invitations and appeals of the most urgent character rained upon me from important individuals, and from collective bodies of prominent men in the respective cities and towns.

The Spirits, who had sent us forth, had well understood that, after our hands had thus been “put to the plough,” it would be beyond our possibility to “look back.” Many friends to the new cause urged their advice that we should establish ourselves in one of the great centres of population and movement, where the thousands and tens of thousands of our locomotive people could conveniently come and hear for themselves. New York was naturally indicated for this purpose, but Cleveland and Cincinnati disputed her claim; while our friends in Rochester insisted that their city was the most appropriate and natural home and centre for the “Rochester Knockings.”

At last our Ohio friends, and indeed all others, concurred in the selection of New York, as a duty and for the good of humanity; while still hoping for occasional excursions for the benefit of other places.

At Rochester, by way of keeping up a continued hold upon us, they offered to provide for the payment of the rent of my house, in the hope that I would eventually return to it. But this I could not accept.

Shall I ever forget that day of our departure from Rochester? Our friends crowded the depot, and the parting embraces and hand-grasps continued even after the train had started in its first slow movements. No small number of our friends made their adieux in tears and blessings: while, for my part, I remember that I did nothing but cry all the way to Syracuse. This was in the early days of January, 1852.

After a few days of stay with friends and relations—(for we were an old Knickerbocker family, and it was in my early childhood that grandfather had transplanted us to Wayne County, which was to us then almost the far West, with its deserted wigwams and wandering Indian hunters)—we settled for a short time in a house temporarily taken, till the one found for me by a good friend, Mr. Sweet, should be ready. I established myself in West 26th Street, in a large and handsome brown stone front, in a neighborhood then of first-rate excellence, in which I resided for two years. From that house I removed to 15th Street, next door to Irving Place; from which, after a residence of a year, I removed, by advice of my friends, to No. 1 Ludlow Place, which I left only to go to my husband's home in West 37th Street, on my marriage, in 1858, which epoch was also the close of my career of public mediumship. Twenty-six years have now elapsed from that most blessed of days to this. Our home has been indeed a happy one. Though I have lost children, it has never been that which Victor Hugo had not the heart to wish for his worst enemy, a house without a child. Indeed, it has usually been full of them. I am still "mother," and my husband "father," to a well-beloved little crowd who are the same to us as our very own, and by whom I am indiscriminately called "Aunt Leah" and "Ma." And what with relatives, and friends on visits, and nephews and nieces of whose education we have taken charge, for the better advantages of New York, it has been one pretty full of visible inmates, as well as those who are not the less real because invisible. And these latter are ever ready to respond, with

the dear familiar raps and alphabet, to our desire to communicate with them; to say nothing of occasional manifestations in other ways, of their presence with us. An earnest thought or request rarely fails to bring our unseen ones.

During two years from the date of my marriage with Calvin R. Brown (see page [230](#)), he had been slowly declining. He breathed the last breath of his blameless life on the 4th of May, 1853, while I was still residing in 26th Street. He had attained the age of nearly twenty-nine years. Professor S. B. Brittan preached the funeral sermon in New York on the 6th day of May, at 8 o'clock P.M. A large concourse of personal friends and friends of the cause of Spiritualism attended. After Professor Brittan had concluded his discourse, Judge Edmonds delivered a short eulogy which purported to come from the Spirit world. Dr. Gray came in rather late, as he had been detained by professional duties, and begged the indulgence of the audience, as he felt it alike a pleasure and a duty he owed to the departed, to pay a small tribute to his memory, and of condolence to the bereft family. He then said, "I have been his attendant physician, and conversed with him daily during his slow decline. He suffered much at times, but never complained. He always met me with a smile. He had no fear of death, still he wanted to live. He was firm, truthful, and honorable in every sense. He was a husband, a son, and a brother—and a linch-pin in the cause of Spiritualism. Honor to whom honor is due."

During the delivery of the speeches, rappings were heard all over the room, in response.

I regret that the paper, giving a minute account of the funeral, has been lost. Arrangements were made by the friends, Judge Edmonds, Dr. Gray, and Mr. Partridge, to procure a church in Rochester, and announce through the papers that the funeral would be held on the 8th of May. These parties telegraphed a message to Isaac Post, of that city, to the above effect, who immediately returned the answer, "Bring on your dead. My house is at your service." We started on the following morning with his remains. Our party consisted of mother, Maggie, Cathy, Lizzie (my daughter), and myself. They engaged the undertaker to go with us to attend to the burying of our

dead. We arrived in Rochester at seven o'clock P.M., and found the hearse and carriages at the depot waiting to take us to Mr. Post's house, where already had assembled a large company of friends who deeply sympathized with us.

The funeral was appointed at ten o'clock A.M. of the 8th. Rev. Chas. Hammond delivered the funeral sermon. The remains were taken to Mount Hope Cemetery; from whence we returned to Isaac Post's, where we tarried over night. We engaged a travelling coach early the next morning, and started for Newark, thirty miles east of Rochester. We arrived at my brother David's about three o'clock P.M. The children all met us at the turn of the lane: all were delighted to see us. We took them in the carriage with us; little Georgie, who was about seven years of age, was wonderfully struck with the appearance of our deep mourning, and said, "Grandma, what makes you all dress so black? Did anybody die?" Mother replied, "Yes, dear, your uncle Calvin died." He replied, "Oh dear, that's too bad." After dinner we all went to sister Maria's, a distance of one mile, taking the children with us. When David and his family went home, little Georgie wanted to stay with us, which he did, and played with little Charlie Smith until bed-time—when they retired and apparently slept well all night. The next morning Georgie felt sick. My brother Stephen harnessed up his horses, and we took him home. They went for the doctor immediately, but he died before twelve o'clock that day. His funeral was on the 12th day of the month. Two Methodist ministers officiated.

It was a singular coincidence that two Universalist and two Methodist ministers selected the same Bible text, the same funeral hymns, and the same tunes, at the services in New York, Rochester, and Newark. In my affliction I had not noticed this until mother spoke of it, and said it was evident that the same guardian influences had controlled on all these three occasions, distinct as they were in time, place, and circumstances. It was probably meant that we should recognize and feel the presence of the unseen friends, who thus signified their sympathy with us in our grief.

Lizzie, Katie, and myself started for New York on the morning of the 13th, leaving mother and Maggie with David and Elizabeth, who had suffered such a sudden bereavement.

I abstain from speaking of the private friendships which grew out of so much opportunity for acquaintance and intercourse with so many out of the best classes of New York society (in the true sense of the word). I am proud as well as happy to have enjoyed such high and precious and ennobling friendships, many of which are not wholly severed even by that death which only makes our friends invisible for a time to our mortal eyes, since a thought, a wish can still bring to me those signal sounds which are as their voices. I will indulge myself here only with a page or two about two semi-angelic women, Alice and Phœbe Cary, who have now risen into the completeness of their angelhood.

ALICE and PHŒBE CARY were among my truest, best, and dearest friends. I was introduced to them by Mr. Greeley when we first came to New York, and our friendship continued during their life. We passed many pleasant evenings with the sisters and a few select friends.

The last time I saw Phœbe, we met in Arnold's store, the day before we sailed for Europe. She came and sat down beside me, and laid her hand gently on mine before I saw her. I was delighted to see her, but was startled by her changed appearance. I rallied her a little, and tried to cheer her. She smiled faintly, but not as she was wont to do. Phœbe had made a confidante of me some time before. She called on me late one afternoon, and sent up word to me to come at once, as she could remain but a short time.

It was an unexpected call, at that hour, and I hastened to see her as soon as possible. She said, "I could not rest without seeing you. Sit down. I want to talk with you." I inquired about Alice's health, as usual, and she said, "Alice will never be any better. What shall I do when she leaves me? I cannot live without her."

Her dark expressive eyes spoke more than her words. I tried to console her, but I did not know the nature of the incurable disease that was slowly but surely wearing Alice's life away. She remained some time, and when leaving me at the door her eyes filled with tears.

Mr. Robert Cary (their father), and his elder daughter, from Cincinnati, always visited us when they were in New York, and they both related many

interesting occurrences which they had witnessed in their own family. I will here relate their “Ghost Story,” as they told it to me.

“There had been a thunder-storm, and the pouring rain had driven all into the house. Our new house was finished, but we had not yet moved into it. This new house stood opposite the old one. The rain was over, and the sun was shining brightly when our mother called out, and asked, ‘How it came that Rhoda and Lucy were in the new house?’

“The door of the new house was open, and there stood Rhoda, in plain sight, holding Lucy in her arms. The whole family came to the door, and all saw the same. They called ‘Rhoda!’ but received no answer. They supposed Rhoda had gone with Lucy into the house to escape the rain; when at this moment Rhoda came down-stairs where she had left Lucy asleep. She, too, saw what we had seen—the apparition of her own ‘wraith’ with that of Lucy in her arms.

“All felt solemnly impressed, and believed it to be a warning of something sorrowful. They went over immediately, and examined every part of the house, but not a trace of any human being was discernible. Rhoda died within a year, and Lucy a month later. They frequently saw Spirits distinctly.”

(For further particulars of these events see a “Memorial of Alice and Phœbe Cary,” by Mary Clemmer.)

Phœbe possessed ready wit. She attended our first reception (soon after my marriage to Mr. Underhill), after we had moved into our new house. When she met me at the parlor door, she whispered in my ear, “My feet are quite wet; I forgot my india rubbers.” It had rained hard that afternoon. I told her she could find a change up-stairs in my room; and sent one of my girls to wait upon her. When she came down into the parlor, she said to me, aside, “I little thought I should stand in your shoes so soon.”

These sisters were devoted Spiritualists, but knowing how often I was importuned by believers and curious people, they would sometimes specify, in their notes of invitation, that they wanted me “socially, not Spiritually.” I subjoin to this chapter facsimiles of two of Alice’s precious little missives, which I preserve among my treasures of the heart. I add to them also

facsimiles of the writing of Horace Greeley and Judge Edmonds, which can never lose their interest for Spiritualists. I leave Mr. Greeley's letter as a puzzle to the reader to decipher it. It is well known that a special apprenticeship had to be served in the *Tribune* office to train a few compositors into the possibility of reading his writing.

When Mrs. Greeley died in October, 1872, Mr. Greeley in his great sorrow sought for consolation through the Spirits. At his request Mr. Oliver Johnson came and asked me to get a communication from Spirit friends of Mr. Greeley. Mr. Underhill, his mother, Mr. Johnson, and myself took seats at the table, and waited in silence for some Spirit to manifest. Very soon the alphabet was signalled for, and this was spelled (it was taken down by Mr. Underhill), "Bear my message to my dear friend Horace. Tell him many kindred Spirits are hovering around him in this day of trial; and though he may not be susceptible to our heart-whisperings now, when quiet and rested he will feel the truthfulness of this message. Truth will meet a response in his honest heart.

"ALICE CARY."

COURSES OF TEST EXPERIMENTATION.

One of the courses of test experimentation made within this period in New York was as follows:

I met a party of gentlemen at the house of Dr. John F. Gray, in Lafayette Place, New York City, for about two years. The meetings were held once a week. The circle was composed of Dr. John F. Gray, Hon. John W. Edmonds, Dr. Robert T. Hallock, Dr. Hull, Charles Partridge, and George Washington Rains. The latter gentleman was an officer in the U. S. Army, and stationed at that time on Governor's Island.

This party carefully, honestly, and scientifically investigated the rappings and all phenomena connected therewith. They sought to ascertain, if possible, the peculiar temperament of both mind and body, or the predominant qualities of either, or both, to become instrumental, or to interpose an agency, between the visible and invisible worlds.

They were disgusted with the silly pretended exposé of the conceited "Buffalo doctors," and the equally silly and infamous C. C. Burr.

Major Rains was an educated chemist and fine electrician. He arranged a swing, which was fastened to iron or steel chains, sustained by tackles and pulleys attached to the ceiling. I sat in the swing, and over my head was a large glass of circular form, about two and a half feet in diameter, and beneath my feet (which were about four feet from the floor) was a steel circular disk about three feet in diameter. The whole arrangement was suspended by the tackles. Major Rains brought his electrometer, and made every experiment that their ingenuity could invent or suggest. They suspended the table; each person in the room standing on horse-shoe magnets provided for that occasion.

The physicians were provided with stethoscopes, and placed them on different parts of my person. They all declared “that the sounds had nothing whatever to do with the physical body;” and, “So far as we can discover, the mediums have no more power over the sounds than the investigators have.”

Such has been the character of the verdict, whenever an honest attempt has been made to discover the source of the rappings.

PRIVATE CIRCLE FOR MEETINGS ON MONDAY EVENINGS.

This circle was composed of Professor Mapes, Dr. A. D. Wilson, Dr. Kirby, Dr. John F. Gray, W. P. Sanger and wife, Dr. Robert Hallock, George Willets, Hon. John W. Edmonds, John T. Daley, and several others. This party was known as Professor Mapes’s party.

This party agreed to sit for development, and waive all personal questions, as they wanted to learn all they could of a general character.

It was also agreed, by the heads of the committee, that no fanatic in Spiritualism, nor dictatorial or selfish individual, should be admitted to their party. If, by chance, any one conflicting with the harmony of the circle was admitted, he was forthwith expelled. I could mention several who were thus dismissed, or gotten rid of, after having been admitted. I must pass over many very interesting and important facts that were made known to and through that intellectual and honorable party. One circumstance, as a visible and tangible phenomenon, was beyond all cavil.

Professor Mapes was requested, by Spirit direction, to place a number of three-cent pieces on the floor, under the table between his feet, and they would let him see what the Spirits would do with them. All the gentlemen present searched their pockets, but could not find enough to gratify the demand of the Spirits; so one of the gentlemen of the party went out and succeeded in getting a large handful of them. They were then more plentiful in circulation than they are now. The professor then placed them as directed. He scattered the coin on the floor, and placed his feet in front of the money, protecting it from any interference; they strictly prohibited all women save myself and the wife of one of the company, from the circle—for my sisters were at that time holding sittings at their own home. The party was then directed to examine the situation of the professor and the money. The gas was burning brightly. I never turned down the lights, and knew nothing of cabinets or curtains, and had never, at that time, heard of them. The professor sat at one end of the table, and I sat, facing him, at the other end. We were at further distance apart than any other two of the circle. The Spirits directed us to sing. We sang a few minutes, and they spelled out “look.” The professor moved back, and there, in five piles lying neatly piled one upon the other, to the extent of four inches each in height, were the three-cent pieces. The company were all directed to leave their seats and look at them. Professor Mapes made a draft of the positions of the money before and after the experiment.

One of the party, a gentleman of veracity, had his gaiter unbuttoned while sitting in the circle. He was greatly excited, but, according to the rules under which he entered the association, he did not speak until the manifestations ceased. He was then called upon to explain to the circle; which he did by holding up his feet and showing to the circle that a playful Spirit had meddled with one of his gaiters. (He wore cloth gaiters and low shoes.) And the strangest part of the thing was that it could not be found in the room. He was asked to explain what the sensation was. He said, “The hand that held my *foot* was icy cold, and the nimble fingers that unbuttoned the gaiter were burning hot.” He added, “My gaiter was new, and buttoned tightly.” They were sometimes directed to get on the table; and, without hands touching it, it would run all over the floor—sometimes with one, and often with two or three persons, upon it.

RULES OF SÉANCES.

At our public hours, none were admitted but investigators. An intelligent waiter at the door received the fee on their entrance, though the number was not inconsiderable who were welcome without fee, nor of those to whom, when I had reason to know them to be poor and deserving, I afterward returned it.

The following were my private rules, made known to all visitors, compliance with which was enforced by the general public feeling, and by the respectful and polite tone which characterized my receptions, and the personal consideration of which all the family were the objects, from our noble mother, who was usually present, to our youngest sister, Katie (now Mrs. Jencken, in London).

“RULES OF ORDER.

“Each individual in the Circle is entitled to a just proportion of the time, and that it may be secured to each in turn, without interruption or annoyance, System and Order are essential, to secure which, the following Rules of Order are expected to be observed.

“*First.*—Each person may use the time which properly belongs to him as he sees fit, but, having so used it, cannot again ask questions, or in any way appropriate the time, except he is again reached in rotation.

“*Second.*—Any aid that new investigators may require will be cheerfully rendered by Mrs. Brown, but no other person in the Circle should, by prompting, suggesting, loud conversation, or otherwise, interfere with the person in communication. *Particular attention is called to this Rule, and an exact and rigid observance of it requested, as its violation results in great loss of time and disturbs the Harmony, which is essential to reliable communications.*

“*Third.*—Conversation in the Circle, except by those in communication with the Spirit, should be as little as possible, and that aside and in an undertone.

“*Fourth.*—All persons should follow, without delay or discussion, all directions with reference to conduct, position, etc., as compliance with directions generally insures satisfactory manifestations, while neglect or refusal usually results in their partial or complete cessation.

“*Fifth.*—The ladies, in whose presence the manifestations are made, will use their best exertions to satisfy all inquiries; but since the manifestations, alike in their commencement, character and duration, are *above their personal control*, they cannot promise that all persons, or all inquiries, will obtain answers, no manifestations being made except as the Spirits will.

EXPLANATIONS.

The subject should be approached in good faith and with entire truthfulness and honesty, by all who seek correct responses. This remark is suggested by the law which in Spiritual intercourse is believed

to be of universal application, viz., ‘*Like attracts Like.*’

“The communications are mainly conversational in their nature, and in answer to questions such as can be responded to by the Spirits in the monosyllables, *Yes* and *No*.

“Inquirers should direct their questions to the Spirits, as if they were conversing with them in the body, stating their questions plainly, either in writing or orally.

The answers by the Spirits are given by signals as follows:

Three raps signifying *Yes*.

One rap “ *No*.

Two raps “ *neither Yes nor No*, but variously, according to the nature of the question, as: *not now, not yet, not quite, don’t know*, and the like.

Five raps signifying *Alphabet*—The Alphabet is never responded to, except when the signal for it has been given by the Spirit. Hence, to save time, it is never called, unless the signal has been heard.

Continuous light raps indicate *an error* in the answer just given. They annul the signal previously made, and the question should be repeated.

Continuous loud raps indicate *want of Harmony* in the Circle, and may generally be taken as a reproof in consequence of some violation of the Rules of Order.

Admission One Dollar.

Hours: From 3 to 5 P.M., and 8 to 10 in the evening; except Wednesday and Saturday evenings, and Saturday afternoons, which are reserved for private parties.

The mornings of each day are also appropriated to private parties, the terms for which are five dollars for each hour, and for which arrangements can be made by application to Mrs. Brown.

☞ No visitors will be received on Sundays.

We received a great deal of money. There were occasional days when my maid, the good and faithful Susie, would make returns of a hundred dollars as the day’s receipts; but it was as freely spent as given. We, none of us, have ever been accused of the spirit of hoarding; nor had Mammon any temple in the home or in the hearts of any of us, though Charity had; and that, I think, is one of the frequent though not invariable fruits of Spiritualism and intercourse with Spirits, observable in human character and life. Money, and selfishness in all its forms, are apt to shrink into small dimensions of value in the minds of persons who communicate much with those of the next life, and who thus come to know and realize, as a certainty, the truth of *that next life*.

My dear Mr. & Mrs. Underhill—

Can you come
and take tea with us
to-morrow evening? I do hope
so. I want you socially—not
spiritually. Mr. Oliver Johnson
and Mr. Owen will be here,
and both of them hope to
meet you. Tea at six
o'clock. Our number is
52 East 52nd St. near the
Fourth Ave.

Hoping to see you
I am most truly yours.

Alice Cary.

Sincerely,

My dear Mr. & Mrs. Underhill

Can you come and
take tea with us to-morrow?
I do hope so. I want you socially—
not spiritually. Mr. Oliver Johnson
and Mr. Owen will be here, and both
of them hope to meet you. Tea at six

o'clock. Our number is 52 East 20th
St. near the Fourth Ave.

Hoping to see you.

I am most truly yours.

Alice Cary.

Sunday.

My dear Mrs. Underhill—
Can you and Mr.
Underhill. dine here with
us tomorrow evening?
Half past six is our hour.
You will meet Mr. Davis
of Washington, and prob-
ably Mr. Greeley.
Hoping to see you
I am very truly yours,

Alice Cary.

52 East 20th St.

Saturday.

My dear Mrs. Underhill—

Can you and Mr. Underhill drink tea with us tomorrow evening? Half past six is our hour. You will meet Mr. Davis of Washington, and probably Mr. Greeley

Hoping to see you.

I am very truly yours,

Alice Cary.

52 East 20th St.

Saturday.

March 30. '58

Dear Leah

I have a gathering
of spiritualists at my house
on the first Monday evening
of every month. The first
one will be next Monday
April 5th will you come?
You will meet many old
friends

Yrs J W Edmunds

159 Lexington Avenue
between 31st & 32^d Street

March 30. '58

Dear Leah

I have a gathering of
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Monday evening of every month. The
first one will be next Monday April

*5th. Will you come? You will meet
many old friends*

Yrs J W Edmonds

159 Lexington Avenue

between 31st & 32^d Street]

New York  Tribune.

New York, Dec 4 1876

My Friend,

I thank you for
your note just opened,
I will try to call on
you soon, but you
are very busy.

I have a letter
from my folks today.
They are at Worcester,
near Bourneouth in
the south-west corner
of France. Mrs. Wedley
cannot walk a step, be-
ing a fearful sufferer
from Rheumatism, but
her nerves are better.
The girls are both well,
I may try
to find you next Sunday.
Yours, Grace E. Wedley
Mrs. L. L. Underbill

New York Tribune

New York, Dec. 4, 1876

My Friend:

I thank you for your note just opened. I will try to call on you soon, but I am very busy.

I have a letter from my folks to-day. They are at Arcachon near Bordeaux on the south-west coast of France. Mrs. Greeley cannot walk a step being a fearful sufferer from rheumatism, but her hives are better. The girls are both with her and well. I may try to find you next sunday.

Yours, Horace Greeley.

Mrs. Leah Underhill

CHAPTER XIX.

NEW YORK CITY (*Continued*).

OUR BRILLIANT SUCCESS WITH THE SUPERIOR INTELLECTUAL CLASSES—WHISKEY AT WASHINGTON—
COGNIZANCE OF DOMESTIC SECRETS—DISCOMFITURE OF ANDERSON, “THE WIZARD OF THE NORTH”—
REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE WITH A VERY NOTORIOUS PERSON.

Our rooms were frequented by much of the best society in New York; and it was common to see the street encumbered with long files of carriages. Particularly the intellectual and literary classes were familiar visitors, both at our circles and in our private life. Many of them became our most intimate friends. Hundreds of promiscuous visitors were deeply interested, and were, in reality, Spiritualists at heart who had not the courage to face the social and business disadvantages attaching to the public avowal of such a novel and unpopular doctrine, which the clergy, as a rule, denounced. Several of the most highly respected Senators in Congress having become open and warm Spiritualists—among whom Gov. N. P. Tallmadge was the most openly zealous—probably nearly all of that body passed through the experience of our rooms; for I frequently received telegrams from Washington for private engagements for a party of a dozen or more. It was remarkable how the superior classes of actors *took to Spiritualism*, and I have been greatly interested in them from my earliest acquaintance with them. My tenderest sympathies have been awakened when sitting in circles with many of them, who have been raised in my estimation far above the level of those who fancy themselves to be their superiors.

This Spiritualism is a searcher of hearts, and the truly good get satisfactory answers and elevated Spirits to guide and watch over them. But to return to Washington, it was not at that time a very satisfactory place for the prosecution of Spiritualism: even though it was such a centre of congregation from all parts of the country. It was, indeed, a centre of political agitation, and business connected with the Government; but at that time, at least, too much whiskey was consumed there. The following letter from my young sister Katie will sufficiently illustrate this:

“I am tired of my life. Only think of it! Last evening a party of twelve fine-looking gentlemen visited our rooms. All, but two, were as drunk as they could well be. They made mean, low remarks. Only imagine Maggie and me, and dear mother, before a crowd of drunken Senators! One very fine-looking man stood up before the crowd, and addressed them thus: ‘I wish to be heard, gentlemen. This is all a humbug, but it is worth a dollar to sit in the sunlight of Miss Kate’s eyes.’

“(Margaretta had left in disgust.) At this sudden announcement, all was still as death. My face was red as fire. A friend walked up to me. He was from the Navy-yard, and said, ‘Don’t mind him, he is drunk; I would not pay the least attention to him. He is a gentleman when sober; and when I repeat his language to him to-morrow, he will feel ashamed of his conduct.’ We all left the room, and that ended the scene. Oh, dear Leah, I long to be laid in a peaceful grave. I care not how soon. I would live on a crust of bread, and drink cold water, if I could live a different life. Oh, how we wished for you, dear Leah! I told them, if my sister Leah was with us, they would not dare insult us. They would be escorted by officers from our rooms.

“Washington is a mean city. I despise nearly everything I meet here. Gov. Tallmadge and Waddy Thompson are honorable gentlemen. They bring their friends during our private hours.”

I have written these extracts from my child-sister’s letter, to more fully illustrate the dreadful position we held at that time. Still, some wondered how it was that the “Fox Family” should have been the chosen ones, through whom Spirits could communicate; and one little incident, which I can never forget, transpired when we were at Barnum’s Hotel, corner of Maiden Lane and Broadway, 1850.

Dr. Scott, a tall, wiry, wriggling old consequence, walked up to mother with his smirking smile (the rooms were filled with investigators, and he wished to appear to great advantage), and said, bending low, “Mrs. Fox, can you explain why your children should be mediums? Is it because your family are better than other folk?”

Mother replied, “Dr. Scott, can you explain to me why fresh fish swim in salt water?” They looked at each other in silence, while the company roared with laughter.

Experience taught me to adopt a rule not to give private séances to single strangers, but rather to only two or more at a time. This was not so much as a safeguard against personal impertinences (for such things were of rare occurrence, and never repeated), but under the advice of my Spirit friends, to afford some protection against malignant enemies who might come (as had happened) under a mask of friendly interest and honest investigation, and then, when unchecked by the presence of another witness, give calumnious accounts of their private séances. I might cite some curious instances of this.

But I should have but few instances to tell of personal impertinence ever having been addressed to me, though thus living a life which constantly afforded to promiscuous strangers the free admission to the presence of myself and my young sisters, protected only by their dignity and their noble mother’s presence. I will mention but one, which occurred in an Eastern city, in 1857, the hero of which was an important man who had inherited from a far nobler father one of the greatest names known to our history. The incident occurred neither in New York nor in Washington, but to name the city would go far to identify the person. Five gentlemen were announced at one of my public hours, of whom one was evidently the most prominent man, and a sort of leader of the company. A glance sufficed to show that he was considerably intoxicated, and that some of his companions had had more or less share in the conviviality which had preceded their visits to the “Spirits” of a different kind. He is no longer in this life, but some of the rest doubtless survive, and are not likely to have forgotten the occasion when they had to retire ignominiously from my rooms at a hotel.

Naturally during the years thus spent in the exercise of my mediumship in New York, I became acquainted with no small number of domestic and family affairs of the most delicate—sometimes the most painful—character. In the private séances so often solicited by visitors there would arise, in their communication with Spirits, revelations of secrets the existence of

which was little suspected by the outside world, and which, with me, were under no less absolute and sacred a sanction of secrecy than in the Catholic confessional, or the confidential relations of the medical man. And it is a happiness for me to know that, apart from the communications received by visitors from their Spirit friends, I have many a time and oft had the opportunity of exerting useful influences on the minds of some whose inmost hearts and lives have thus been laid open before a sympathetic and sisterly eye.

DISCOMFITURE OF ANDERSON, "THE WIZARD OF THE NORTH."

I am tempted to relate one occurrence of this period, though I do not remember its exact date. The newspapers will supply it to anybody desirous of chronological accuracy (it must have been about the middle of 1853). The famous conjurer Anderson, "The Wizard of the North," was exhibiting in New York, I believe in the large building called Tripler Hall, in the rear of a hotel on Broadway, near Bond Street. He had advertised a challenge to any "poverty-stricken medium" to come to his hall and attempt to produce their "knockings" if they could, with the offer of a thousand dollars if they should do so. Possibly he had expected to crowd his hall for several evenings by this clap-trap, as he was himself a conjuring trickster by trade, he supposed that we were of the same kidney, or class, and that we would not venture to accept such a challenge from him. It happened that we (Katy and I) arrived one evening at home from a week's absence in Rochester, and were told at the door by Susie that Judge Edmonds, Dr. Gray, and one or two friends more were waiting in the parlor to see us. They had known of our expected arrival at that hour.

Now, the object of our visit to Rochester had been this: I had conveyed there for burial the body of a beloved member of my family. After that interment, I was further detained by the death of a nephew, and the same undertaker remained to conduct this second ceremony. The friends who were awaiting us at home hastily explained the situation, Anderson's challenge, etc., and said that we ought to be already at Tripler Hall, and urged our instant starting. I pleaded the impossibility (physical and moral), but they insisted that we must not leave that triumph to our adversaries—for

the sake of our cause as well as for our own or that of our friends. They said that a cup of tea could be prepared and swallowed in fifteen minutes, and the upshot was that Judge Edmonds drafted a short note to Mr. Anderson, which I copied and signed, announcing our acceptance of his challenge and our speedy following after our missive, with the sole variation from his terms that the one thousand dollars were to go to some public charity (I forget which), as we would not accept it. A reliable messenger rushed off to place it in Anderson's hands. We reached the hall with all possible speed and found it crowded to its utmost capacity. I had the arm of Judge Edmonds, and Kate that of Dr. Gray. We arrived in time to hear Anderson reading aloud, at the front of his stage, the concluding lines of the letter he had received. He was in a perfect rage, gesticulating in the most violent manner, denouncing the suddenness with which this had been sprung upon him, etc., etc., and refusing us admission to his stage. All know that conjurers usually extend forward a long bridge from their stage over the pit of the theatre, along which they travel to and fro in the course of their dealings, and "patter" with the audience. We and our respective escorts (we, of course, in deepest of crapes, and dropping with fatigue^[11]) ascended the outer steps of this bridge, and moved forward toward the stage, to which we came very near. But the violence of speech and action by Anderson, who barred the way at the other end, held us back. Mr. Partridge spoke from the stage, and Judge Edmonds and Dr. Gray from their places, relating the facts, how we had that moment returned from burying our dead, exhausted with fatigue and hunger, and heart-broken with grief, but had yielded to their appeals to us to come instantly to meet the challenge which had been addressed to us and to Spiritualism, with the simple condition that the money staked by Anderson should go not to us but to a public charity. It may be imagined what effect all this produced upon the audience. "Fair play to the Rochester knockings!" "Fair play to the sisters!" etc., etc., mingled with hisses, seemed to come from every throat. A very little more, and I believe the "Wizard of the North" would have been mobbed on his own stage. But finding that we could not gain admission to it while he thus barred the way, and it being plain and patent to everybody that he had backed down, and that we and Spiritualism were incontestably triumphant, the crape-draped figures, with their highly honorable escort, withdrew as they had come, and glad were we to get back home and to disrobe ourselves of our travelling dresses. The next day the papers told how Anderson had

backed down, and for a week following redoubled crowds flocked to our receptions with their congratulations.

The conjurer might, of course, have been sued by us for his \$1,000, for the benefit of a charity; but we were satisfied, and cared no further for that or for him. He never renewed the challenge, or if he ever did, in any distant place when we were not there to respond (as is likely enough, for such is a conjurer's trick), we never heard of it.

The "Wizard" had met with about as bad a fate as the Buffalo doctors, with their knee theory, the Rev. C. C. Burr, with his toe-ology, and the Harvard professors, with their unknown theory—promised, but never put forth. Anderson had, no doubt, never examined the numerous "investigations" through which we had passed triumphant, and had taken for granted that we were tricksters, like himself, who needed our own stage, machinery, etc., and was probably the most astonished of men and conjurers when he received my unostentatious acceptance of his challenge, followed up by the *de facto* appearance of two black-draped and travel-worn young ladies with their escorts, bearding the lion in his den, and vainly applying for impromptu admission to his own stage.

REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE WITH A ONCE VERY NOTORIOUS PERSON.

One afternoon in 1852, between five and eight (my private hours), my good Susie announced a grand lady, apparently, who had come in a fine carriage with a footman, and who, when told that it was not one of my hours for receiving, begged to see me for a moment. She was admitted, in her satins and velvets, of good figure, handsome and striking, though not beautiful nor longer very young; lady-like in her deportment and general effect, though I could discover that her language was not quite up to her elegant style of dress and manner. She made on me the impression of some woman of rather inferior antecedents, who had been married by some rich man for her good looks. She wanted simply to make an engagement for a private hour, which I gave her for the next morning, and to which she was duly punctual.

She had not been long seated at the table with me, after asking some questions, when she bent her head down upon the table and wept and

sobbed convulsively, and called on the Spirit of her mother, who, together with other affectionate expressions, answered in substance, "My dear child, you were left destitute, and a helpless child, and neglected and abused by those who should have taken care of you." After recovering herself, she said, "You little know how this affects me. These are words of tenderness from my mother; I do believe it, and I am sure of it. I was, indeed, left a helpless child to the cold charity of the world."

She did not remain very long, nor do I recall more details; but she wept profusely and sobbed, and took my hand, bidding me good-bye, leaving on the table the regular fee of \$5. I had no reason to expect to see her again, nor any to doubt her entire respectability.

She soon after came again (my maid Susie announced her as "the rich lady") and engaged another hour for a private party of her friends. There came with her, to that appointment, three or four nice-looking and well-behaved young women, and two little girls, sisters, of nine and eleven years, whom she presented to me as "my Gracie and my Florence;" and whom I, at the time, presumed to be her children.

She asked, "Is so and so present?" (I do not recall the name.) "Yes," was answered; and she asked, "What shall I do with these dear children?" The reply came, "You have done well by them so far." They were pretty and sweet-mannered children, evidently under good training. She said they were not her own, and that they were being brought up at a superior seminary in Albany, and that on coming of age they would inherit a good property. She turned to the children and said, "Your father and mother are here." "Oh! aunty (clinging to her), what do they say?" "They say you must continue at school." (The children loved her, and had wanted to come home to her.) The Spirits then rapped out, "We watch over you hourly. When you pray we always listen to your prayers." There was weeping and sobbing between the children and their "Aunty." Some questions then passed respecting their property and minor matters. I afterward learned from my good friend, Dr. Wilson, who knew all about them, that the father, after the death of the mother, had fallen into relations with my visitor (who, to me, was as yet only "the rich lady"), and then, when he found his end approaching (from consumption), had given her his directions about his children, knowing her heart to be good, and reliable for conformity to them. While this sitting was

going on an interruption occurred, which eventually led up to such consequences that I must introduce it.

A French woman, an importer of laces and a pedler of them, was announced by Susie, who knew that I had some business with her about the purchase of some of her goods, and I had to give her a few minutes. She was a keen and artful woman, and having noticed the style of the customary carriages at my door, she asked me if I could not introduce her to some of my friends, to whom she might sell some of her wares. I yielded to her request (such women are sometimes irresistible), and the result was that, on my showing my own lace to my elegant visitors, they examined the store in her box, and two of them engaged sets of lace from her. Through her acquaintance thus formed with "the rich lady," at whose house she had to deliver her laces, she learned who she was, and it was easy in New York then for such a woman to learn all about her. It will be seen below that the consequences were serious for my poor visitor, "the rich lady." This French lace dealer had heard about the "manifestations" at my house, and even knew something about such things in France, and in her visits to that house, to me unknown, as was equally the name of its mistress, she took on herself the character of a clairvoyant medium, and played upon them plenty of her cunning tricks, such as pretended entrancement, etc., for which perhaps a door may have been opened through the genuine experience they had had with me.

My still anonymous friend, "the rich lady," paid me afterward another visit, in which she still kept me ignorant of who she was. She came alone this time, and unbosomed many of her sorrows to me. (How many others have done so! some men, but chiefly women!) While she was there in the parlor a gentleman came in (Dr. Schoonmaker, a dentist, of 12th Street, a friend of mine, who I believe is still living and remembers it) and was introduced into the back room. By some accident of the opening of the door, he caught a glimpse of my visitor in the front room. He said to me, "Mrs. Brown, are you aware who that is in your front room?" I said that we knew her as "the rich lady," though she was an uneducated one. "Have you never heard of the notorious —— —?" and he told me her name, of which of course I had heard. "I am so sorry you have told me this," I replied; "she has engaged me for another day." "Well," he said, "I am her dentist; and she was in my chair a good part of yesterday. Her fee is as good as anybody's; your advertisements open the door to all investigators, and you have no

right to refuse her so long as she behaves herself.” “She has certainly acted like a lady thus far with me,” I could not but answer.

Between then and her next engagement with me (which was her fourth visit to my house), the lace woman had played her fraudulent cards upon her. She had palmed off upon her a fraudulent trance and Spiritualism, and had prepared her for the coming of a handsome young French officer, with et cetera, et cetera of a story. The upshot was that this young man was the lace woman’s son, and an adventurer of whom the rich lady was made a prey. He pretended honorable love and marriage, at which a sinful but repentant soul clutched readily. She married him, and paid me a farewell visit on her departure.

She said, “You little know the good you have done to me;” and she threw on my neck a gold chain and handsome cross. She kissed my hand and left it wet with tears. “Oh, it won’t hurt you,” she said, “if I kiss your hand, though I am much worse than you think me—or at least have been.”

My good friend, Professor Mapes, was present at this, and public repute had made him know all about her. After she had gone he said to me, “You have done that poor woman more good than all the preachers of New York could ever have done. You have reformed one of the vilest of women.”

I afterward heard that her handsome adventurer-husband spent or got away from her all her money, and absconded, abandoning her; and that she died destitute and forlorn in a hospital in Paris. I could tell more tales than this of women who have passed through my hands, or rather those of the Spirits, between whom and them I have humbly served as a medium.

I have thus far carried my narrative down to the time at which my public mediumship closed with my marriage in 1858. Of the five years spent in New York, I have spoken only in the general manner of the present chapter, though were I to enter upon the field of particulars I should have to weary the reader’s patience with a second volume. I will only relate two episodes of that interesting period: the phosphorus affair, and the affair of the Harvard professors, for reasons which will be apparent. But I must give them each a chapter to itself.

[11] In this I but followed in the rut of custom. I do not now approve of crape and lugubrious mourning. Why thus parade insignia of mourning for the mere disappearance of those whom we know to be now more alive than when they were fettered by the bonds of sublunary life—far, far happier and higher—and not less near and loving to us than they had been when we could see, hear, and feel them with our natural senses? Our immoderate grief only grieves them. Spiritualism will, one day, put an end to the trade in crape, “and,” the scribe might well add, “the enormous exactions of the undertaker, which often impoverish the living but sincere mourners.”

CHAPTER XX.

PHOSPHORUS.

SPIRIT LIGHTS VISIBLE AT DARK SÉANCES—PRIVATE CIRCLE IN JERSEY CITY IN 1857—SOLID GRANULES OF PHOSPHORUS APPEARING IN EARTH WHICH I HAD TOUCHED—SURPRISING AND DISTRESSING LETTER—THE GOOD SPIRITS AND DANIEL UNDERHILL TO THE RESCUE—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN—MARRIAGE TO D. UNDERHILL, NOVEMBER 2, 1858, AND CLOSE OF MY PUBLIC MEDIUMSHIP—ANALOGOUS PHENOMENA IN PRIVATE AT HOME.

I will here relate from my experiences a curious and, so far as I know, novel chapter in the records of Modern Spiritualism, namely, *the production of solid granulated phosphorus by Spirits.*

It will be seen that that phenomenon actually occurred through my mediumship, though under circumstances and appearances highly suggestive (to our enemies) of trickery on my part, and such as naturally to awaken uneasiness in the minds of friends whom long experience with me should have made, and had made, suspicion-proof in regard to me and my Spirit guides; and that for nearly nine months I was made very unhappy for the want of confirmatory evidence as to the real objective genuineness of the phenomenon sufficient to silence cavil and compel conviction. My unhappiness proceeded from the consciousness that *some* friends had doubted more or less (though never going the length of signifying doubt to myself), while I could not know *who*, nor how far doubt had taken distinct shape in their minds. To a person of my temperament and temper, however sustained by pride and conscious innocence, I cannot easily conceive a more painful situation. But thank God (and the good Spirits who have never failed me in the long run), this invisible cloud which for months chilled the atmosphere of my life, as a distressful something keenly felt though not to be seen, cleared off like the evaporation of dew from the surface of a mirror, as will be seen below.

We never gave *public* séances in darkened rooms. I do not approve of the practice. Many forms of manifestations thus obtained are calculated to prejudice the investigator and excite suspicion of the medium. I love to sit with a few friends, who are prepared to witness manifestations, whether in

light or dark, and who have had sufficient evidence to understand the conditions necessary to enable Spirits to manifest themselves in form. On such occasions there should not be more than six or seven persons in the circle, and they should all be harmonious, and sit together around a table; placing their hands in such a manner that if any one shall stir, or change position, it must be at once discovered.

When Spirits appear, they come surrounded with, or luminous by, their own light. I seldom sat in a darkened room without seeing lights, which were also visible to the company.

I never used anything to conceal, or afford the Spirits a hiding-place for anything. I was never directed to do so. We (all persons present) have been told to sit in the dark and rub the palms of our hands together; when, immediately on that being done, sparks of light would appear. (I can frequently produce such lights—or, rather, they come of themselves—when entirely alone.) I suppose they are electrical or phosphorescent; but there are different lights. At times they vary in form, color, and intensity. Sometimes they will be of the size of a spark; sometimes of that of a hand, or larger; sometimes flitting or flickering about; sometimes—especially when a Spirit is communicating with you by touches, or caresses, or otherwise—fixed in front of your face, like a person looking into your eyes; sometimes a vague, luminous cloudiness, suggestive of a form or not, as the case may be. Mr. Robert Dale Owen took every precaution to lock and seal the doors; not that he doubted us, but because he was writing a book for the sceptical world to read, and in his honesty of purpose he determined to be “sure.” He was right. His two books, the “Footfalls” and the “Debatable Land,” can never lose their interest and value to the student of Spiritualism.

Frequently, while sitting with select friends in dark circles, lights would appear in different parts of the room; sometimes quite numerous. These sights were no new thing to us, but very astonishing to those who had never before witnessed such manifestations. In order to convince such, the Spirits would direct them to examine the room and everything in it; lock the doors, join hands and quietly wait for manifestations. We were sometimes directed to sing, but not to ask questions, nor to make any exclamations of wonder, or expressions of opinion, until the manifestations had ceased. Such directions must be complied with, if we would win good success.^[12]

I met a large private circle in Jersey City, for a long time, once a week. Many of the members of this party had met at my séances for years; but, as they could not all come to New York, I went to their different houses across the river to accommodate them. This party insisted on sitting in darkened rooms. Some of them had witnessed remarkable manifestations in our most private séances. George Willets and wife were members of this circle, and they desired to have others see a little of the wonderful manifestations which they had so often witnessed.

I consented to do so, but the Spirits expressly directed them not to attempt such an undertaking in a party so little calculated to follow implicitly the directions requisite to accomplish the results sought. We had learned, by repeated observations, that Spirits could, under certain conditions, when we were all in bed and no person stirring in the room to disturb the forces through which they operate, disclose mysteries which hitherto were unknown in this age of the world. After much persuasion, I decided to sit for such manifestations.

The directions were given by the Spirits, and all were anxious to see and know these facts through their own perceptions; as it is difficult to “realize” some things on the representations of others, however worthy of our confidence and however possessing it.

Our first sitting proved satisfactory, so far as it went; but the party were directed to be more quiet and not have more persons present than could be accommodated conveniently.

The second attempt was at the house of Mr. Simeon S. Post, and was successful until they became greatly excited, and the directions were not followed; inasmuch as there were too many persons present who were entirely ignorant of the rules by which we were controlled; and although they were permitted to make the closest scrutiny of the whole previous arrangements, in order to keep the forces undisturbed during their (the Spirits’) operations, they (the investigators) could not or would not, for want of common sense, perhaps, follow all the directions.

This being the case, in order to gratify those who were prepared and blest with good sense, a part of the company were directed to go with me into the adjoining room (a bath-room). While there the lights appeared, very bright

—almost blazing at times. I was faint and *my hands seemed burning*. I naturally ran to the faucet to let the cold water run on them, which greatly relieved the burning sensation. But the floating, moving lights continued, and being near the door, the lady of the house went out into the yard with me, where I instinctively plunged my hands into the damp earth (it had been raining).

The next evening Mrs. Post saw *lights where my hands had been*, and found in the ground several particles of solid phosphorus, being guided to the spot by seeing the phosphoric smoke rising through the ground, as well as by the luminosity of the spot. They (my friends) could not comprehend this mystery. They talked over the matter between themselves, and my friend Mr. Willets wrote me a letter, which I will here give.

“No. 6, PAVONIA PLACE,
JERSEY CITY, November 24, 1857. } ”

“DEAR MRS. BROWN:

“The members of the circle are expecting me to see you and have a talk with you respecting the manifestations of lights at Mr. Simeon Post’s house last week. I argued that the Spirits could produce phosphorus (in my opinion, accumulated from the atmosphere and medium forces of the circle combined). Mr. Post had not the least suspicion of anything wrong, but could not account for the lights appearing where your hands had been. I have stood by you always, and in this case have done so, saying that I know that you would not deceive any one. *Can you* explain this matter so that it will be satisfactory to the circle? You will not think hard of me for bringing this to your notice, and believe me to be your sincere friend,

“GEORGE WILLETS.”

This letter of course implied that I might have had—what had of course no foundation in fact—phosphorus on my fingers. Nor could I have much blamed any in whose mind such a thought might have arisen, however painful to me, or however unjust the suspicion.

Mr. Underhill had accompanied me to Jersey City. He was a friend of Mr. Post's, who had invited him to join the circle. It was convenient for him to call for me, as it was on his way. I did not know that any one doubted the genuineness of the manifestations at Mr. Post's, and judge of my painful astonishment when I read Mr. Willet's letter. I knew I was innocent, but did not know that I could so prove myself. I prayed to the Most High to relieve me from this terrible imputation. Mr. Underhill felt sure of my innocence. In his own purity of heart he could not doubt me. His sister had become a medium, and spoke in unknown tongues. And his mother could move tables by placing her hands upon them. She is still with us, in full possession of her faculties.

“None know her, but to love her,
None name her, but to praise.”

Mr. Underhill came to my rescue in that dark hour of my life, when old and trusted friends wavered in opinion.

If this volume were to be limited in its circulation to New York City, where Mr. Underhill is conspicuously, while modestly, known in the business world through a long series of years, as President of one of its oldest and most solid Fire Insurance companies, it would not be necessary to say a word about his character for honor and veracity. It best becomes me to abstain from doing so, leaving to strangers to him to satisfy themselves by easy inquiries.

He accompanied me to Jersey City, and how many others (if any) shared his generous confidence I could not know, as none had the rudeness or unkindness to manifest their doubts to me. His faith in my integrity strengthened and enabled me to stand the ordeal. I leave it to him to relate the rest of the story.

STATEMENT OF DANIEL UNDERHILL.

“On Sunday evening, at Mrs. Brown's, soon after the receipt of Mr. George Willet's letter, there were present Dr. Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland, Mrs. Brown, and myself. Some of her most

intimate friends frequently dropped in on Sunday evenings to enjoy a social cup of tea, and an hour or so in pleasant conversation.

“On this occasion it was announced by the ‘invisibles’ that on Tuesday evening next an investigating séance, for phosphorescent phenomena, should be held; and the following persons were chosen by the Spirits to attend, namely, Dr. A. D. Wilson, Henry Sheldon, Oliver Johnson, Mrs. Johnson, J. F. Cleveland, Mrs. Cleveland, Julian G. Davies, Mr. Downer, Mr. Beadle, Leah (Mrs.) Brown, Katie Fox, Daniel Underhill, Dr. Kirby, ‘if he wishes.’

“The parties not present at the time were notified and invited to attend.

“Mr. Sheldon was requested to procure some earth, which he did from under Brooklyn Heights, and brought it with him in a cigar-box wrapped in paper.

“When the parties were seated at the table, in general conversation, directions were given by the Spirits.

“Mr. Sheldon was requested to unwrap the box of fresh Brooklyn earth and place it on the centre of the table, and darken the room. The box was placed as directed.

“After the room was darkened, the box was moved by the ‘Spirits’ nearer to Mrs. B., who then placed her fingers in the earth. Her fingers soon became luminous, so that her hands were visible to the whole circle. When she removed her hands the light was turned on. Dr. Wilson took the box, and with his knife dug out a quantity of granulated phosphorus. In doing so, some of the granules had not sufficiently hardened, and separated on the table. The doctor, in endeavoring to pick them up, burnt his fingers quite badly.”

And again, July 31, 1858:

“On this evening I called on Mrs. Brown (at No. 1 Ludlow Place), who stated to me that she had all day been impressed that if she should have a sitting with a few friends that evening, she would have manifestations of a character to explain the mystery of the occurrence at Mr. S. S. Post’s, Jersey

City (where I had attended a private séance with her between seven and eight months previously).

“On this occasion there were present Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Johnson, Miss Knight, Mr. Kedzie (of Rochester), Mrs. Brown, and myself. We retired to the back parlor, closing the doors and windows in order to make the room quite dark. Mr. Kedzie procured a bowl of earth and water, as directed (by the Spirits), and placed it on the table around which we were seated. While we were engaged in general conversation and singing, lights were seen floating about the room, at times immediately over the centre of the circle. Mrs. Brown placed her fingers in the bowl, from which arose a light, or vapor, which so illuminated the room as to make her hands visible to all around the table.

“Bright phosphoric lights were also seen in the earth. On examination, we found deposited several granules of pure phosphorus, which we collected and preserved.

“On the following evening Mrs. B. informed me that she wanted to go to Jersey City, to the house of Mr. Post; that if she did so, the same manifestations would occur in the presence of his family; and she desired me, if I saw Mr. Post, to inform him of her wish to do so, in order to satisfy them that what had occurred there, in the commencement of the dark sittings, nearly eight months previously, was entirely beyond any control or agency of hers; but she desired that no one should be present except Mr. Post’s immediate family.

“On Wednesday morning following (August 4th) Mr. Post called at my office. When I informed him of Mrs. Brown’s wishes, he expressed much pleasure, and a strong desire that it should be so tested. He wished that it might be during the current week, if possible, as he expected to leave home the first of the week following, to be absent for several months. I informed Mrs. B. that evening of my interview with Mr. Post, when she appointed Saturday evening, and desired me to inform Mr. Post of the fact, as he would call on me the following day.

“Mrs. Brown called at my office about 11.30 A.M., and informed me that she had been directed by the Spirits to have Mr. John Hilton present.

“I accompanied Mrs. B. to the home of Mr. Post, at 245 South Sixth Street, Jersey City, on the evening appointed. We arrived there about eight o’clock P.M. They were requested to make a thorough examination, in order to satisfy themselves that neither Mrs. B. nor myself had any phosphorus about us. Mrs. B. retired to a private room with the ladies, who disrobed her of every article of clothing, and furnished her with an entire outfit from their own wardrobe. After this they dressed and reconducted her to the room in which the séance was held.

“In the mean time the gentlemen satisfied themselves that there was no phosphorus about my person. We assembled in the front room up-stairs. There were present Mr. Post, Mrs. Post, a daughter and two sons, Mr. Post’s sister, Mr. Hilton, Mrs. Brown, and myself.

“After taking seats at the table, they were directed to close and lock all the doors and windows. They were also directed to get a bowl of water and bring in the box of earth, which had been procured by Messrs. Post and Hilton during the day and sealed up by them.

“After sitting a few moments they were directed to ‘break the seal’ (which was done by Mr. Simeon Post). The box was placed in front of the medium. He was then directed by the Spirits to ‘put out the light,’ which was done. In a few moments they discovered a phosphorescent light, emanating from the ends of Mrs. Brown’s fingers. Indeed, there seemed to be a vaporous exhalation from her entire person; and after her fingers had rested on the earth a short time, a visible fluid gradually concentrated around Mrs. Brown’s hands, and deposited itself from the extremities of her fingers into the earth.

“This performance lasted about fifteen minutes. The box was examined, and Mr. Post procured from the earth it contained several quite large granules of phosphorus, the purity of which was beyond question, and which he preserved, and caused to be chemically examined and tested.

“Mrs. B. was then taken in charge by the ladies, and reconducted to the dressing-room, clothed in her own attire, and returned to the sitting-room. There was a wish expressed, on the part of all present, to get communications from their ‘Spirit friends;’ and, although there seemed to be a perfect willingness on the part of the medium, the controlling Spirits

deemed it advisable that there should be no further manifestations on that night, and said, through raps, 'It would be wrong to permit different classes of Spirits to manifest under existing circumstances. I will bring about another meeting soon.

'BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.'"

Mr. Underhill and I were married on the second day of November, 1858, at No. 35 Nineteenth Street, New York City. My father had taken the house of Mr. Horace Greeley, who made it his home with my parents when he was in the city. We were married by the Rev. John Pierpont. Mr. U. purchased the house we now live in, and we moved into it immediately on our return from a western excursion. It was agreed upon that his friends should be mine, and my friends should be his, but that I should never again sit in public circles.



Daniel Underhill

He thought I had done my duty faithfully, and that it was time for me to retire from public séances. The announcement fell like a thunderbolt upon nearly all of my investigators. Many argued that it was a duty I owed to the public, and to my God, to continue to labor in the cause of Spiritualism; that I had been chosen, by higher authorities, to do a work that rested on me and my family. Some of my friends thought differently, and as they knew the man who had so generously acquitted me of all blame or suspicion, and who so nobly sustained me through the difficulties with which I was destined to contend, my true friends congratulated me and rejoiced at my good fortune.

ANOTHER STATEMENT FROM D. UNDERHILL.

“SUNDAY NIGHT, August 1, 1859.

“We retired about eleven o’clock. I had locked the door opening from the hall into the front room, also the door leading from the same hall into the bath-room. The door leading from the hall to the bed-room was locked on the inside by Leah; but after retiring she was in doubt as to whether she had locked it; whereupon I arose and went to the door, tried the lock, and found it fast. I then returned to bed. In a few moments we were startled by the springing of the bolt of the lock of that door. Leah exclaimed, ‘What’s that?’ I replied, ‘It’s nothing but the springing of the bolt of the lock;’ supposing that when I turned the knob the bolt had failed to spring into its proper place. ‘No,’ she said, ‘it is something more than that.’ Very soon we heard sounds, as if Spirits were on their knees on the floor patting the carpet with their hands. I commenced asking questions, and received responses by the same sounds.

“It was soon evident that one or more Spirits were around our bed. My questions were answered by a hand patting me on the head. Soon something was passed over our faces, just touching us, after which lights appeared over us. They passed to my side of the bed, and a cloth was placed upon my right shoulder and pressed heavily—at times as with two hands; also on the arm. When the pressure left my arm the light again appeared on or over us, waving about us, as if to gather force from the atmosphere. During all this time hands were distinctly visible holding the cloth with a bright phosphorescent light upon it. Then the sheet with which I was covered was drawn down and the cloth was placed upon my stomach and chest. On feeling it with my hands, I found it was a coarse towel. Repeated pressures were made in this way for some time, after which there was an alarm of fire in the neighborhood. I dressed myself, and went out, returning in about half an hour. On my return I again locked the door and extinguished the light, and went to bed.

“My attention was attracted to a bright light on the floor, when, at the same time, Leah noticed a bright, flashing light, rising from the mantel, and showing the picture over it distinctly. She called my attention to it. The foot-board of the bedstead obstructed my view, but on rising I noticed several lights, also one which appeared above the mantel. I arose and went to satisfy myself that there were no matches lying around, when, reaching

the spot, I found the light was very brilliant, and emitted a strong phosphorescent vapor. Placing my hand upon one of the lights, I found it to be a small granule of phosphorus, comparing exactly with those which we had before found deposited in the earth. Several of these granules were lying near by, and also in the candelabrum on the end of the mantel-piece.

“As I was about to resume my place in bed, the alphabet was called for, and the Spirit spelled out, ‘Look in the fire-place.’ On looking I discovered a number of pieces or granules of phosphorus on the bricks inside of the fire-place, which was closed tightly with a screen or summer-piece. The Spirits said they had placed them there to avoid damage or danger, as my getting up and going out had disturbed the forces too suddenly.

“A few evenings afterward, there were again manifestations of phosphorus, which were so strong that I was fearful they might set fire to the bed, and as a matter of precaution, I procured a pail of water and placed it beside the bed. It was then spelled, ‘Keep passive, and there will be no danger.’ I was then directed to place paper and pencil under the bed, which I did, and very soon we heard the scratching of the pencil on the paper, which was badly scorched, and a third part of it burned; but the writing was plainly visible. The paper was lost, and I do not now remember the communication written upon it. The Spirits said, however, that the scorching of the paper was caused by the forces being too strong.”

“SATURDAY NIGHT, July 31, 1859.

“About ten o’clock P.M. Leah and myself were in the second story. I was sitting by the front window, leaning my hand against the casement, dozing. Leah had passed into the back room, and was returning to the front room, when she was startled by heavy tramping, apparently close behind her. The sound was similar to that of a person walking in wooden shoes. She called to me. I started, and met her in the middle room. When Leah stopped walking the footsteps ceased, but as soon as she commenced again the same heavy steps kept pace with her. We passed into the front room, where she called me to try a test. She sat down in a high chair, and I seated myself on the floor, in front of her, taking her feet on my knees. Very soon the same sounds were produced on the floor beside her chair; showing very clearly

that the sounds were produced independently of her, not even causing any nervous start or electric motion on her part.

“D. UNDERHILL.”

[12] The frequency of the appearance of *lights*, or luminous appearances, at séances, is suggestive of the idea that Spirits often employ, in their manifestations, phosphorus in some form or condition—phosphorus probably drawn from the atmosphere, or from the brains of the medium or sitters, or both, through their higher knowledge of the secrets and resources of the chemistry of nature. That they should know also how to make it inodorous is easily conceivable. I have never perceived (though in this the author of “The Missing Link” thinks she has sometimes done so) any of the phosphoric odor as accompanying those exhibitions of Spirit lights, though sometimes the entire forms of Spirits appear as what I may call phosphorically luminous. That human brains are, to some extent at least, natural reservoirs, from which they draw or elaborate some basis of phosphorus, seems probable enough—or at least should be so to those philosophers who strive to approximate phosphorus to thought, and bid us eat phosphoric food to stimulate our wits, and fancy they catch a gleam of it in the brightening of the eye. It is reliably recorded that at the famous séances of Count de Bullet, at which the controlling Spirit is known by the conventional name of “John King,” he constantly appeared holding what seemed a round, white, luminous stone, whose light would gradually fade out after a while, till almost invisible, when he would either withdraw for a moment or two into the cabinet, where the medium was asleep in trance, and return with his lamp re-illuminated, or else apply the *stone*, called his ‘lamp,’ to the forehead of the Count de Bullet, when the light would be seen to rapidly resume its full brightness. The first effect of such application to the forehead, was that *dark clouds of wreathing smoke* would seem to enter into the stone from the forehead, soon to pass into pervading light; strong in close proximity, but, like phosphoric light, not radiating to much distance. That the Spirits should be able to elaborate the cerebral, or atmospheric, or terrestrial phosphorus into the condition of solid particles of granulated phosphorus, is not difficult to conceive, but I do not know of any other instance of their having actually done it, under human observation, than that now related by Mrs. Underhill.—ED.

CHAPTER XXI.

BOSTON AND THE HARVARD PROFESSORS, 1857.

AGREEMENT FOR AN INVESTIGATION BY A COMMITTEE OF HARVARD PROFESSORS—EXPULSION OF A STUDENT FROM THE DIVINITY SCHOOL FOR THE CRIME OF MEDIUMSHIP—PROFESSOR FELTON—AGASSIZ—VARLEY, THE ELECTRICIAN OF THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

On the 16th day of June, 1857, we left our home in New York, at the earnest solicitation of friends in Boston, to attend an investigation which had been arranged in accordance with the following note:

THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES.

“We, the undersigned, hereby agree to submit the question in controversy between us in regard to the phenomena of Spiritualism, so called, to the investigation and award of the Committee, consisting of Professors Agassiz, Pierce, and Horsford, and Dr. Gould, according to the terms of the paper annexed.

Boston Courier,
by GEORGE LUNT.
H. F. GARDNER.

“CAMBRIDGE, June 9, 1857.”

DR. GARDNER'S CONDITIONS.

“Meeting to be held in a suitable room in the city of Boston, to continue six days, or a longer time if desirable, and two hours each day to be devoted to the investigation, commencing at 4 and closing at 6 o'clock P.M.

“All the arrangements and details for the forming of the circles to be entirely under the control of Dr. Gardner, except the Committee may remain out of the circle so formed if they choose to do so. If the phenomena are produced under the arrangements as ordered by Dr. Gardner, and they are not satisfactory to the Committee, they shall have the right to require them to be produced under such conditions as in their judgment will be satisfactory to them.

“As harmony is an essential condition for the production of the manifestations, it is agreed that no loud talking or exciting debate or other unnecessary noise shall be allowed in the rooms during the

sessions, and that each person present shall be treated with that respect and courtesy which is due from each person to every other in the society of GENTLEMEN.

“There may be present at each session the writer in the *Boston Courier*, and a friend, and the four gentlemen composing the Committee of Investigation, Dr. Gardner, and any number of persons not exceeding six at any one time, at his option, such being selected and invited by Dr. Gardner.

“The writer in the *Courier*, and the gentlemen composing the Committee, agree that, while they are at liberty to exercise all the shrewdness and powers of observation which they are capable during the investigation, they will not exercise their will power to endeavor to prevent the manifestations, but allow them to be produced under the most favorable conditions which a thorough scientific investigation will permit.

“The words ‘to be provided by Dr. Gardner’ first being stricken out, and the words ‘and a friend’ inserted, it is further understood that the proceedings are not to be published until the investigations are closed.

“*Boston Courier*,
by GEORGE LUNT.
H. F. GARDNER.”

We questioned, at that time, the propriety of leaving New York to attend to this request, as to do so would necessarily cause us to break our engagements at home. And, as to the contest between the professors of Harvard College and the Boston Spiritualists, mediums, etc., we cared very little at that time whether they (the professors) should pronounce for or against us, and for this reason: that it may be safely averred that while intelligent, scientific minds, honestly and studiously devoted to their legitimate labors and investigations, have been, and are, glorious pioneers in the advancement of human knowledge, *there are subjects* touching which scholastic eminence furnishes but a poor outfit for special and honest investigation. But we had met the equals of these Boston and Harvard professors long ere this; and here let me add we seldom received enlightenment through scientific opponents. Many successful experiments had been made by honest, intelligent, and educated investigators, which proved, beyond all cavil, what *their science* could not fathom—and did not wish to.

It will be remembered, I doubt not, that Professor Eustis, of the Scientific School, once caught the foot of a Divinity student out of its proper place under the table, and that the said professor cried “fraud,” and brought an accusation against the student before the governing faculty of the university,

who, in their high wisdom, knowing not what they did, expelled the young man for the “heinous crime of owning an erratic foot.”

I am unable to state here at what time this occurrence took place, but the public press, at that time, very extensively condemned the action of the collegiate authorities in that case; and, in doing this, Spiritualism necessarily came more or less in for consideration. Great doubt was expressed, in the press editorials of the day, of the honesty of the professors in thus expelling the student without giving him an opportunity to prove his integrity. The expulsion of this young Divinity student was simply because he was a Spiritualist and a medium, and refused to abandon the sacred truth which he had learned and tested in his own person; and it was in the full spirit of the old New England persecutions for honest opinion obnoxious to dominant authority; which, fortunately, had no longer the power to hang or burn. But the world moves, after all, in spite of such persecutions, to which history soon does the justice it has rendered to Galileo; and the leading scientific journal of New England, published at Cambridge itself, an organ of the Scientific faculty of Harvard, has recently put itself in the line of modern progress in reference to this very subject of Spiritualism.

Fierce and rude attacks were made in the columns of *The Boston Courier*, by these professors, upon mediums, Spiritualists, and all who had any faith in the phenomena; insinuating at the time that, “If mediums believed in themselves, they would only be too eager to exhibit their powers before those who are most sceptical.”

In reply to these attacks Dr. Gardner made the following proposition, viz., That a committee of twelve disinterested men shall be selected by the principal editors of *The Boston Journal*, *The Boston Courier*, and *The Daily Traveller*, which committee shall arrange all the preliminaries of the discussion, and decide upon the strength of the arguments, adduced for and against the Spiritual origin of the various forms of manifestations of the present day, usually denominated Spiritual.

The challenge to a public discussion was declined, but in lieu of it the following statement appeared in *The Courier*, which was well understood to have proceeded from Professor Felton, of Harvard:

“We will pay \$500 to Dr. Gardner, to Mrs. Henderson, to Mrs. Hatch, or to Mr. or Mrs. anybody else who will communicate a single word imparted to the ‘Spirits’ by us, in an adjoining room; who will read a single word, in English, written inside a book, or sheet of paper, folded in such a manner as we may choose; who will answer, with the aid of all the higher intelligences he or she can invoke from the other world, *three questions*—which the superior intelligences must be able to answer, if what they said in *The Melodeon* was true; and we will not require Dr. Gardner or the mediums to risk a single cent on the experiment. If one or all of them can do one of these things, the five hundred dollars shall be paid on the spot. If they fail, they shall pay nothing; not even the expense incident to trying the experiment.”

Immediately on receipt of this challenge from the professors, Dr. Gardner replied, “Now, Mr. Editor, I accept the offer, as I do also the distinguished gentlemen named as the committee, provided the person or persons making the offer will agree to let all of the conditions of the arrangement come within the scope of those natural laws within which we believe Spirits are confined in producing the manifestations above referred to; and I will meet the person or persons making the offer at any time and place, after next Sabbath, which he or they may name, to make such arrangements as are necessary to a thorough and scientific test of this great subject.

“H. F. GARDNER.

“May 27, 1857.”

The committee named in the *Courier* was George Lunt (editor of that paper), Prof. Benjamin Pierce, chairman, Prof. Agassiz, Prof. Horsford, and Dr. A. B. Gould.

The place of meeting was in the upper room of the Albion Building, corner of Tremont and Beacon Streets, Boston.

I and Katie accepted an invitation to go to Boston to lend our contribution to this investigation, with disinterested self-sacrifice for the sake of the cause, and in support of Dr. Gardner, one of the best of men and Spiritualists, who thus stood forward as its representative and champion. I may mention that this was anterior, not subsequent to the Phosphorus affair

related in the preceding chapter. There were present Miss Kendrick, George A. Redman, J. V. Mansfield, the Davenport brothers, Katie and myself—mediums.

The committee of Spiritualists were Mr. Allan Putnam, Dr. Gardner, Major G. Washington Rains.

At the first meeting Dr. Gardner expressed his dissatisfaction with the idea of a penalty of \$500, or of any money, to be paid by the *Courier*, and this seemed to meet unanimous approval; so that no ground remained for the position afterward taken by the professors, that they had to make an award, as stakeholders and judges, of \$500 on the presentation of certain specific phenomena laid in Prof. Felton's original (unsigned) article in the *Courier*, while the document above quoted, of June 9, 1857, between the *Courier* and Dr. Gardner, is conclusive to the effect that it was to be a general scientific investigation. It will be seen below how the professors afterward quibbled over this point, and avoided making a report of any results, but only an "award" that the \$500 was not claimable, because the specific phenomena originally put forward by Prof. Felton had not been exhibited; while at the same time promising a future report, which report they *never came up to the scratch of making*. It was generally understood that a draft of a report had been proposed by a portion of them, but suppressed because deemed more "damaging to Christianity" than one favorable to Spiritualism. So that Harvard has ever since remained under the odium and ridicule of never having made a report, of which, in what they called an "award," it had recognized that the duty was incumbent on the professors, and which they had expressly promised to make. It was in vain that for months and years the Spiritualist papers of Boston clamored for the promised report, and jeered at those who evidently found it impossible to make one which should not be more or less favorable to Spiritualism.

This meeting, to my mind, was very unsatisfactory. I was astonished and disappointed at the course which the professors pursued. Astonished at their seeming ignorance of all laws of order and harmony, and disappointed to find that they had met, determined to establish some appearance of carrying their point, right or wrong.

They fell far beneath the degree of intelligence we had met on so many former occasions, in connection with the phenomenal manifestations associated with Spiritualism. Our investigating committees had always heretofore been chosen with reference to their intellectual competency and honorable character; whose reports were expected to enlighten thousands who were unable to make such experiments themselves. But I am quite sure, from the experience I have had, that a great majority of those highly conceited professors, many of whom were of quite ordinary talent, had, to some extent, overcome the deficiencies of nature by turning their attention in one direction of specific study only.

On all other subjects, they are ordinary, and often very ordinary men. Professor Agassiz conversed with me pleasantly, and I was attracted to him, and admired him greatly; *but I knew he was wanting in courage*, the courage of being ready to forfeit or endanger his great *position* in Harvard and the country. I incline to the theory presented by Mr. Allan Putnam in 1874, in his pamphlet on “Agassiz and Spiritualism,” that Agassiz at this investigation was in a false position, which gives him claims to our indulgence. In his earlier life, when a professor in Switzerland, he had been thrown under the mesmeric spell by the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend, and at this investigation was under mysterious conflicting influences, of which his better self was perhaps unconscious, and for which it was not responsible. (See the pamphlet referred to, published by Colby and Rich, Boston.)

He said to me, “Mrs. Brown, I have seen the day I could do everything you do.” I replied to this, “Very well, Professor: if you can do all that is done through me, you are a Medium,” and I at once challenged him, in friendship and good-will, to take the stand (in the presence of their committee) with me, and submit himself to the same tests I would, adding that unless he could do all that the Spirits could do through me, I should claim the victory.

He replied, “My physical condition is much changed now.” I did not at that time know that he had formerly been a mesmeric subject, and had been made clairvoyant, and given positive proof of his mediumship long years before I knew anything about Spirit rappings, magnetism, or anything relating to the subject. He positively refused to have anything to do further

in connection with the examination at that time, and remained with me, aside, during the investigation going on at the time with others.

Prof. Agassiz noticed that my attention was somewhat absorbed in the movements of Prof. Pierce (as he wandered about so restlessly, and seemed very much troubled; I trying to study him out), and said to me, "Mrs. Brown, what do you think of Prof. Pierce?" I replied, "If he were boxed up in such a way that I could see nothing but his lower extremities, and the manner in which he plants his feet on the ground, I could read his character correctly." He laughed and said, "I think you do not read him favorably." "No," I said, "he is not an honest man."

Prof. Agassiz did not dare to sit in a circle and subject himself to the influence or power of magnetism, as may be seen in a quotation from "Facts of Mesmerism," by Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend, an article written by himself and consequently correct, from which the following is extracted:

"Desirous to know what to think of mesmerism, I for a long time sought for an opportunity of making some experiments in regard to it upon myself, so as to avoid the doubts which might arise on the nature of the sensations which we have heard described by mesmerized persons. M. Desor, yesterday, in a visit which he made to Berne, invited Mr. Townshend, who had previously mesmerized him, to accompany him to Neufchatel and try to mesmerize me.

"These gentlemen arrived here with the evening courier, and informed me of their arrival. At eight o'clock I went to them. We continued at supper till half-past nine o'clock, and about ten Mr. Townshend commenced operating on me. While we sat opposite to each other, he, in the first place, only took hold of my hands and looked at me fixedly. I was firmly resolved to arrive at a knowledge of the truth, whatever it might be; and therefore, the moment I saw him endeavoring to exert an action upon me, *I silently addressed the Author of all things, beseeching him to give me the power to resist the influence, and to be conscientious in regard to myself, as well as in regard to the facts.*

"I then fixed my eyes upon Mr. Townshend, attentive to whatever passed. I was in very suitable circumstances: the hour being early, and one at which I

was in the habit of studying, was far from disposing me to sleep. I was sufficiently master of myself to experience no emotion, and to repress all flights of imagination, even if I had been less calm; accordingly it was a long time before I felt any effect from the presence of Mr. Townshend opposite me. However, after at least a quarter of an hour, I felt a sensation of a current through all my limbs, and from that moment my eye-lids grew heavy. I then saw Mr. Townshend extend his hands before my eyes, as if he were about to plunge his fingers into them; and then make different circular movements around my eyes, which caused my eye-lids to become still heavier.

“I had the idea that he was endeavoring to make me close my eyes, and yet it was not as if some one had threatened my eyes, and in the waking state I had closed them to prevent him. It was an irresistible heaviness of the lids which compelled me to shut them, and, by degrees, I found that I had no longer the power of keeping them open, but did not the less retain my consciousness of what was going on around me, so that I heard M. Desor speak to Mr. Townshend, understood what they said, and heard what questions they asked me, just as if I had been awake, but I had not the power of answering. I endeavored in vain several times to do so, and, when I succeeded, I perceived that I was passing out of the state of torpor in which I had been, and which was rather agreeable than painful.

“In this state, I heard the watchman cry ten o’clock; then I heard it strike a quarter-past; but afterward I fell into a deeper sleep, although I never entirely lost my consciousness. It appeared to me that Mr. Townshend was endeavoring to put me into a sound sleep. My movements seemed under his control; for I wished several times to change the position of my arms, but had not sufficient power to do it, or even really to will it; while I felt my head carried to the right or left shoulder, and backward or forward, without wishing it, and, indeed, in spite of the resistance which I endeavored to oppose; and this happened several times.

“I experienced at the same time a feeling of great pleasure in giving way to the attraction which dragged me sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other; then a kind of surprise on feeling my head fall into Mr. Townshend’s hand, who appeared to me from that time to be the cause of the attraction. To his inquiry if I were well, and what I felt, I found I could not answer, but

I smiled; I felt that my features expanded in spite of my resistance. I was inwardly confused at experiencing pleasure *from an influence which was mysterious to me*. From this moment I wished to wake, and was less at my ease; and yet, on Mr. Townshend asking me whether I wished to be awakened, I made a hesitating movement with my shoulders. Mr. Townshend then repeated some frictions which increased my sleep, yet I was always conscious of what was passing around me.

“He then asked me if I wished to become lucid, at the same time continuing, as I felt, the frictions from the face to the arms. I then experienced an indescribable sensation of delight, and for an instant saw before me rays of dazzling light, which instantly disappeared. I was then inwardly sorrowful at this state being prolonged. It appeared to me that enough had been done with me. I wished to awake, but could not; yet when Mr. Townshend and Mr. Desor spoke, I heard them. I also heard the clock, and the watchman cry, but I did not know what hour he cried. Mr. Townshend then presented his watch to me, and asked me if I could see the time, and if I saw him; but I could distinguish nothing. I heard the clock strike the quarter, but could not get out of my sleepy state. Mr. Townshend then woke me with some quick transverse movements from the middle of the face outward, which instantly caused my eyes to open; and at the same time I got up, saying to him, ‘I thank you.’ It was a quarter past eleven. He then told me—and M. Desor repeated the same thing—that the only fact which had satisfied them that I was in a state of mesmeric sleep was the facility with which my head followed all the movements of his hand, although he did not touch me, and the pleasure which I appeared to feel at the moment when, after several repetitions of friction, he thus moved my head at pleasure.

“(Signed) AGASSIZ.”

On the above quoted statement of Agassiz himself, Mr. Allan Putnam, in his pamphlet on “Agassiz and Spiritualism,” remarks:

“We are distinctly taught, in the above (see pages 6, 7, 8, and 9), that as philosopher and scientist, then in the full vigor of manhood, Agassiz ‘had for a long time sought’ for such an opportunity to be mesmerized as Dr. Townshend’s visit afforded. This professor, even then eminent—this man,

gifted with gigantic mental and strong physical powers—reverently and prayerfully, as well as philosophically, sat calmly down, not to welcome and imbibe, but ‘*to resist the mesmeric influence.*’ Then Greek met Greek, scientist met scientist, in calm but resolute measurement of the strength and efficiency of their respective weapons and forces. Agassiz says his purpose was to *resist*. The whole tone of his account, however, indicates that his resistance was in no degree captious, but designed simply to measure the strength and enable him to note the action of mesmeric force. The vigorous professor then called into exercise all his own great inherent powers of resistance, and such further aid as his earnest aspiration could bring to his support, and yet was forced to yield up to another’s will all command over his own physical organs. A stronger than he entered and ruled over his peculiar domain. The Author of all things, though besought, did not so cooperate as to countervail the legitimate action of natural powers. Invisible forces, emitted and directed by another man’s mind, against which his own robust intellect was planted in calm and firm resistance, penetrated even the compact Agassiz, and caused him,

“1st. To feel the sensation of a current through all his limbs.

“2d. To close his eye-lids from necessity.

“3d. To lose his powers of utterance.

“4th. To lose power to change the position of his arms.

“5th. To lose power to even *will* to move his arms.

“6th. To lack power to prevent movements of his own head by another’s will.

“7th. To experience great pleasure in giving way to the attraction upon him.

“8th. To feel surprised at the contact of his head with another’s hand.

“9th. To find the operator the cause of the attraction.

“10th. To be confused at experiencing *pleasure* from an influence that was *mysterious* to him.

“11th. To see for an instant dazzling rays of light.

“12th. To be unable to awake, even though he wished to.

“Similar experiences have become so common that they are now devoid of strangeness. Thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands, have had their like since 1839. But no other Agassiz has described the sensations and facts attending the subduing operations. The character of their reporter gives his experiences exceptional value.

“It is true and readily admitted that this keen and exact observer was then dominated by *mesmeric*, which many assume to be widely different from *Spirit*, force. The belief is prevalent to-day that those two adjectives describe one and the same thing. Few persons who have sought to discover the relations between mesmerism and Spiritualism, hesitate to indorse the following statement, made by Cromwell F. Varley before a committee of the London Dialectical Society, which was substantially this, viz., ‘I believe that the mesmeric force and the Spiritual force are the same—the only difference being that in one case the producing agent is in a material body, and in the other is out of such a body.’ Mr. Varley’s competency to give a valuable opinion may be inferred from the fact that the great Atlantic Telegraph Company elected him from among England’s eminent electricians, to supervise and control the constructors and operators of their vast and delicate apparatus for flashing knowledge under the waters, from continent to continent, and he made their project a success. We add, that Spiritualism had, for years, been manifested in striking forms and much distinctness, both through himself and other members of his own family, and that he had been an extensive observer and scientific student of its phenomena, and a careful tester of its forces. He had reached the conclusion, not only that the chief force employed in producing both the mesmeric and the Spiritualistic entrancement was the same, but also that it was distinct from either electricity or magnetism. From Mr. Varley’s views the conclusion may be fairly deduced that Agassiz, in middle life, experienced much that is undistinguishable from the sensations and perceptions of modern mediums, and that he was subdued by use of the same force by which they are controlled. As a general rule, though possibly subject to a few exceptions, persons who have once yielded to mesmeric, afterward are very liable to succumb to Spirit force. This rule will have important bearings when we come to view the deportment of Agassiz as a member of the Harvard investigating committee. What we have already

adduced suggests the probability that, if unresisted by himself, Spirits could have controlled him with much facility, had he consented to be calm and unresisting while he was within the auras or spheres of persons whose emanations and constituent elements were helpful to the control of physical forms by Spirits.”

The great naturalist probably was mesmerized at other times than the one of which his own pen furnished an account. For Townshend, p. 344, says: “Prof. Agassiz, who, when mesmerized, could not of himself stir a muscle, moved like an automaton across the room when impelled by me. Even while retaining his consciousness enough *to resist my efforts* to move his limbs by mere gestures, without contact of any kind, he subsequently owned that he was actually compelled into such motions as I wished him to perform.”

CHAPTER XXII.

BOSTON AND THE HARVARD PROFESSORS (*Continued*).

DISINTERESTED JUDGMENTS UPON THE SHAM INVESTIGATION—OUR PART IN THE PROCEEDINGS—MORE FAIR INVESTIGATION BY THE COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NEW ENGLAND PRESS—INVESTIGATION BY A BODY OF UNITARIAN CLERGYMEN—OUR TRIUMPHANT RETURN HOME—THEODORE PARKER.

Not only would Prof. Agassiz not sit in circle with us, saying that he had vowed never again to sit in a circle, but he would not even consent to go into a private room with the medium, Mr. Redman, who invited him to do so when he found that the powerfully adverse influence of hostile wills and feelings strained against him, in the room in which sat the professors and the representative of *The Courier*, paralyzed his ability to exhibit the phenomena which, under normal circumstances, were familiar and invariable with him.

It is evident that all this was a mere sham "investigation." *The Boston Traveller* said after it, that "It is *the unanimous opinion* of those who witnessed the whole proceedings, with the exception of the representative of *The Courier*, that the whole affair was in no sense of the word an investigation, and that nothing was proved or disproved by it." And without quoting from other (non-Spiritualist) papers, I will only add from *The Cambridge Chronicle* of July 11th, issued under the shadow of old Harvard's edifices, and circulated through its halls and dormitories, the following comments by a correspondent: "It is patent to observation that the committee approached the subject with preconceived views. They seem to have taken for granted that they knew more on the subject, even without investigation, than the unscientific Spiritualists with all their long experience and heart interest in it; and they erroneously judged that the public would take their *ipse dixit* with unreasoning deference. Because a man knows a rock, does it follow that he knows a star? or if he knows a star, does he know a Spirit? Their professors have shown their ignorance in this 'investigation,' nothing more," etc.

I may say, with specific reference to the part of the “two Fox sisters,” that in spite of the bad influences upon us of the bitterly hostile spirit which ruled the so-called “investigation,” and the contemptuous ill-temper often manifested by some of the committee, I had no reason to be dissatisfied with the part played by our Spirit friends. Our rappings came, if not as profusely as usual, yet abundantly, both low and loud, in spite of our being moved to different parts of the room, of our being placed standing on cushions and on the stuffed spring seat of a sofa, etc. Their demonstrative effect was broken by Agassiz’s assurances that he could show how these could be produced by natural physiological means, and his pledge that he would do so, a pledge given in the collective form of “we,” and therefore binding on the body whose silence was assent to them. And yet on the last day, after he had in haste left the room, and when Dr. Gardner called for the fulfilment of this engagement, Prof. Pierce, who had presided, wriggled out of it by the plea that that was only an individual promise by Prof. Agassiz, and *not one by the committee*. Of course it would have been easy to recall Agassiz, or to hold another meeting for the purpose. Nor was that pledge ever after redeemed, in spite of the calls of the Spiritualist press. Nor could the great Agassiz have more eloquently admitted the impossibility of its fulfilment, than he did by such silence under such circumstances.

On the 10th of July, 1857, Mr. Allan Putnam, of Roxbury, published a statement from which I extract the following:

“Mrs. Brown and her sister, Miss C. Fox, were present as mediums. A conversation was started which was carried on mostly, but not entirely, by Mr. Lunt, the representative of *The Courier*, and Major Rains, of Newburg, N. Y., a graduate of West Point, once assistant professor there, and who, in connection with Judge Edmonds and others, made a long-continued investigation of Spiritual powers scientifically. This conversation related to the instrumentality and processes by which Spirits work, and Major Rains expressed some of his views as to the proper processes for a scientific investigation of this particular subject.

“Also, there was conversation, mostly between Professor Agassiz and Mrs. Brown, as to when and how the Fox family first learned that they possessed this mediumistic susceptibility. The substance of this harmonized with what has often been published.

“After a time, the mediums and a few others being at the table, raps were heard, mostly on the floor (or rather upon a three or four inch platform covering the stuffed or deadened floor), while a few gentle ones were felt and heard as if made on the table. Afterward, when Mrs. Brown stood by a large wooden box, and put first her finger and then a common pencil against the box, the raps were heard there as on the box and near her hand. Again, when she stood upon a covered stool, the sounds seemed to be made beneath her on the platform. Again, when the two mediums were both standing on the stuffed seat of a sofa, the persons near them remarked that they heard sounds as from the wood of the sofa, and also from the wall against which the sofa stood. My position was distant from the sofa, and I only state what others who were near remarked. Many of the raps upon the platform and one or two upon the box were quite distinctly heard in most parts of the room.

“Near the close of their sitting, Prof. Agassiz stated that the production of such sounds could be referred to known laws, and said, ‘Before the investigation is over we will explain to you how they may be produced.’

“When about to separate, Major Rains expressed a wish that all would stop and compare notes, and come to an agreement as to what had actually occurred or been exhibited. A few sentences as to the propriety or importance of this course were exchanged between him and Prof. Pierce, when the Professor said, with a very ironical and discourteous tone and look, ‘We thank you, sir, for your *advice*,’ and bowing, hastily left the room. This occurred while a portion of the company were about leaving the room—while nearly all were standing and ready to go—while promiscuous conversation was going on—and it is not probable that many heard or saw what is here described. I was standing by the side of Major Rains, and saw and heard the whole most distinctly. Mortified and ashamed at the tones and looks of this representative of *Alma Mater* and of Science, when addressed to a gentleman stranger, and a man of science, I turned silently away, and was not surprised when, shortly after, Major Rains said to me, ‘There seems no occasion for me to remain here because of any knowledge or skill which my experience in such investigations may have given me; there is no attempt, no purpose, to have an investigation of the general subject. I had better return home.’ And soon he did go, as then proposed.

“Now the ‘change came o’er the spirit of my dream.’ At the next gathering I asked, privately, and learned from both Prof. Pierce and Mr. Gould, that they considered the money question as still before them, and that they were but judges and not investigators. From that time my relations to them and to that particular trial became relatively unpleasant. I had little to do or say, and nothing to hope for, because of the necessary antagonism in the room.

“At their next sitting Mr. Redman was the medium. Raps and tipping of the table did not come as they usually do with him; yet he asked those at the table to write the names of deceased friends and roll up the slips. Prof. Pierce commenced writing in a book. Prof. Agassiz, in the meanwhile, was standing near his back, frequently changing his own attitude and position, and looking very intently upon Redman, although he said to Prof. Pierce, ‘Throw that one out,’ meaning the slip just written upon. There was the appearance of much mental disturbance in Prof. Agassiz, as shown by his attitudes, his changes of position, his wild gaze, and his tones when he spoke. No raps came, *nothing* claiming to be Spiritual was done by or through Mr. Redman in the public room. At some time during this sitting Dr. Gardner drew attention to the points of disturbance, through strong mental action and intent use of the eyes. Mr. Lunt was understood to say that he had been using both mind and eyes intently, and with much effect; but I was on the opposite side of the room from him when he spoke, and may not have taken in the exact import of his words.

“Similar want of success attended the other mediums, at all the subsequent sittings up to the meeting of the Davenports, on the last evening. These boys, or young men, were intrusted almost entirely to the management of the Committee, and those of us who were but spectators are not so informed as to make it proper to state in advance of the Committee what was attempted nor what the success. We do know that at the close Prof. Agassiz held up a small, short piece of thread, which he said had been ‘*broken*,’ and that that was the *test*. Having uttered these words in a very rough tone and emphatic manner, he, in a similar tone, said, ‘Good night, gentlemen,’ and hastily left us.

“Prof. Pierce then said to Dr. Gardner, ‘I suppose you are through with us.’ The Doctor replied, ‘No, you have promised to show us how the raps were made.’ ‘Not as a Committee,’ said Prof. Pierce; ‘Mr. Agassiz made that

promise as an individual.’ And thus the affair closed—we as much disappointed at the failure of Agassiz to keep his word and unveil the mystery of rapping, as at any one failure during the sittings.

“The *Investigation*, in fact, was a trial of the correctness of the statements made at the preliminary meeting, viz., ‘that it was in the power of the gentlemen there present to make the trial a failure, by ejecting certain forces from their own minds and eyes.’ In this they were successful.

“Two of the gentlemen, Prof. Agassiz and Mr. Lunt, omitted throughout all the sessions to comply with invitations to sit in the circle around the table, and there was not, in any instance or at any point, any opportunity for Dr. Gardner to exercise ‘the determination of all the accessory circumstances.’ The former gentleman, it seems, was permitted to exercise his own choice as to being in the circle, but not so the latter. Dr. Gardner’s friends have been disappointed, and the chief disappointment was at the manners and actions and mental and emotional states of two of the Committee and a representative of *The Courier*.

“No chickens were hatched on this occasion, where the hen was kept in perpetual agitation, and was often driven from her nest during the period of incubation; *but it does not follow that eggs never contain a vital principle*. Let the proper conditions be observed, let natural laws have legitimate play, and the latent vital principle will take form and embodiment and come forth from the shell a thing of life and power. It is easy to prevent the hatching of an egg, for the Committee did that with very little trouble. But many hens ‘steal to their nests,’ and in secluded spots, where natural laws are conformed to, the hatching processes still go on in spite of human science.

“ALLEN PUTNAM.

“ROXBURY, July 10, 1857.”

I must here bear testimony to the uniform politeness—I may say kindness—with which I was personally treated by Prof. Agassiz, however rough may have been his occasional treatment of some of the other mediums. So far as we were concerned, he exhibited nothing but that perfect gentlemanhood which lent another grace to his mental greatness and scientific attainment. There has always remained on my mind the impression of something

mysterious as having clouded his general conduct in this “investigation.” He was indeed in a false position, and ought never to have been a member of that committee of professors, inasmuch as it was of such serious importance to Prof. Felton (afterwards president), who was virtually the prosecuting officer against Spiritualism, and so vehement in his public antagonism to it, and who was also so closely connected by marriage with Agassiz, his *father-in-law* (I believe), that a failure to support Felton in this must have complicated family relations. I must also add that I found Prof. Horsford unexceptionable as a kind and courteous gentleman. I think that at the bottom of the committee’s strange conduct in only making an “award” on a money question, which no longer existed before them, and then remaining in the ridiculous position of never making their promised “report,” notwithstanding the challenges and the jeers of the Spiritualist papers and orators, lay, in some degree at least, the facts of this awkwardness of domestic difficulties, and the impossibility of getting the professors united upon any report.

But that noble man, who has long since gone to his reward, Dr. Gardner, did not let the matter drop at this point. No sooner was the “award” promulgated than he engaged his mediums to postpone their departure from the city, and, under like circumstances, in the same room, furniture unchanged, to repeat their sittings before a different set of investigators, namely, the *representatives of the Press*. A large body of these gentlemen attended, besides their friends and other spectators, and it is sufficient for me to say that the results were entirely satisfactory. But Dr. Gardner had requested that their reports should be withheld from publication until after the committee’s full report should have appeared.

In Mr. Allan Putnam’s pamphlet above referred to (“Agassiz and Spiritualism”), is given an account of this convening of the members of the Press, by Dr. Gardner, written by the temporary editor of *The New England Spiritualist*, and signed “One Present,” and commencing:

“It is well known that the ‘award’ of the committee entirely failed to meet the rational demands of inquirers. It took the form of a decree rather than a decision. Such being the facts, Dr. Gardner thought it due, not only to himself but to the community, to make another effort to have the matter fairly and deliberately tested. Accordingly, immediately after the

appearance of the committee's 'award,' he invited the editors of the principal newspapers in the city to attend the séances and witness manifestations through the same mediums he had employed before the professors.

"The gentlemen who responded to this invitation were: Messrs. Carter, Robinson, and Brown, of *The Boston Traveller*; Stockwell, of *The Journal*; Bulger, of *The Post*; Clapp and Shillaber, of *The Gazette*; Marsh, of *The Bee*; Tracy, of *The Herald*; Hill, of *The Ledger*; and the editors of *The Banner of Light*, and *New England Spiritualist*. There were also present at a portion of the sittings, Hon. L. V. Bell, A. Putnam, Esq., Alvin Adams, Esq., and others."

I extract only the following, which relates to ourselves:

"SECOND SESSION.

"At the second session, on Thursday afternoon, July 2d, Mrs. Brown and Miss Kate Fox were present as mediums. The precaution was taken again to examine the furniture and appliances of the room, to guard against any mechanical trickery. The company then seating themselves, raps were in a few moments heard upon the floor and table. The sounds were various and complicated, from the lightest tap to quite heavy blows. The heavier sounds had a peculiar softness, as if they had been made by a padded drum-stick worked by a spring.

"The next step was to test the intelligence manifested through the sounds. The method of doing this will be understood from the following, which is but a small part of the proceedings—as a report of the whole would be but a repetition of questions similar in their character, and eliciting equivalent results.

"A Spirit-friend of Mr. Marsh announced himself as present.

"MR. MARSH.—'Will you tell me your name?'

"BY THE SOUNDS.—'Yes.'

"A list of names was written by Mr. M., and as he pointed to them separately the Spirit designated that of Le Grand Smith.

“MR. M.—‘Will you tell me the manner of your death?’

“‘Lost at sea.’ (Correct.)

“MR. M.—‘Will you tell me where I last saw you?’

“‘New York.’ (Correct.)

“‘Have you any other acquaintance in this room?’

“‘Mr. Clapp.’

“MR. C.—‘Will Mr. Marsh ask him where I last saw him?’

“Answer obtained by Mr. Marsh—‘Boston.’ (Correct.)

“MR. C.—‘I have seen him when he was sick; can he tell at what place?’

“MR. M.—‘Will the Spirit tell where Mr. Clapp has seen him sick?’

“‘New York.’ (Correct.)

“‘Where else?’ (No answer.)

“‘Whom were you intimate with in Boston? the Chickering?’

“A weak affirmative was returned, which was supposed to indicate that he was acquainted with them—perhaps not intimately.

“‘Did you know Col. N. A. Thompson?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Any other persons in this circle?’

“‘Dr. Gardner’—and others.

“Dr. G. seemed willing that all failures should pass as such, and promptly said, ‘That is a mistake, gentlemen; I don’t know any such person.’

“A desultory conversation here sprung up; after which Mr. Marsh resumed: ‘In whose employ were you when I first knew you?’

“‘Jenny Lind’s.’

“DR. G.—‘Oh! is that the man? I know now. I saw him in Springfield once; had some sharp words with him, too.’

“MR. STOCKWELL—‘Is there any other Spirit present who was lost at sea?’

“‘Yes.’

“MR. S.—‘An acquaintance of mine?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Will he tell in what steamer he was lost?’

“Correctly answered.

“‘If I write a list of names, will he indicate his?’

“‘Yes.’

“Mr. S. wrote a list of names; but neither of them was indicated by the Spirit, though he went through the list twice. A moment or two after, an earnest response was heard. Mr. S. had spelt the name wrong in the first instance; but instantly, on correcting it, the affirmative came. The last-mentioned facts were then stated to the company, no hint having been given in the course of the proceeding whether it was satisfactory or not. The name indicated was that of Samuel Stacy.

“Another friend of Mr. S. announced his presence. His name was correctly given; and a list of towns was written, with the request that he would point out where he died. No response came; but on changing the word Cambridge in the list, to *Cambridgeport*, the sounds were promptly returned. In these last two instances was an accuracy of intelligence beyond what was looked for by the experimenter.

“‘Will the Spirit tell his birth-place?’

“‘Yes.’

“A list of towns being written by Mr. S., was passed to Mr. Brown, with the request that the response might be given to him, Mr. B. being totally ignorant of the matter.

“Various tests of this nature were tried. The questions were asked by those ignorant of their answers, and the result was, without exception, correct.

“The question of a separate intelligence having had due consideration, experiments were tried with regard to the sounds. The mediums, by request, moved to various portions of the room; and the sounds were produced, varying in quality according to the different substances from which they apparently proceeded. The ‘toe-joint’ theory being suggested by some one, the mediums were requested to stand on the spring cushion of a sofa. This they did, and merely touching the tip of a finger against the plastering, the sounds were distinctly and abundantly heard on, or rather *in* the wall. They were equally distinct to a person in the adjoining room. That the ladies had no other contact with the wall than to touch it lightly with the tip of a single finger, all present can testify.”

Nor was this action of the members of the Press the only investigation by high authority which we two (Katie and I) underwent on this occasion of our visit to Boston, in 1857.

It was proposed by our friends that we should meet a party of Unitarian clergymen at the house of Rev. Dr. Harrington, in Summerville, about six miles from Boston.

They made a most thorough investigation. They held a consultation in a private room, and considered that now was the time to satisfy themselves in regard to the production of the sounds; as they had read the statement made by the Buffalo doctors, in which “knee-knocking” figures, and also the Burr toe-ological humbug, and many more wise theories, which they wished to prove true or silence forever.

Rev. Dr. Francis, a brother of Lydia Maria Child, and another distinguished clergyman, were appointed to hold our knees, and two ladies held our feet, rested on chairs, exposed plainly to view.

During the time we were held in this position, sounds were made all around the room—on chairs, on the floor, under their feet, etc. One old gentleman shouted out, “Thank God, I always believed the raps were genuine, and now

I know they are.” He then told us he was living near Rochester when we first came before the public, and always felt the deepest sympathy for us.

At the close of the investigation we were all invited to go into the dining-room, where a sumptuous banquet had been prepared for the party. The Spirits of earth and heaven met and rejoiced together on this occasion; and there were many more of the invisible ones than of those still in the flesh. Many sweet songs were sung, and the timely echoes from the Spirit world told us plainly that they were not afar off. It was time for us to leave them. Mr. Alvin Adams had taken us there in his beautiful equipage, and he advised us of the hour. The party accompanied us to the carriage, and with many blessings and words of encouragement, bid us farewell.

There were fifteen or more Unitarian clergymen together with many of their lady and gentlemen friends. One of the clergymen, laying his hand on the shoulder of Dr. Francis, exclaimed, “Gentlemen, this is proof positive of that which we have all been grasping after, as a shadow, from time immemorial.”

On our return to the hotel at Boston, a large party of friends had assembled in our parlor, and met us with outstretched hands. Wm. Lloyd Garrison said, “I know you have been successful, or you would not come in with such happy faces.” The Spirits rapped in response to his exclamation, and we spent a pleasant evening.

The following morning a large party, who came from Vermont, occasioned considerable amusement.

They came “to see the mediums,” which seemed to be all that some of them wanted. They waited in the reception-room. Several of them stood on the stairs. As we came from the breakfast table and passed through the hall, one of them called out loudly to the others, “There! we’ve seen ’em without paying.”

They came from the Green Mountains, with the idea that we were something curious to be seen: and they had concluded to spend a dollar in order to gratify their curiosity. Edwin Forrest and several of his friends were still at the breakfast table, and they enjoyed the joke very much.

The party were not all, however, of this kind; two or three came in and paid the admission fee. One woman had good evidence of communication with a daughter lately deceased.

We met many interesting persons at Mr. Parks's, among whom were Theodore Parker, and Rev. James Freeman Clark, who seemed very much interested, and kindly invited us to accompany Mr. and Mrs. Parks to his home, which invitation was accepted. We spent a pleasant day with his honored mother and sister, his wife being absent from home.

I shall ever remember the beaming, kindly face of Rev. Theodore Parker, who fearlessly, frankly, and honestly announced to his friends that he was a believer in Spiritualism. Subsequently he visited me several times in company with Rev. John Pierpont.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ROBERT DALE OWEN AND PROFESSOR FELTON, PRESIDENT OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

MASTERLY LETTER FROM MR. OWEN.

Although not directly connected with the affair of the Harvard Professors, yet it comes in natural sequence to the preceding chapter for me to mention that, after the appearance of Robert Dale Owen's "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," Professor Felton, who burned with angry zeal against Spiritualism, wrote him a letter (April 13, 1860), which was slow in reaching its destination. Mr. Owen, having written a reply to it, requested Felton's permission to publish the former with the latter; a request which was declined on the ground that "the letter was hastily written, and intended only for your eyes."

The letter referred to was a fair sample of the sort of criticism which he wrote on the subject, and which he was willing to retail out to others, and then decline to face any fair discussion with a highly honorable opponent, at least his equal in public and social position, who had unanswerably answered his bitterly libellous language. It is open to question whether Mr. Owen's delicacy was not excessive in respecting the privacy of Professor Felton's volunteered letter of controversial attack upon his book, and whether he would not have been perfectly justified in publishing it, as he asked permission to do, side by side with the masterly reply which it elicited. This reply, which I now proceed to publish, will suffice to show how little the Harvard dignitary, however learned in Greek, was a match in logical controversy for Mr. Owen, who had been a distinguished member of Congress, and who had recently vacated the post of U. S. Minister at the court of Naples.

The Professor stated that he had fully "investigated the subject both in this country and in Europe, and that the conclusion at which he had arrived was that the alleged physical phenomena, such as moving of tables without the ordinary application of physical force, *never take place* under conditions which absolutely prevent the action of delusion or fraud." He is not the only

man who has claimed to have “investigated,” when he has visited a few mediums with the eyes of his mind so shut and sealed with hostile prejudice that what he calls his investigation had been but an idle farce.

Then again, in the same letter, he declares, in relation to the investigation in Boston, that “the whole thing failed, failed utterly.”

I refrain from designating this as it deserves. I refer my readers to the history of that sham investigation for them to give it its proper designation. He knew the statement was not true of the manifestations during the investigation, if his own committee could be believed. The letter says, “If I ever have time I shall prepare a volume on the subject.”

He did not, however, have time before he followed the course of Nature, and he has now found out for himself many things not falling within the scope of his studies as Professor of Greek, which he did not know before.

After this outpouring, he goes on to sanction the same thing in Christian Revelation. He says the cases are different. Yes, we have the absolute facts here, and that is better than those of long ago. The fact is, Prof. Felton never gave it one hour of fair investigation.

Though Prof. Felton refused permission for the publication of his letter, I am under no restraint for the publication of Mr. Owen’s masterly reply to it; with which, as it has not before been published (to my knowledge), I am glad to be able to enrich this volume.

“PHILADELPHIA, November 12, 1860.

“MY DEAR SIR:

“It was only on my recent return from Europe that I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the thirtieth of April last. I have since given to its strictures the earnest consideration to which the character and standing of the writer and his friendly tone justly entitle them.

“If, on a careful review, I had found cause to believe that the tendency of my work is such as you represent, it would be little consolation to feel that it was prompted by those good intentions which you are candid and courteous enough to ascribe to me. Prudence, painstaking discrimination,

severe scrutiny of evidence, especially for the novel or the extraordinary, are, in an author, duties as imperative as good faith and uprightness; nor should he escape reprehension by pleading the one, if it appear that he has neglected the others.

“But my conscience acquits me of neglecting, save by exceptional inadvertence, reasonable precautions. That these may, in some cases, have proved unavailing, is the lot of human effort. So far, however, after ten months’ probation, I have had doubts cast upon a single narrative only, out of the seventy or eighty which my volume contains; and it is to the credit of your sagacity that the story thus discredited is that of the Livonian Schoolteacher, the very one to the evidence for which you chiefly take exception. It was part of my business in visiting Europe to test a case, to the conflicting evidence regarding which, about three months after the publication of ‘Footfalls,’ my attention was called by a friend; and as my inquiries, though they showed some foundation for the story, tended to discredit its details, I did what duty required of me; I omitted in the English edition, recently issued, and in the tenth American edition, the story in question, adding an explanatory note, and substituting a narrative entitled ‘The Two Sisters,’ relative to a similar phenomenon, and of which a copy is herewith inclosed. You will find the names of the two witnesses initialized only; but I am authorized by these ladies to communicate to you, if you desire to follow up the case, their names—neither unknown nor little esteemed—and their residence, within a day’s easy journey of Cambridge.

“In two of the narratives, the ‘Wynyard apparition’ and ‘Gaspar,’ I have obtained and inserted in the latest editions important additional vouchers.

“You have not, as you inform me, the ‘slightest hesitation in rejecting the entire mass of the stories.’ Forgive me if I say, that I admire your boldness more than your discretion. Abercrombie, in his ‘Intellectual Powers,’ vouches (‘Footfalls,’ pp. 151, 163, 181, 204) for several of the most remarkable. John Wesley relates (p. 225), and Dr. Adam Clarke and the poet Southey indorse (p. 238) another; Goethe is sponsor for one (p. 197); sceptics like Mackay (p. 255) and Macnish (p. 155) for a second and third; Mrs. Senator Linn for a fourth (p. 455); Dr. Bushnell for a fifth (p. 459); William Howitt and his amiable wife for several more (pp. 170, 171, 373); Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall for two of the most interesting (pp. 447, 463). At

least a dozen are attested by clergymen of unimpeached character. If all these names seem to you irresponsible, and if you refuse credit, unless men be ‘put on the stand and under the solemnity of an oath,’ that species of evidence also, the highest known to the law, I have furnished. The facts touching the Mompesson disturbances were officially proved in court (p. 221); so, before the sheriff of Edinburgh, were those which tormented Captain Molesworth (p. 254); so, above all, were the phenomena of the Cideville Parsonage, running through two months and a half. In this last case I have given (pp. 275 to 282) the sworn testimony of *eleven* witnesses taken down, as the French forms of law require, in writing, read over to each witness, and its accuracy attested by the signature of each. Among these witnesses were the mayor of the town, the Marquis de Mirville, well known as an author of repute, a neighboring lady of rank and her son, and three clergymen. The mayor swears that he saw the shovel and tongs move from the fireplace into the room, no one touching them or near them; that, having replaced them, the same thing happened a second time, ‘while the witness had his eyes on them, so as to detect any trick.’ The Curate of Saussy saw a ‘hammer fly, impelled by an invisible force, from the spot where it lay, and fall on the floor without more noise than if he had placed it there.’ All testify to phenomena, and especially to knockings, as marvellous as any which American Spiritualism claims. Monsieur de Saint Victor deposes that ‘he felt convinced, that if every person in the house had set to work, together, to pound with mallets on the floor, they would not have produced such a racket’ (p. 280). Not one of the witnesses, placed under such solemn responsibilities, ‘shrinks from repeating the monstrous story.’

“The Cideville wonders, thus attested by evidence strong enough to hang a dozen men, far exceed those of Hydesville. Are you prepared to pronounce these eleven witnesses (and as many more, whose testimony I have omitted, and who swear to the same incidents) to be, as you declared the Foxes, ‘wretched cheats, contemptible and dishonest’? Did they, too, palm ‘unscrupulous frauds on deluded people’? Have you not the ‘slightest hesitation’ in setting down persons of character and station as wilful perjurers?—nay, as motiveless perjurers? Or were they, one and all, deluded? Were the impressions their senses received due only to ‘ill-regulated imaginations’? What sort of imagination is it that would persuade two men that a table which they sought, by main force, to prevent from

moving, did move, without conceivable cause, in spite of their efforts? (p. 280.) Do people imagine ‘such a clatter in the room that one can hardly endure it’?—or that ‘every piece of furniture there was set in vibration’?—or such a pounding that the witness ‘expected every moment that the floor of the apartment would sink beneath his feet’? (p. 280.)

“You take me to task for narrating on insufficient testimony. If the rules of evidence which I have applied in the Mompesson case, in the Wesley case, in the Cideville case, and I will add in that of the Rochester Knockings, are to be rejected as untrustworthy, then not only shall we sink back to scepticism in all history and (as far as historical evidence goes) in all religion, but proof will fail us, in all our courts of justice, alike to acquit the innocent and condemn the guilty.

“I do not allege that all the narratives in my book are equally well authenticated. The Stilling story, for example (p. 317), may be taken as apocryphal. That of the ‘Surgeon’s Assistant’ (p. 325) has not been verified by me. ‘The Rescue’ (p. 333) came to me, thirty years after it happened, at second hand. But in these and in all similar examples throughout the book, where the nature of the case did not admit of evidence at first hand, I have specially called the attention of the reader to that fact. Nor, if one or more of these stories should prove to be without foundation, would it be just, for that cause, to discredit the others. The ‘*ex uno disce omnes*’ argument is not applicable here. Each narrative ought to be judged independently, by its own evidence. It is a sound maxim in law, that the superfluous does not invalidate the essential.

“I may add that, if in one example I have negligently omitted corroborative inquiries, I am not in the habit of sparing pains to authenticate a narrative. You imagine that I have been satisfied with the reports in Spiritual papers about the ‘Electric girl.’ I spent a week in Paris in procuring the original documents in that case and embodying them in my narrative. A small portion only of these is contained in the ‘Comptes Rendus.’ The authentic details have never yet been given to the American public. They are of great interest in a scientific point of view.

“You assume that such men as Arago regard clairvoyance as mere trickery. Arago, in 1853, expressly said (‘Footfalls,’ p. 23) that ‘somnambulism

ought not to be rejected *a priori*, especially by those who have kept up with the progress of modern science;’ and he admitted (‘Footfalls,’ p. 68) that ‘psychology may one day obtain a place among the exact sciences.’ Cuvier went further. He conceded (‘Footfalls,’ p. 68) the principle lying at the base of Mesmerism.

“Inasmuch as my book treats only of spontaneous phenomena, not of those that are evoked, I have therein said nothing of the Foxes, except in connection with the narrative of what, in the olden time, would have been called the ‘haunted house’ of Hydesville; one of a class of which I have given numerous other older examples. Now, however, having been afforded by the sisters ample opportunity to investigate the rappings and other manifestations alleged to occur in their presence, I am ready, after warning, to go farther, and to say that, whatever the true character of these phenomena, I see no reason whatever for ascribing them to imposture. Nothing came to light in the course of this investigation other than what bore, to my mind, the impress of an honest desire to be freed, by rigid tests of fair dealing, from all blame. I never rest my opinion of character or motive upon report when I can have opportunity of personal verification. Such opportunity, which in this case I believe you have not had, I am enabled now to offer you. I am authorized by Mrs. Underhill (formerly Leah Fox) and by her husband (a gentleman of New York who has been, for seventeen years, secretary of one of the principal insurance offices in Wall Street), to say that, though Mrs. Underhill has not for some years sat as a professional medium, and has resolved not again to do so, she is willing, in the interests of truth, to afford you, during the university vacation, or at other time when your leisure serves, all reasonable facilities for strict investigation.

“I pray it may not be understood that I urge you to accept this offer. I think, indeed, that such an investigation is not unworthy either of your character or of mine. But I am no propagandist; and I have observed that if there be nothing within which moves us to undertake such inquiries, they seldom afford satisfaction or eventuate in useful results.

“You speak of my book as ‘ill-judged and mischievous,’ as ‘furnishing aid to hosts of deceivers,’ and you think it, ‘in the present state of intellectual

and moral disorder' on the subjects of which it treats, 'peculiarly dangerous.'

"Truth, unless prematurely urged (John xvi. 12), is never ill-judged or mischievous. I did not go in search of this subject. It came up in the course of human events, and doubtless at the proper time and for a good purpose. I found it already controlling the belief of hundreds of thousands, engaging the attention of millions. This, if it presented no other claims, appeared to me to entitle it, before judgment pronounced, to diligent and respectful inquiry. Thus inquiring, I perceived, as you have done, 'intellectual and moral disorders' not unfrequently following in the train of its influence; yet, looking at it more closely, I became convinced that it produced good as well as evil.

"Surveying the ground further, I found the arena occupied chiefly by partisans; some of these (shall I include yourself?) delving the good; others, in their hasty enthusiasm, overlooking the evil. The former seemed to me to forget that it is not by despising error that we correct it; the latter, that the new and the untried often run into error and extravagance.

"Desiring, after twenty years of public life, some more tranquil and philosophical field of labor, I discovered none which appeared to promise more useful results than this. If, as you allege, 'all the phenomena are due to two, and only two sources—delusion and imposture,' these should be detected and exploded, as by carefully prosecuted researches every delusion and every imposture can be. If, as I believe, there be a foundation of truth underlying them, still there is imperative demand for the exercise of prudence and the precautions of due regulation. Lacking these, a source of good may eventuate in evil. Even if the phenomena, wisely followed up, may elevate morality and fortify religion, yet if these marvels are permitted to spread among us without chart or compass whereby to steer our course through an unexplored ocean of mystery, we may find ourselves at the mercy of very sinister influences.

"As to the general question at issue between yourself and me, you admit the reality of Spiritual influences directly exerted by God upon human intelligence. So far as, from the Creator's work, we may judge His modes of action, these are mediate and by ministering agencies, not by direct

intervention. “Why, then, should we regard the hypothesis of Spiritual interposition (Hebrews i. 14) as a baseless superstition?”

“You further admit the occurrence, though only in Christ’s day, of Spiritual intercourse. But a dispassionate survey of the economy of the universe tends to the conviction that no great law of action ever shows itself, for a brief season, thereafter to disappear forever. And Scripture, instead of thus restricting Spiritual phenomena, intimates (Mark xvi. 17, 18) their continuance.

“Guided by such general views, I published ‘Footfalls.’ Its prompt sale and its favorable reception have been my least rewards. Tokens of sympathy and of gratitude contain the greater. A mother, deprived by death of her favorite child, and refusing to be comforted because he was not, confesses that she has been indebted to its pages for healthy and hopeful views of death, renovated spirits, courage to labor and to wait. A sceptic into whose hands the volume fell a few weeks before his decease, requests that, after he is gone, I may be informed that to that volume, and especially to its chapter on the ‘Change at Death,’ he owed the revolution of a life’s opinions, and the first consolatory conviction which had ever reached him that there was a fairer and a better world toward which he was fast hastening.

“‘By their fruits ye shall know them,’ said the great Author of our religion. Do not fruits like these indicate a good tree? And if the chief narratives contained in my book may be trusted, what are their teachings? That not an effort to store our minds or school our hearts, made here in time, but has its result and its reward hereafter in eternity. But what motive to exertion in good can be proposed to man more powerful than such an assurance?”

“These are my reasons for still believing, notwithstanding your opinion of my work, that it is of wholesome tendency.

“Time, the great teacher, will decide between us. Ten years—probably less—will see the question determined whether the Spiritual hypothesis is destined to grow in favor and assume station as a reality, or to sink into discredit, as a mere figment of the brain. I am content to bide the event.

“Meanwhile, following my convictions of the useful, I propose next year (unless ere then I pass to another phase of existence where much that is now

obscure will doubtless be made plain) to follow up my first work by another; and therein I purpose to examine what I have not yet touched upon; namely, the progress and character of what go by the name of 'Spiritual manifestations.' I purpose to investigate first their verity, then their influence; to inquire under what aspects they have proved injurious, and under what beneficial to mankind; how far they may be usefully prosecuted, and at what point they become prejudicial or unsafe.

"This second volume, like the first, shall contain many materials, some suggestions, few opinions. On such a subject as this, dogmatism, whether in affirming or denying, is unpardonable. There is, perhaps, no human inquiry, as to which Bacon's wise aphorism is more applicable: 'If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties.'

"If even the opinions and suggestions I may offer should fail in accuracy, the materials will remain valuable, if care and industry may avail judiciously to select them. From these each reader can deduce his own conclusions; and thus, perhaps, such incidental puzzles as the seeming investment with clothing of apparitions may be relieved from the imputation of absurdity, if they do not find full solution.

"A word, in conclusion, as to the alleged abandonment of what is called Spiritualism by certain persons named by you. You adduce the reported defection of such seceders as conclusive argument against the cause they desert. But it proves nothing, except, perhaps, that one extreme often results in its opposite. If these men, forsaking common sense, ran off into wild extravagance, little wonder that they repented. And if their case be otherwise, their secession, if secede they did, has still no weight. Weak men adopt opinions, and again discard them, alike on insufficient evidence. We sometimes turn back, confused, in the very path of progress. Du Fay, the discoverer of the fact that there are two kinds or states of electricity, repudiated his own brilliant discovery.

"I am, my dear sir,

"Faithfully yours,

"ROBERT DALE OWEN.

"PRESIDENT C. C. FELTON."^[13]

I may add that Mr. Owen, in the summer of 1859, while residing with us, engaged upon his first book (the "Footfalls"), obtained the willing consent of Mr. Underhill and myself, to invite Prof. Felton to come and accept the hospitality of our home at 232 W. 37th Street, for a fortnight or as much shorter or longer a period as he might favor us with his stay; as a means of receiving daily and hourly evidences of all he should like to investigate. Prof. Felton declined the invitation. The invitation proved at least our willingness to submit to such an exhaustive investigation. What disposition its non-acceptance indicated on the other side, in regard to a question which is confessedly one of supremest vital importance to all mankind, it is not for me to say, but rather to leave to the judgment of those who may do me the honor of being my readers.

[13] To this letter Prof. Felton never made any published reply. A letter from him, bearing date seven days after that of Mr. Owen, is before me (or rather a copy of it which Mr. Owen allowed Mr. Underhill to make); but, while perfectly civil and friendly, it bears on its face the evidence of a virtual prohibition of publication, saying that it was so hastily written that it was despatched without reperusal, and that his other duties left him no time for public controversy on this subject. I need only say that it was mainly made up of slashing and sweeping generalities against Spiritualism, which Mr. Owen would have had not the slightest difficulty in confuting—and in confuting so triumphantly that the learned Greek professor of Harvard would not have had a rag left to cover the nakedness of the “*absurdum*” to which he would have been reduced by Owen’s superior brain and pen. A further appeal against publication was clearly involved in a remark that he contemplated some future publication of a volume on the subject. Mr. Owen therefore could do no more than await the promised volume, but the purpose was never carried into effect; which is much to be regretted, since its non-appearance costs to the literature of Spiritualism a third volume (this time controversial), which would have constituted a precious sequel to Mr. Owen’s two great works, the “Footfalls on the Boundary of another World,” and “The Debatable Land.” The two gentlemen (both of whom I knew) have now passed beyond that Boundary, and beyond all further Debate about that Land, where we shall all soon find them, I doubt not, now excellent friends to the cause of Spiritualism, as well as to each other.—ED.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EXPERIENCES OF ROBERT DALE OWEN THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF THE
AUTHOR.

MOVING A LEDGE OF ROCK ON THE SEA-SHORE—RAPS ON THE WATER, AND IN THE LIVING WOOD—
SEEING THE RAPS—MOVING PONDERABLE BODIES BY OCCULT AGENCY—CRUCIAL TEST—A HEAVY
DINNER-TABLE SUSPENDED IN THE AIR BY OCCULT AGENCY.

I will here introduce some interesting extracts from Robert Dale Owen, relating to some of his personal experiences with me, which will speak for themselves:

I.

MOVING A LEDGE OF ROCK ON THE SEA-SHORE.

“On the twenty-fourth of August, 1861, I accepted an invitation, from Mr. Samuel B. Underhill, of New Rochelle, a sea-side village on the shore of Long Island Sound, to spend the next day with him, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Underhill (their near relatives).

“On the afternoon of August 25, Mr. S. B. Underhill drove us out in his carriage, through the picturesque country adjoining the village; the party consisting of Mr. S. B. Underhill and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. D. Underhill, and myself.^[14]

“In the course of the drive, coming near the shore of the Sound, at a point where there were long ledges of rock slanting down into the water, it suddenly suggested itself to me that here was an excellent opportunity for a crucial test. I inquired of Mrs. Underhill if she had ever tried to obtain raps on the sea-shore. ‘No,’ she said; she never had.

“‘Do you think we can get them here?’ I asked. ‘I have never found any place where they could not be had,’ she replied; ‘so I dare say we can.’

Thereupon there were three raps—the conventional sign of assent—from the bottom of the carriage.

“So we drove down to the beach, and got out to test the matter. The portion of rock whither we repaired was not an isolated block, detached from the rest, but part of a large, flat mass of rock, covering at least half an acre, and running back into a bluff bank that rose beyond it; there were also several underlying ledges. We were about thirty feet from the sea and, as there was a moderate breeze, the surf broke on the rocks below us.

“But yet, standing on the ledge beside Mrs. Underhill, and asking for the raps, I heard them quite distinctly above the noise produced by the surf. This was several times repeated, with the same result.

“Then Mrs. Underhill and Mrs. S. B. Underhill sat down, and I, stepping on a lower ledge, laid my ear on the ledge on which the ladies were sitting and repeated my request. In a few seconds the raps were heard by me from within the substance of the rock and immediately beneath my ear.

“I then sought to verify the matter by the sense of touch. Placing my hand on the same ledge, a few feet from Mrs. Underhill, and asking for the raps, when these came audibly, I felt, simultaneously with each rap, a slight but *unmistakably distinct vibration or concussion of the rock*. It was sufficiently marked to indicate to me a rap, once or twice, when a louder roll of the surf for a moment drowned the sound.

“Without making any remark as to what I felt, I asked Mr. U. to put his hand on the ledge. ‘Why!’ he suddenly exclaimed, ‘the whole rock vibrates!’ During all this time Mrs. Underhill sat, as far as I could judge, in complete repose.”—“Debatable Land,” p. 346.

II.

RAPS ON THE WATER AND IN THE LIVING WOOD.

“On the tenth of July, 1861, I joined a few friends in an excursion from the city of New York, by steamboat, to the Highlands of Neversink; Mr. and Mrs. Underhill being of the party.

“It occurred to me, while sitting on deck by Mrs. Underhill, to ask if we could have the raps there. Instantly they were distinctly heard, first from the deck, and then I heard them, and quite plainly *felt them*, on the wooden stool on which I sat. In the afternoon our party went out in a sailing boat, fifteen or twenty feet long. There, again at my suggestion, we had them, sounding from under the floor of the boat. It had a centre-board, or sliding keel, and we had raps from within the long, narrow box that inclosed it. At any part of this box where we called for the raps, we obtained them.

“In the evening we ascended a hill, back of the hotel, to the Highland lighthouse. In returning and passing through a wood on the hill-side, I proposed to try if we could have raps from the ground; and immediately I plainly heard them from beneath the ground on which we trod: it was a dull sound, as of blows struck on the earth. Then I asked Mrs. Underhill to touch one of the trees with the tips of her fingers, and, applying my ear to the tree, I heard the raps from beneath the bark. Other persons of our party verified this as I had done.

“In returning, next morning, on another steamer, we had raps on the hand-rail of the upper promenade deck, and also from within a small metal boat that was turned upside down, on the deck below.

“Notes of these experiments were taken immediately on my return to New York.”—Owen’s “Debatable Land,” p. 345.

III.

SEEING THE RAPS.

“It was during an evening session at Mr. Underhill’s, February 22, 1860. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Kate Fox, and myself, there were present Mr. Underhill’s aged father and mother; venerable examples of the plain, primitive Quakers, both of whom took the deepest interest in the proceedings.

“By request, through the raps, the gas was extinguished and we joined hands.

“Very soon lights were seen floating about the room, apparently phosphorescent. At first they were small, just visible, but gradually they became larger, attaining the size and general outline of hands; but I could not distinguish any fingers. These lights usually showed themselves first behind and between Leah and Kate, near the floor. Then they rose; sometimes remaining near Leah’s head, sometimes near her sister’s. One of them was nearly as large as a human head. None of these touched me, though one approached within a few inches. Another made circles in the air just above our heads. After floating about for a brief space, they usually seemed to return either to Leah or Kate.

“While the hands of the circle remained joined, I looked under the table^[15] and saw lights, as many as ten or twelve times, on or near the floor, and moving about. Once, while I was looking intently at such a light, about as large as a small fist, it rose and fell, as a hammer would with which one was striking against the floor. At each stroke a loud rap was heard in connection. It was exactly as if *an invisible hand held an illuminated hammer and pounded with it*. Then, desiring conscious proof of what I saw was not by human agency, I asked *mentally*, ‘Will the Spirit strike with that light three times?’ which was done forthwith; and then, after an interval, repeated.

“When, a second time, the light was seen and I was noticing the corresponding sounds, some one said, ‘Can you make it softer?’

“Almost instantly I saw the light diminish and strike the floor, at intervals, with a soft and muffled sound, just distinguishable.”—“Debatable Land,” p. 348.

IV.

MOVING PONDERABLE BODIES BY OCCULT AGENCY.

“‘When they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water; and he cried, and said (to Elisha), ‘Alas, master!’ for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, ‘Where fell it?’ And he showed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it thither; and the iron did swim.’ (2 Kings vi. 4-6.)

“The raising from the ground of weighty substances, or the moving of these from place to place, is one of the most common, and most easily verified, of physical manifestations. I have elsewhere given many examples of it. (See ‘Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World.’) Here I shall add but two or three out of the numerous cases that have come under my eye during Spiritual sessions.

“A most satisfactory test of the power, by occult agency, to raise ponderous substances was suggested to me by that practical thinker, the late Robert Chambers, the well-known author and publisher, during his visit to the United States, in the autumn of 1860; and we carried it out on the thirteenth of October of that year.

“On the evening of that day we had a sitting in Mrs. Underhill’s dining-room; there being present Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Kate Fox, Mr. Chambers, and myself. In this room we found an extension dinner-table of solid mahogany, capable of seating fourteen persons. This we contracted to the form of a centre-table, and, having procured a large steelyard, we found that it weighed in that form a hundred and twenty-one pounds. We suspended this table by the steelyard, in exact equipoise and about eight inches from the floor. Then we sat down by it; and while our experiment proceeded, Mrs. Underhill sat with the points of both feet touching one of mine and Kate in the same relation to Mr. Chambers. This was done at their suggestion, so as to afford us proof that they had no physical agency in the matter. Their hands were over the table, near the top, but not touching it. There was bright gas-light. Thus we were able to obtain a

CRUCIAL TEST,

the table remaining suspended, with the constant weight at the figure of 121. We asked that it might be made lighter. In a few seconds the long arm ascended. We moved the weight to the figure 100: it still ascended; then to 80; then to 60. Even at this last figure the smaller arm of the steelyard was somewhat depressed, showing that the table, for the moment, weighed less than sixty pounds. It had *lost more than half its weight*, namely, upward of sixty-one pounds. In other words there was a power equal to sixty-one pounds sustaining it. Then we asked that it might be made heavier; and it

was so; first, as the figures indicated, to 130, and finally to a hundred and forty-four pounds.

“The change of weight continued, in each instance, from three to eight seconds, as we ascertained by our watches; and during the whole time the ladies maintained the same position of feet and hands; Mr. Underhill not approaching the table.

“We had given Mr. Underhill no notice of our intention to ask for this experiment. The heavy steelyard was bought for the occasion from a hardware-store in the neighborhood. How much a Jewish axe-head commonly weighed, in the days of Elisha, I know not; it could be but a few pounds. Our miracle (dynamics) exceeded that of the prophet, as far as regards the weight of the body that was made lighter. But the Hebrew seer was at a greater distance from the object raised than were our mediums. On the evening just preceding that on which we tried the above experiment I had a sitting at Mr. Underhill’s, with very satisfactory result.”

A HEAVY DINNER-TABLE SUSPENDED IN THE AIR WITHOUT CONTACT.

“Our session was on the evening of October 12, 1860, lasting from half-past nine till eleven.^[16] It was held in the same room and at the same table before mentioned, and by gas-light. Present, Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Kate Fox, Mr. Harrison Gray Dyer, of New York, and myself. We had very loud rappings, from various parts of the room and on the chairs. Then, while our hands were on the table, it began to move, sometimes with a rotary motion, sometimes rising up on one side, until finally it rose from the floor all but one leg. Then we sought to induce it to rise entirely from the floor. After (what seemed) strenuous efforts, almost successful, to rise, we aided it by each putting a single finger under it; and, with this slight assistance, it rose into the air and remained suspended during six or seven seconds.

“After a time we asked whether, if we removed our fingers from the table-top, while it was in the air, it could still remain suspended; and the reply (by rapping) being in the affirmative, after aiding it to rise as before, we withdrew our fingers entirely, raising them above it. The table then remained, nearly level, suspended without any human support whatever,

during the space of five or six seconds; and then gradually settled down, without jar or sudden dropping, to the floor.

“Then, anxious to advance a step further, we asked if the table could not be raised from the floor without any aid or contact whatever. The reply being in the affirmative, we stood up and placed all our hands over it, at the distance of three or four inches from the table-top: when it rose of itself, following our hands as we gradually raised them, till it hung in the air about the same distance from the floor as before. There it remained six or seven seconds, preserving its horizontal, and almost as steady as when it rested on the ground; then it slowly descended, still preserving the horizontal, until the feet reached the carpet. As before, there was no jar or sudden dropping.

“The same experiment was repeated next evening in the presence of Robert Chambers, after we had completed our tests with the steelyard; and with exactly the same results. At first, as before, we raised it on our fingers; then, withdrawing them, it remained in the air six or seven seconds. On the second trial it rose entirely without contact, remaining suspended for about the same space. It should here be remarked that we were in the habit, during these experiments, of moving the table to different parts of the room, and of looking under it from time to time.

“Upon the whole I consider this moving of physical objects to be as conclusively established, in its ultramundane aspect, as the Spirit rap. A hundred and twenty pound dinner-table is no trifle to lift. The conditions exclude the possibility of concealed machinery. And by what conceivable bodily effort, undetectable by watchful bystanders, can two or three assistants heave from the ground, maintain in the air, and then drop slowly to the floor, so ponderous a weight, with their hands the while in full view, under broad gas-light? No one in his senses, and believing in his senses, can witness what I have witnessed, and yet remain a sceptic in this matter.”—“Debatable Land,” p. 361.

[14] Mrs. S. B. Underhill was a sister of my husband, and a full believer in Spiritualism. There was no relationship between Mr. S. B. and Mr. D. Underhill. It had simply happened that his sister had married a gentleman of her own name with whom she had no tie of kin.

[15] This is literally exact that Mr. Owen “looked under the table,” but it omits to say *how*; and I the more readily supply that omission, because he himself, after his book was published, expressed regret that, in his cultivation of brevity, he had not explained himself more fully. To speak of having looked under a table rather suggests the idea of having stooped down for that purpose. The following was exactly the way in which it passed. Mr. Owen desired to look under it and thought of so doing, when the table, which was *an extension-table*, opened itself, its two halves being drawn apart, so as to enable him to see through as well as under it, through the wide opening thus made—evidently by the Spirits who had seen his thought. As this was a distinct phenomenal fact (and one not without its interest) Mr. Owen regretted afterward that he had not stated it precisely as it had occurred.

[16] We found, by repeated trials, that our experiments succeeded better when we sat at a late hour, after the servants had gone to bed, when the house and the streets were quiet.

CHAPTER XXV.

EXPERIENCES OF THE AUTHOR WITH ROBERT DALE OWEN (*Continued*).

V.

AN EVENTFUL HOUR WITH LEAH FOX UNDERHILL—A GHOST SPEAKS.

“It was on the evening of Sunday, the twenty-first of October, 1860. The sitting was held in Mr. Underhill’s dining-room, lasting from ten till eleven o’clock P.M.

“The room was lighted by gas. There were two windows fronting the street; three doors: one opening on a corridor whence a staircase ascended to the next floor, another opening on a short passage leading to the kitchen, the third, the door of a pantry in which were crockery and various other articles, including a barrel of loaf-sugar in one corner.

“Before we had any demonstrations the raps requested us to wait until the domestics had retired. There were two servant girls in the kitchen, whom Mrs. Underhill sent up stairs to bed, so that everything was profoundly still on that floor of the house. Then we fastened the inside blinds of both windows, so as to exclude all light from the street.

“Before commencing the session, at Mr. Underhill’s request, I shut and locked the three doors above referred to, leaving the keys in the doors, so that no one, even if furnished with keys, could open them from without. I satisfied myself by careful personal inspection of the furniture, and otherwise, that there was no one in the pantry, nor any one in the dining-room except the three persons who, along with myself, assisted at the sitting. These persons were Mr. Daniel Underhill, Mrs. Underhill (Leah Fox), and her nephew, Charles, twelve years old. We sat down to a centre-table, three feet eleven inches in diameter, of black walnut, and without table-cover. (I had previously looked under it; nothing to be seen there.) The gas-burner was immediately over it. I sat on the east side of the table,

Mr. Underhill opposite to me, Mrs. Underhill on my left hand, and Charles on the right. There was no fire in the room.

“The rappings commenced, gradually increasing in number and force. After a short interval they spelled, ‘Put out the gas.’ It was accordingly extinguished and the room remained in total darkness. Then ‘Join hands.’ Shortly after doing so I felt, several times, a cool breeze blowing on my cheek. Then was spelled, ‘Do not break the circle.’ We obeyed; and, except for a second or two at a time, it remained, on my part, unbroken throughout the rest of the sitting.

“After a few minutes I perceived a light, apparently of a phosphorescent character, on my left, near the floor. It was, at first, of a rectangular form, with the edges rounded. I judged it to be about four inches long and two and a half inches wide. It seemed like an open palm illuminated, but the light which emanated from it showed quite distinctly its entire surface; I could distinguish no fingers. For a time it moved about near the floor, then it rose into the air and floated about the room, sometimes over our heads. After a time it changed its appearance and increased in brightness. It then resembled an opaque oval substance, about the size of a child’s head, muffled up in the folds of some very white and shining material, like fine linen, only brighter. As it moved about, I began to hear, at first imperfectly, afterward somewhat more distinctly, the rustling as of a silk dress, or of other light article of female apparel, giving the impression that one or more persons were moving silently about the room. Then the light passed behind Mrs. Underhill; then I saw it close to Mr. Underhill, and just opposite to me. Mr. Underhill said, ‘Can you not go down to Mr. Owen? do try.’ Thereupon it moved slowly around to my left side. This time the folds appeared to have dropped, and what seemed a face (still covered, however, with a luminous veil) came bending down within five or six inches of my own face, as I turned toward it. As it approached, I plainly distinguished the semi-luminous outline of an entire figure of the usual female stature. I saw, very distinctly, the arms moving. At the lower extremity of its right arm, as if on the palm of the hand, the figure bore what seemed a rectangular substance, about four inches by two, as nearly as I could estimate. This substance was more brightly illuminated than the rest of the figure. It may have been only the illuminated palm, but I do not think it was; it seemed more like a transparent box with phosphorescent light within it. Whatever it was, the

figure raised it above its head, and then passed it slowly down close to what seemed the face, and then over the upper part of the body, as one might pass a lantern over any object, with intent to make it visible. This action it repeated several times.

“By aid of the illuminations thus afforded I saw, more distinctly than before, the general form of the face and figure; but both appeared covered with a half-transparent veil, and I could distinguish no features; nor were the outlines of the body, nor of the limbs, sharply defined. The motion of the right arm with the light was the most marked and frequent.

“While this was taking place I held Mrs. Underhill’s hand and Charles’s. As the various phases of the phenomena succeeded each other, I remarked on what I saw; and Mr. Underhill, from the opposite side of the table, responded to my remarks; so that I am quite certain he was seated there. I expressed a wish that the Spirit would touch me, and Mr. Underhill said, from his place, ‘We are very anxious that the Spirit should touch Mr. Owen, if it can.’

“Thereupon I felt what seemed a human hand laid on my head. And, as I looked steadily at the figure, which stood on my left side, I saw its head bend toward my left shoulder. A moment afterward I *felt*, and simultaneously *heard*, just behind the point of that shoulder, a kiss imprinted. I could not, for any physical fact, obtain the evidence of three senses—sight, touch, and hearing—more distinctly than in this case I did.

“Immediately afterward I saw this luminous body pass behind me; what seemed, by the touch, to be hands gently laid hold of both my shoulders and turned me round to the right. I looked on that side and the figure now stood by my right shoulder.

“After pausing there for a few seconds, it moved toward the window furthest from me, and we heard the sounds as if some one were attempting to open the window-blind.

“Mr. Underhill, from his place, remarked that it would probably be able to effect this; for it had done so on a previous occasion. The blind was in four compartments, each of which could be opened or closed by raising or lowering a wire attached to movable slats. The figure opened the upper left-

hand quarter of the blind, so that a faint light shone in from the street lamps. I was looking at the window when this occurred.

“Up to this time the appearance, gradually becoming more luminous, had been in sight, moving about the room fully five minutes. There was not the slightest footfall when it moved. My hearing is very acute; I listened for every sound; and as, in the intervals of conversation, the silence was unbroken, I could have detected the fall of the lightest footstep.

“From this time the light which illuminated the figure gradually faded, and soon I could no longer distinguish any form. The slight rustling sound, unaccompanied by footsteps, still, however, continued.

“Suddenly we heard a noise as of the door opposite to me being unlocked; then of its being hastily opened and shut; then the rustling sound approached me on the left, and a key was laid on my left hand. Then a second door was heard to be unlocked in the same way, and I heard another key laid on the table just before me. Then a third door (that of the cupboard, by the sound) was heard to be unlocked and opened, and a key, as if pitched over our heads, was heard to drop with a clatter on the table.

“While this was going on I commented, from time to time, on each occurrence, and received answers from Mr. Underhill, from his place at the table opposite to me.

“While we were conversing, there was a rattling of the crockery in the cupboard. Mrs. Underhill expressed her apprehensions as to some favorite china, but Mr. Underhill replied, ‘I will trust the Spirits;’ and then added, ‘Cannot the Spirit bring something to Mr. Owen?’ Almost immediately there was set down on the table, close to my left hand, some object which I touched, and it proved to be a cut-glass goblet. In setting it down, what seemed a human hand touched mine, and immediately afterward was laid several times on my shoulder. I expressed a desire that it would distinctly grasp my hand, to which Mr. Underhill responded. Instantly a small hand, or what in touch resembled one, took hold of my hand and grasped it. Then it clasped my bare wrist, gently but with a firm grasp; then my lower arm, then my upper arm; each time with a distinct grasp. I could not have distinguished the touch from that of a human hand. It was a little cooler than mine, but not disagreeably so. There was nothing chilly or clammy or

otherwise unpleasant about it. There was after this, throughout the sitting, no sound whatever of opening or closing doors.

“While it was touching me thus, Mr. Underhill said, ‘Can you fill the goblet you brought to Mr. Owen with water?’ There was a rustling but no footstep, a slight noise in the pantry, and then the sound of something dropped into the goblet; but, putting my hand in, I felt no water. In doing so I broke the circle only for a moment. Then, just behind me, I heard a sound as if the glass of the clock on the mantel-piece were touched and shaken.

“All this time there was no word spoken except by those at the table; but, once or twice, there was a whistling sound in the air.

“When, soon after, we were bidden by the raps to relight the gas, I found three door-keys on the table, the goblet also, and within it a lump of loaf-sugar. Both the room doors were closed, but on trying them I found that neither was locked. Two of the keys on the table fitted them. The door of the pantry, which the third key fitted, stood open, and the cover of the barrel of sugar was pushed partly off. The left-hand upper portion of the blind, at which we had seen and heard the figure, was open.

“These are facts, all briefly noted down the same evening on which they happened, and written out in full the next morning.

“The allegations, by the raps, were that the Spirit present was that of a daughter of Mrs. Fox, who had died young, and that other Spirits were present (among them an Indian Spirit), aiding her to show herself to our circle. Emily—that was the girl’s name—had been Mrs. Underhill’s favorite sister, long mourned over, and had lain, during the last hour of her life and at the moment of death, in Mrs. Underhill’s arms. Mr. Underhill stated to me that he had seen the same Spirit, as distinctly, several times before; and that he had been able to distinguish the features. He appeared also, on this occasion, to have perceived the whole figure, and especially the features, more distinctly than I did, though my natural sight has always been keen, and, except within ordinary reading distance, is still nearly as strong as it was thirty years ago. With these exceptions, all present, so far as I could judge by comparing notes with them during and after the sitting, seemed to have seen and heard the succession of phenomena here described just as I myself had done.

“Up to this time, never having witnessed any such phenomena as these, I had often doubted within myself how I should be affected by witnessing an apparition, or what I had reason to consider such.

“It *seemed* to me that I should experience no alarm; but of this in advance of actual experience, I could not be assured. Now I know just how far I can trust my self-possession. Awe I undoubtedly felt—awe and intense interest; but, in looking back on my feelings throughout that wonder-bringing hour, I feel certain that a physician might have placed his finger on my wrist, even at the moment when that dimly illuminated Presence first bent over me, with scarcely six inches intervening between its veiled face and mine—its hands placed on my head, its lips touching my shoulder—and not have found the beatings of my pulse unduly accelerated; or if he had detected acceleration, it could not, I am very sure, have been justly ascribed to any tremor or fear, but solely to the natural effect of solemn and riveted expectation. If a man, under such circumstances, may trust to his own recollections not twenty-four hours old, I can aver, on my honor, that I was not, at any time while these events were in progress, under other excitement (though it may be greater in degree) than a chemist might be supposed to experience while watching the issue of a long-projected and decisive experiment, or an astronomer when the culminating point of some important observation is about to be reached.

“I beg it may not be supposed that I mention this as boasting or courage. There was, in truth, nothing of which to boast. The preceding and attendant circumstances were such as to preclude alarm. I was not alone, nor taken by surprise. I was expecting some phenomena and hoping that they would be of a phosphorescent nature. And though I had not any expectation of seeing an actual form, yet, as the allegation was that a deceased sister, beloved by one of the assistants, was present, and as all the demonstrations were gentle and seemingly arranged by friendly agencies to satisfy my desire for the strongest evidence in proof of Spiritual appearance, I was under very different circumstances to those which have often shaken the nerves even of the boldest, while encountering for the first time what is usually called a ghost.

“I state the fact of my equanimity, then, merely as one of the attendant circumstances which may be fairly taken into account in judging the

testimony here supplied in proof of the appearance, in visible and tangible form, of an alleged Spirit of a deceased person. It is often assumed that a man who believes he sees an apparition is (to use a common expression) frightened out of his senses, and so, is not entitled to credit as a witness.

“If it be objected that, before the sitting closed, the doors were unlocked, I reply first, that all the remarkable and interesting portion of the phenomena *occurred before this happened*; and secondly, that, as the keys of the locked doors were left in them, they could only be opened from the inside. If, in reply to this last, it still be urged that Mr. Underhill, deserting his post for a few seconds, might have opened one of the doors, I reply that I happened to be conversing with him at the moment we first heard the key turned. I add that during the next sitting, when still more wonderful phenomena occurred, I took a precaution (as will be seen) which made it impossible that either Mr. Underhill or any of the company should leave their seats, even for a moment, without my knowledge.”

A GHOST SPEAKS.

“Five days after this I had the session here referred to, in the same room, with the same assistants, during which similar phenomena were repeated, but with one highly noteworthy addition.

“The date was the twenty-sixth of October, 1860, and it was an evening session, from half-past ten till midnight. The same precautions which I had taken before the commencement of the former sitting, as to locking all the doors, looking under the table, examining the room and furniture, etc., I carefully adopted on this occasion also. As before, we waited until the servants had retired and all was still.

“After a time there was spelled ‘Darken;’ then ‘Join hands.’ We obeyed; but on this occasion I took an additional precaution. Grasping Mrs. Underhill’s right hand and Charles’s left, I brought my own hands to the centre of the table, and Mr. Underhill, across the table, laid his hands on mine. This we continued throughout the entire sitting. I am able, therefore, to assert that, from the beginning of this sitting till the end, the circle remained unbroken.

“After a few minutes, there appeared a luminous body of an irregularly circular form, about four inches in diameter, floating between us and the

door, which was back of Mrs. Underhill. It was somewhat brighter than when it first appeared on the previous occasion, that is, on the twenty-first of October.

“Then, after an interval, the light, rustling sound seemed to indicate the approach of some one. The figure was not so distinct as on the previous occasion, the lower portion losing itself in a grayish cloud. The highest light seemed to be on the spot corresponding to the forehead. But I saw no features; nor did I see the arms moving. Very soon I was gently touched on the head, then on the shoulders, then laid hold of, as with both hands of some one standing behind me. Then the figure seemed, by the sound, to move away toward Mr. Underhill. He stated that the figure was approaching him. He asked it if, as a test, it could take something out of his pocket; but there was no reply, by raps or otherwise. Immediately I heard a sound as if some one were moving the key about in the door opposite to me.

“Soon after Mr. Underhill said the figure had again approached him. I saw the illuminated circular substance close to his head, but could not distinguish any figure. Mr. Underhill said that he could dimly discern the figure.

“After a time it moved round to the lad Charles, who exhibited much alarm, crying out, ‘Oh, go away! pray don’t!’ when it approached, as I saw it do, close to his head, which he had bent down on the table. It was now very bright, so that, by the light, I could see the outline of the boy’s head. Charles afterward stated that he saw it distinctly, and that a hand touched him repeatedly. While it was close to Charles, it appeared to me as if a white handkerchief or some article of the like texture were thrown over a hand or some similar support. I saw no figure. When it rose behind Charles, as if to leave him when he cried out, I could perceive what resembled a hand grasping some illuminated substance, the outline of the hand appearing as a shadow across the illuminated ground.

“Then it moved, as I could see, to Mr. Underhill, and after a time crossed over to me, and touched me gently on the shoulder. Of a sudden it occurred to me that one other evidence was lacking. I expressed a desire that, if it could, it would speak. It seemed to make several efforts to do so, as

indicated by a slight, guttural sound; then I heard a sound resembling the syllable *es*, twice repeated.

“Then, by the raps, was spelled out, ‘Sing.’ Mrs. Underhill complied. The figure which had seemed to move away and return, again touched me from behind, drawing me slightly toward it. Then, in a brief interval of the singing, I heard, in a low voice, just behind me, ‘God bless you.’ As additional assurance that it was no momentary illusion, I asked that it would speak again; and again, in an interval of the music, I heard, in distinct tones, the same words, ‘God bless you.’ They seemed to be pronounced close to my ear. The voice was low—apparently a woman’s voice—just louder than a whisper, and the words seemed to be pronounced with an effort, in subdued tones, as a person faint from sickness might speak. I particularly noticed, also, that each word was pronounced separately, with a perceptible interval between, and there was not the usual accent on *bless*, followed by the shortened *you*; but each word was equally accented. In other respects the sound resembled the human voice, when low and gentle.

“Mrs. Underhill afterward stated to me that she distinguished the word *you*, but not the others. Mr. Underhill said he had heard articulate sounds, but could not make out any of the words; he only knew that something had been said to me.

“After a time I saw the figure pass behind Mrs. Underhill and remain, for a few minutes, near her husband; then it returned to me, appearing on my left side. I saw the outline of a head and face, but still, as before, covered with a veil which concealed the features. I perceived, however, what I had not observed before, what seemed tresses of dark hair dropping over the face, and the dim outline of an arm raised one of these tresses, and then dropped it again, several times, as if to attract my attention. Behind was the vague outline of a figure, but less distinct than during the previous sitting. Then the figure passed behind me. I was leaning over the table, so that Mr. Underhill might not have so far to stretch in order to reach my hands. I felt a kiss on my shoulders, then there was the feeling of two hands laid each on one shoulder, and I was drawn very gently back till my shoulders, above the chair back, were pressed against what seemed a material form. Almost at the same moment my hand was kissed.

“Mr. Underhill cried out, ‘Ah, you were drawn back;’ and Mrs. Underhill said, a little impatiently, ‘Every one is touched but me. Can’t you come to me?’ The words were hardly pronounced when she screamed out, as in alarm; she had been suddenly and unexpectedly kissed on the forehead.

“From that very moment the manifestations entirely ceased. No luminous object to be seen, not another touch, not a rustle, not a sound of any kind in the room. I listened attentively, and am certain that no door opened or shut, and scarcely a minute or two elapsed ere it was spelled out, ‘Light the gas.’

“When we had done so we found everything as before, with a single exception. I ascertained by looking under the table and in the pantry that there was no one in the room but ourselves; I found all the three doors locked, but the key belonging to the door opposite to me was missing. We asked where it was; the raps replied, ‘Look.’ We could not see it anywhere. Then we examined our pockets, and, from one of his coat-pockets Mr. Underhill produced a key which was found to fit the door. Mrs. Underhill asked if her alarmed exclamation had injured the Spirit?

“Answer by the raps: ‘Not much.’

“Mrs. U.: ‘I’m so *much* afraid I hurt her!’

“Answer: ‘It frightened her.’

“Question (by me): ‘Did Mrs. Underhill’s cry of alarm cause the manifestations to cease?’

“Answer: ‘Yes.’

“As to the door-key, I remark:

“That Mr. Underhill asked, as a test, to have something taken from his pocket; but it was a better test, since he could not move from his place to take the key from the door and deposit it in his pocket. Who *but* a Spirit could take it, our circle remaining unbroken? Is the taking by Spirit agency incredible? But the hands that pressed my shoulders, that grasped my hand, that clasped my wrist, were surely material enough to extract a key from a door-lock and drop it into a pocket.

“Then all the doors, this time, were left locked, so that no one could enter from without; to say nothing of the absurd supposition that a Spirit should open a door in order to admit human assistants.”—“Debatable Land,” p. 467.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SPIRIT CURES—MR. CAPRON'S WIFE.

STATEMENT BY E. W. CAPRON—WIFE OF GENERAL WADDY THOMPSON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA—WIFE OF MR. DAVIS OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

I might fill many pages with my reminiscences under this head, but I now confine myself to three instances, the first in order being also the first in my experience. I take it partly for that reason, and partly because it contains the features of the temporary transfer to myself of the affection removed from the sufferer, and also of the cure having been performed *at a distance*.

I.

STATEMENT BY E. W. CAPRON.

“On the occasion of my first visit at the house of the Fox sisters, then living in Prospect Street, Rochester, I mentioned casually that my wife was afflicted with a very severe and troublesome cough. Nothing more was said about it at the time, but as we sat quietly conversing with and about the ‘Spirits,’ Leah seemed suddenly entranced and said, ‘I’m going to cure Rebecca’s cough.’ It was no sooner said than done. She visited her mentally and described her accurately, and pronounced her cured. I returned to my home (Auburn) and found her entirely well. I expressed surprise, and asked her how she became so suddenly cured? She said she did not herself understand it, as her cough had left her since ‘night before last.’ Her cough was cured and never returned.

“E. W. CAPRON.”

NOTE.—I will add that the cough was transferred to myself with equal violence to that which had tormented Mrs. Capron. My family at times feared that I might rupture a blood-vessel. (Why did the Spirits not relieve me too?) It lasted for about a week, when my mother sent for Professor E. C. Rogers, a powerful mesmerizer who happened to be lecturing in Rochester at the time, who by his magnetic power and manipulations gave me prompt and complete relief. He was not a “Spiritualist,” nor am I able to say exactly what his philosophy was. He afterward published an 8vo volume of

about 330 pages, entitled, "Philosophy of Mysterious Agents, Human and Mundane; or, Dynamic Laws and Relations of Man," etc.

A. L. U.

II.

WIFE OF GENERAL WADDY THOMPSON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

General Waddy Thompson was a widower when I first knew him (he had met my mother and sisters in Washington, in 1852). Subsequently he attended my séances frequently. On the occasion I now speak of (in the fall of 1857), he called to make an engagement with me to see him and his young, second wife, who was an invalid. As they were going to start for home the next morning, he wished to come that afternoon. It was cold, and the snow and frozen rain came down heavily, but at the appointed time a carriage drove to the door, and Mrs. Thompson was carried into the house by two men. She was beautiful alike in person and in character. Her lameness and great suffering, which she had endured for over four years, had had their origin in milk fever, which had settled in her leg, and had baffled the skill of the most renowned physicians of Europe and America.

The manifestations of Spirit presence came freely, and very soon Mrs. Thompson cried out, "Oh! something is taking hold of my limbs with hands!" The General begged her to sit still, saying, "Do not stir, my dear; it is your Spirit guardian who loves you." She wept and called on her mother's Spirit to come, saying, "Dear mother, I want you to go with me where I go, and watch over us all."

Mrs. Thompson was cured, and walked back without difficulty from Ludlow Place to the St. Nicholas Hotel.

Two years later, in 1859, she and her lovely sister, Miss Jones, accompanied the General to New York, and on learning that it was our reception night, came to enjoy the evening with us, and related the circumstances before a very large party.

III.

WIFE OF MR. DAVIS, OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

The third I save myself the trouble of writing by copying it from Robert Dale Owen's "Debatable Land," page 513. But in doing so I correct an error of *date* which was natural enough on the part of Mrs. Davis in a narration made in 1862 of an occurrence which had taken place some five years before. In point of fact it occurred in 1857, while I resided in my house, No. 1 Ludlow Place. She erroneously makes it February, 1858, instead of 1857. My marriage with Mr. Underhill was on the 2d of November, 1858. Of course I was not "Mrs. Underhill," but Mrs. Brown, at the time of this extraordinary cure; though it was natural that Mrs. Davis in 1862 should speak of me by the name which had then been mine for about four years; and also that this should have misled Mr. Owen, and caused him to understand the case as having occurred after I had become Mrs. U. The reader will therefore, in perusing this narrative, simply change the word "Underhill" to Brown. With that unimportant correction, the whole of it is strictly true. See letter from Mrs. Davis to me, written on her return home from this visit, dated August 8, 1857, page [391](#).

Paralysis of the Motor Nerve.

"In the month of February, 1858, a lady, the wife of Mr. Davis, of Providence, R. I., was residing at her home in the immediate vicinity of that city.

"It happened, one morning, when a large and powerful horse was standing harnessed in front of the house, that a servant, passing carelessly close to the animal with a child's carriage in which was an infant daughter of Mrs. Davis, accidentally dropped the tongue of the carriage close to the horse's heels. Mrs. Davis, seeing the danger of her child, rushed to the horse's head, and seizing him suddenly by the bridle with her right hand, the animal reared violently so as almost to lift her from her feet. She succeeded, however, in leading him off from her child, which thus escaped unhurt.

"At the moment she experienced no pain; afterward she went about her usual occupations, but felt faint and languid throughout the day. About ten o'clock P.M., sitting down to supper, she first noticed a pain in her elbow, and then, when she attempted to use her right hand, was unable to do so; she found it impossible to close three of the fingers of that hand, the index-

finger alone obeying the impulse of her will. After a time the pain increased and extended above the elbow.

“In the course of the night the right leg also became affected, the pain extending to the hip.

“In the morning she discovered that she could not, by any effort of the will, move either the right arm or the right leg.

“The physicians declared it to be a case of paralysis of the motor nerves, caused chiefly by sudden excitement. For a long time it resisted all remedies. During seven weeks the paralysis continued unabated.

“In all that time she never used hand or arm: when she walked she had to drag the right leg after her. The leg, too, became cold even to the hip, and all efforts to warm it were ineffectual.

“In the month of April she experienced slight relief by the frequent use of electricity; but only so far that, by a special effort of the will, she could partially move her hand and arm. Habitually she rested the elbow on her hip, or, when sitting in an arm-chair, raised it with the other hand so as to rest it on the chair-arm. Nor did she ever, until the incident about to be related, regain the power of straightening either leg or arm. Nor was the warmth of the leg at all restored; and when she walked she still had to drag it after her along the ground.

“This continued, without alteration or improvement, until the month of July, 1858; and by this time she had become comparatively disheartened. Life seemed to her no longer worth having: a cripple for life, a burden to her friends, useless to her family. She gave way to tears and despondency.

“In the early part of July a friend, Mrs. J., wife of a gentleman well known in New York literary circles^[17] and who had been staying with Mrs. Davis, proposed to close her visit and return to that city. Suddenly Mrs. Davis experienced an impulse for which she could not at all account. It was an urgent desire to go to New York and visit Mrs. Underhill (Leah Fox), with whom she was not acquainted, having merely heard of her through Mrs. J. She said to that lady (Mrs. J.) that if she would remain with her a day longer, she (Mrs. Davis) would accompany her to New York and visit Mrs. Underhill in hope of relief. Mrs. J. consenting, they left Providence on the

evening of July 3d, notwithstanding the doubts expressed by Mr. Davis whether his wife would be able to endure the journey, reached New York next morning, and proceeded at once to Mrs. Underhill's.

"Mrs. Davis was so much exhausted on her arrival, that she retired to a private room until the afternoon, when she, Mrs. J., and Mrs. Underhill met in the parlor.

"Loud raps being heard, it was proposed to sit down at the centre-table. It being but three o'clock in the afternoon, there was bright day-light.

"Soon after the ladies sat down, all their hands being on the table, Mrs. Davis felt the ankle of her right leg seized as by the firm grasp of a human hand, the foot raised, and the heel placed in what seemed another hand.^[18] The touch of the fingers and thumb was unmistakably distinct, and indicated that it was a right hand which grasped the ankle, while a left hand received the heel. After a time the hand which had seized the ankle released its grasp, and Mrs. Davis felt it make passes down the leg. These passes were continued about ten minutes. Mrs. Davis felt a sensation as of the circulation pervading the paralyzed limb; and the natural warmth, of which it had been for months deprived, gradually returned. At the expiration of about ten minutes, there was spelled out by raps: 'Rise and walk.'

"Mrs. Davis arose and found, with an amazement which she said no words could describe, that she could walk as well as she had ever done in her life. She paced up and down the room to assure herself that it was a reality: the pain, the paralysis were gone; she could use the hitherto disabled leg as freely as the other. After more than four months of suffering and of decrepitude, she found the natural warmth and vigor of the limb suddenly and (as it would be commonly phrased) miraculously restored.

"This terminated the sitting for the time; the *arm* still remaining paralyzed as before. But late in the evening, after the departure of several visitors, the ladies sat down again. This time, by rapping, a request was made to darken the room. After a brief delay the arm was manipulated as the leg had been, but with more force, as if rubbed downward from the shoulder by a smooth and somewhat elastic piece of metal, like the steel busk sometimes used in ladies' stays. After this had been continued for some time, what seemed to the touch a steel busk was laid in Mrs. Davis's right hand, and, by raps, a

request was spelled out to close the fingers upon it. This she found herself able to do with a firm grasp. Then the busk was drawn forcibly from her hand.

“From that time forth she recovered the use of her arm as completely as she had that of her leg. Nor has she had pain or any return of the paralysis, or weakness, or loss of temperature, in either limb, from that day to the present time;^[19] that is, during four years.

“In communicating the above to me, as Mrs. Davis did, in presence of the same friend who accompanied her to Mrs. Underhill’s, Mrs. Davis kindly gave me permission to use her name.”^[20]

^[17] Oliver Johnson, Editor of the *Anti-Slavery Standard*.

^[18] The allegation by rapping was, that the agency was that of a deceased brother of Mrs. Davis.

^[19] Written July, 1862, when this narrative was communicated to me.

^[20] The above was related to me July 20, 1862, by Mrs. Davis herself. I wrote it out next day; and submitted the manuscript on the 24th of July to Mrs. Davis, in presence of Mrs. J., for authentication. It was assented to by both ladies as correct.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

J. HEDDON—S. CHAMBERLAIN—JOHN E. ROBINSON—A. UNDERHILL—GEORGE LEE, M. D.

The two following letters, from Mr. Heddon and Judge Chamberlain to me, I take from *The Cleveland Plaindealer*, in which paper they are thus prefaced by the editor:

“*More Testimony.*—Some friends of Mrs. Fish, on learning her intended visit to this city, gave her many flattering letters, signifying their great esteem for her and confidence in the ‘good cause,’ as they call it, of the doctrine of Spiritualism. Among the many such testimonials we select the following from J. Heddon, Esq., and Judge Chamberlain, men of the first standing in their community.”

J. HEDDON.

“STAFFORD, May 9, 1851.

“RESPECTED MADAM: As Mr. Chamberlain and myself left Rochester before we had an opportunity of copying those Spiritual manifestations, I will now transcribe and send them to you by mail, and Mr. Chamberlain engages to do the same. You are at perfect liberty to make any use you may think proper of mine, including or omitting the name, as you may think best; for I am alike indifferent to frowns or flattery. I feel a lively interest in the cause, and I believe many of my friends will be induced to pay you a visit on your return from the West; and most assuredly your humble servant among the rest. The communications I copy *verbatim* on the other side of the sheet.

“Wishing you a pleasant and successful visit to Cleveland, I am

“Your most ob’t servant,

“J. HEDDON.”

“STAFFORD, May 9, 1851.

“You are aware that, for the first time, I had manifestations on my person of the presence of Spirits at your house on Thursday last, after which I received the following communication from my Spirit friends. My wife thus addressed me:

“‘My dear: I am with you always; in the silent hour of midnight, when all is quiet, I rest upon your bosom and bless you, and keep you safe.’

“*Message to her Child.*—‘Teach her to know her mother watches over her; tell her she has a mother “still living,” teach her to know that death hath no terror—the transition from Earth to Heaven is past description; we shall all be again united. All is well.’

“The Spirit of my father then said: ‘I sanction all she has said—the Truth will rise triumphant—the cause is good. God rules victorious.’

“In answer to a question whether I should have manifestations at home, my wife replied, ‘I will make sounds upon your pillows.’

“The Spirit of a recently departed brother said, ‘Tell her (our mother) I thought of her when I was dying, and desired to see you all, but when my soul was released I came to your abode, and was greatly delighted with my privileges. Things will change with you, and you will rejoice and know the truth.’

“The numerous test questions I kept no record of, and consequently they are omitted here.

“J. HEDDON.

“N. B. My brother died far away from home, which accounts for the above message to his mother.”

S. CHAMBERLAIN.

“LE ROY, N. Y., May 10, 1851.

“MRS. A. L. FISH:

“I herewith annex a copy of an account of some incidents which occurred at your house on the 7th inst. The following *mental* questions were asked and replied to by the Spirits in the usual manner.

“I asked if the Spirit I then had in my mind were present? Answer, ‘Yes.’

“I then asked if the Spirit would give me a message. The alphabet was called for and the following was spelled out:

“‘I used to oppose the subject. I departed this life within the last year; I am convinced of the reality of these things now. I visited Mrs. Fish soon after I left the mortal body, and was pleased with my interview. I scorned the idea of visiting her when I lived on earth, but now I am delighted to call occasionally and listen to the communications. I wish I had known something more about these things before I left the earth.’

“I asked him to give me the letters of his name; which he did. This I considered a good test, as no one present could know whom I had in my mind; and the fact of his death and opinions on this subject were true, as I had been intimately acquainted with him for a period of twenty years, and had had many interviews with him on the subject.

“I then asked, mentally, for the Spirit of a new acquaintance, with whom I had a misunderstanding while in life, which was not settled at his death. I asked him, mentally, what he had to say on the subject? The alphabet was called for, and said, ‘We are good friends again. All differences are now settled forever.’

“I then said, mentally, ‘Perhaps I was wrong.’ He said, ‘No, I was in fault.’ I asked him to spell his first name, which he did. I asked the Spirit of my father-in-law if I should have a medium in my family. He answered, by alphabet, ‘You have a medium in your family already;’ which was true. I asked in what way. He replied, ‘A medium in writing.’ This was also true. I asked him to spell his name, which he declined. I asked him why the Spirits declined, generally, to give their names. He answered, ‘That would convince the sceptic too easily.’ He then said, ‘No good thing can be obtained without some labor—the husbandman must till his ground before it will bring forth much fruit.’ There were many other questions and

answers that I consider equally good tests, but have no time to give them now.

“Wishing you much pleasure and true friends through life,

I am very sincerely yours,

“S. CHAMBERLAIN.”

This Judge Chamberlain was one of the most respectable citizens of Le Roy, N. Y.

JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, May 23, 1851.

“DEAR FRIEND LEAH: Your letter was received two days since, and I thank your punctuality in thus early remembering not to forget me. The accompanying half-sheet was very welcome to Rachel. You could hardly have written more, under the circumstances. I will therefore excuse you for not giving me a particular account of things up to the date when yours was penned. I shall, however, expect a long letter from you soon, written all to me, and as the warfare has, by this time, fairly opened between our friends, the Spirits, and their antagonists in Cleveland, you will have enough to tell me. The result of the ‘passage at arms’ is, of course, not doubtful to any who, like me, are aware of the temper of the weapons which the Spirits wield against their opponents. But we are all interested, exceedingly so, in looking on, while the battle is waged in a new field, with fresh antagonists confident in their own strength because ignorant of the power of the opposing force. It is amusing, this confidence of inflated ignorance! but it is such a universal weakness, that we can hardly any longer wonder at its manifestation. You have so often witnessed it, and have so often triumphed over those who came to sneer and scoff at you, that I think you can well afford now to keep your temper well harnessed on such occasions, and let your auditors see how calm, how confident you are, while awaiting their overthrow. Why, Leah, you can afford to wear a smile and confront, with an unflashing eye, the deriding, sneering sceptic, or even the enraged bigot, who backs his authoritative condemnation by relating falsehoods that have been a thousand times refuted. ‘But it is difficult,’ say you, ‘for me to be

more than mortal.' I know it, and doubt very much if I could be half as patient as you are. But I am at a *safe distance*, and have hazarded giving you (very modestly) this quiet hint. The application of whalebone to a man's back *may* help his manners and regulate the movements of his tongue and pen, but it is not very apt to convince his reason. Mr. Sackett, probably, is quite aware of this; and his administration of the corrective was evidently intended for the moral improvement of the *Herald* man. You wish he (Mr. S.) would come and mete out such justice to the Rochester editorial fraternity. I do not. They are not *worth* the *trouble* of horse-whipping, and besides, only be patient, Leah, and you will see them yet so confoundedly trounced by the Spirits, that it will last them till the orthodox judgment day damns them. It is to be hoped you are wise enough to retire from company sufficiently early in the evening to give you time for rest. There is scarcely anything which more destroys one's equanimity of mind than this neglect of rest. Now will you remember and take care of yourself? I have not yet done with you, for this reason—you need scolding once in a while, and have but few friends who are willing to do it; so I shall remind you, on all proper occasions, of your delinquencies. It occurred to me the other day that we were wrong in so often thinking, latterly, that Spiritualism had made but little advance in some time. It is true, so far as our knowledge is concerned; and the number of mediums for Spiritual communications seems very limited. But all this while the subject has been taking hold of people's minds in *all parts of the country*. They do not stop thinking because a few church conferences and priest-ridden journalists tell them to. Editors who have some independence will write, and their readers will digest anything which is made palatable by the semblance of candor. There is, perhaps, no one subject which is more thought of throughout this country and Europe at this very time than these Spirit, demonstrations. I believe you will go to England and France; but when, and how, and under what auspices, I will not try to guess. Tell Calvin I am obliged for the papers sent by him. I have not seen any of the inmates of your house since you left. I would call there if there were any necessity, but you have left matters in safe custody.

“Say to your sister Maria I hope the journey affords her pleasure, both in seeing a part of the beauties of the great West and in rendering you assistance, who so often want a sister upon whom you can lean and rely with confidence.

“My best regards to her and Calvin, as well as yourself.

“Yours truly,

“J. E. R.”

A. UNDERHILL.

“CLEVELAND, O., June 19, 1851.

“MY DEAR FRIEND LEAH:

“I trust you will appreciate the motive that prompts me to write this to you. I have thought much on the subject, and will make a few suggestions. Your position, as a family, before the world, is now of great importance. The fact of communicating with Spirits has not only been fully established in the minds of a few, but is becoming generally acknowledged by the intelligent world. Your record will necessarily form a great part of the history of the world from this time onward, and though your present trials and perplexities seem past endurance, yet patience and perseverance, until a final triumph overtakes you, should be your polar star and watchword.

“There ever have been martyrs for truth’s sake, and ever will be; and though it may be grievous to bear the taunts and sneers of the ignorant, self-wise, and conceited bigot, yet, if the cause demands it we must endure the sacrifice and look beyond for the reward. I, who have battled for years with the enemies of progress, have become inured to their unblushing insolence, and while I handle their errors without much mercy, I pity their ignorance. *You* are differently situated, and *severely tried* on every hand, but you are enlisted in the good cause, and you must not look back but upward and onward. Thousands are joining your ranks, and your banner floats over the world. We are all fighting the good fight of faith, and our motto is, ‘Truth and justice to all mankind.’

“Other mediums are being developed, and their name will soon be legion, their power and influence irresistible. Already might you as well try to turn back the waters of the Niagara as to stay the onward march of the cause in which you and your family have been selected to take the lead and ‘fight the good fight.’ My dear Leah, remember the ‘wise man’ who ‘built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the

winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.' Let 'false prophets' arise (as I know they will) and 'come to you in sheep's clothing.' You are in the right and have nothing to fear. Many, too, will try to usurp your rights, but trust in God. 'Fear not, neither be dismayed.' Take courage, then, my dear friend, and do not despair. Fight with reason, truth, and prudence, but never surrender to cowardly slander or bigoted insolence; never, never!

“Now, what I wish to say is this: The relations in which you stand to the origin of this unbounded subject, make it highly important that your whole history should be carefully preserved. In fact, you should keep a daily journal, and record therein the progress and developments of this new (and to many) startling science—for so I deem it. The fact is that your names must form an inseparable part of the history of modern Spiritualism, and it is important that you should have that justice which the truth alone can give you. Hence, while it is fresh in the mind, your mother, yourself, or some one should carefully collect and arrange these early facts, in such a way as to secure them and place them where they belong, beyond all doubt or argument; and also, as far as is in your power, you should enter daily, if but two or three times, the distinguished names of your daily investigators, the names of the places you visit, and the thousand calls 'to come' from every part of the United States and from Europe. Do not neglect or deem it unimportant, for the time will come when it will be deeply regretted (if not by you) by those who come after you. Without saying more at this time, please accept my best wishes, and be assured of my co-operation and willingness to share with you all the jeers and taunts of sceptics or obstinate bigots. I much prefer the former, as there is more hope for the sceptic than the bigot. I choose to stand with a few who are in the right rather than with the many in the wrong. Smiles or frowns are alike unheeded when they come from the ignorant or *self-wise*.

“Most truly and respectfully your friend,
“A. UNDERHILL.”

GEORGE LEE, M.D.

“BARRÉ, MASS., June 30, 1851.

“MRS. ANN L. FISH:

“DEAR MADAM—I address you almost as a stranger, although I had the honor of a short acquaintance at your place in Rochester, last September. I was at your house on the same day with several clergymen from Massachusetts. I was then on my way to Mt. Morris on business. A lady from Mt. Morris visited you, a Mrs. Mashon (an acquaintance of yours). While I was stopping there at her house, she informed me that yourself and sisters were about to leave home for a time, and I was much disappointed on finding you were all absent when I returned, as I was then anxious to further investigate those mysterious manifestations. I felt that I had been severely scathed in this world by the loss of all our children; and although I was educated strictly in the orthodox church and its tenets, yet I was somewhat sceptical in regard to the soul’s immortality. You cannot wonder that I should seek confirmation of the soul’s future life.

“When, therefore, I heard those mysterious sounds for the first time at your house, it produced a thrill of joy, as being the strongest evidence of a future life that I had ever met with; and though I was satisfied that there was no trick, no collusion in the sounds, yet I have not been so certain that it might not be some newly developed or newly elaborated electrical effect; yet the evidence is in favor of its Spirituality. It is the most natural solution of the whole subject, and I should regret, as much as any one, to have it prove otherwise.

“I am satisfied that the mediums are honest and unconscious of the primary cause of the phenomena. I am somewhat acquainted with Swedenborg’s writings, and very well acquainted with A. J. Davis and his writings. I consider Davis and his writings among the greatest wonders of the world. That a young man, without education, without even having read books, should have given to the world such far-reaching thought and profound philosophy, upon the most abstruse and metaphysical subjects, is a marvel indeed! The history of mankind cannot produce a parallel fact. And yet we do not suppose he has no errors. He does not claim infallibility. In ‘Nature’s Divine Revelations’ he says, ‘Let then what I am impressed to state, be received as true or rejected as false, as it addresses itself to your judgment, or according to its appeals to your reason.’

“The highest angel in the universe could not give the whole philosophy of the universe, because that Spirit does not possess a perfect knowledge of *all things*; and I have seen many criticisms of Mr. Davis’s writings, but they generally show that the writers of them do not comprehend him; and although some strictures may be just, the great majority of them evince a real misapprehension on the part of their authors.

“Le Roy Sunderland has made two: one upon Mr. Davis’s recent work, ‘The Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse.’ In both of Mr. Sunderland’s criticisms he shows his own want of discrimination. Dr. Gridley has another article in *The Spirit World* as a criticism of Davis. It darkens knowledge with words. They do not take a very comprehensive view of Davis’s philosophy. They seem to forget that Davis uses language figuratively.

“I am somewhat acquainted with Mr. Sunderland, have been at his house recently, and heard the rappings in presence of his daughter, Mrs. Cooper, as a medium. The rappings are obscure—not more than one-quarter as loud or as distinct as I have heard them at your house—much of the time so light as scarcely to be heard; yet I was satisfied at the time that they were the same kind of sounds. I have been before several other mediums; the sounds are all much smaller than at your house.

“Mr. Sunderland seems to be unsettled in his mind about the Spirit world, and about the Spirits being good or bad, or *how much* evil; and is rather disposed to fall in with Swedenborg, at present, on that subject. Mr. Sunderland will do some good with his paper, but I regret some of his articles. This criticism upon Davis is most unjust and uncalled for.

“I am confident Mr. Davis is more correct, more consistent in his philosophy of the Bible and the Spirit world, than Swedenborg.

“Nature and Reason is the standard whereby Davis directs to test all these subjects. God manifesting himself in Nature, in the Universe, is a true revelation to man, and whatever corresponds to the philosophy as discovered in Nature is truth.

“If a revelation is given us not in harmony with philosophy which is *known* to be true, then that revelation is false. Davis’s standard and general philosophy cannot be overthrown; Davis sometimes being himself in

sympathy with higher or purer Spirits, may use language to convey too high or too pure conceptions of the Spirit world; but if Davis is too high, Swedenborg is too low. His hells are inconsistent with a God of wisdom; and if the doctrine of progressive development can be established, or is true, as I think it is, then Swedenborg's doctrines are not all true; but that is the great doctrine of Davis's philosophy, and if it is true, it is all we need. Ultimately we must all become right.

“Although Swedenborg was a very learned and good man, and was Spiritually enlightened while on earth, yet his mind was trammelled by his preconceived theological views. Davis's mind is under less bias, and more free. I am well convinced his writings are destined to produce a great effect upon Christendom. Such men, or writers, as Sunderland, Farrald, and others who follow Swedenborg in part, do not seem to take in the whole ground in one view. They view the Universe in fragmentary parts. They do not seem to consider that a certain relation exists between all things. That

‘All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;’

that Law is necessary as Light; all is an effect of the same interior cause. The higher could not exist without the lower; and surely without the lower there could be no progress, and without the parts the whole could not exist. Higher and lower, evil and good, heat and cold, are relative terms, comparatively positive or negative. I have not written one word of what I intended to write, and what I especially requested a reply to. So you see that nearly my whole letter is a digression. But now to the subject.

“I correspond with the Rev. A. Wilder, of Syracuse, N. Y., who lately wrote to me that a Doctor Boynton, an itinerant lecturer, had been at Syracuse and informed him and Prof. Bush, of New York City, and others, that he, the said Boynton, had been at your place at Rochester, and was there informed by a cousin to yourself (a lady) how the rappings were made, and that it was all a trick done in various ways, by the toes and by the fingers, etc. Dr. Boynton said that he pretended to be friendly, got communication with his father's Spirit (who was not dead), and then he detected this lady in rapping and charged her with it; and she owned up to him and taught him how to rap, which he was practising. To me this seemed absurd and like a

falsehood. I replied to my friend, and used some pretty strong language to convince him that Dr. Boynton was an impostor, a deceiver, a liar, and unworthy of credit. I said to him that a man who went to your place and was permitted to investigate the matter fairly, 'without money and without price,' and then went around the country telling such stories, would not need his ears much lengthened to bray, and what I wondered most at was, that Prof. Bush and Rev. A. Wilder, M.D.—for he has both letters prefixed to his name—should give any credit to him. But, notwithstanding this, friend Wilder writes me again and says he has no reason to question the veracity of Dr. Boynton.

“Now I wish you to reply to me and give me the facts in this case, so that I may be able to know them, and relate them to my friends, Doctor Wilder and Prof. Bush. These two men are both Swedenborgian preachers, and Dr. Wilder is also a medical lecturer in the medical school in Syracuse. A. J. Davis says, in his recent work on Spiritual intercourse, that the mediums sometimes may produce the rapping or other manifestations unconsciously to themselves: being impressed by the Spirits or a strong desire to do what the Spirits are about to do, or what they greatly desire themselves. Whether anything of the kind occurs with yourself or sisters, I never learned. If so, candidly and honestly inform me.

“There are things which we shall all better understand by and by.

“I saw Mr. A. J. Davis a few days ago. He says, 'There is a better time coming.' I don't know whether this will reach you at Rochester. I believe you are much absent. I heard from you in Buffalo through a Mrs. Bond, of Mt. Morris. You will recollect a rather tall, light-complexioned lady who had lost a sister and infant. She read to me her questions and answers to them before yourself and sister Margaretta. This lady is talented, one of earth's progressive spirits. She first informed me of the opposition you met with in Buffalo. Since then I have noticed in the papers your reply, etc., to Doctors Lee, Flint, and Coventry.

“You have my sympathy in your trials. It appears to me that you have great reason to rejoice that you were instrumental, in the hands of Supreme Powers, in giving to the world a more substantial assurance of an immortality, and you have, through the tests you freely submitted to,

forever silenced the theory of C. Chauncy Burr, and put to shame his emissaries. I have but little fellowship with Dr. Charles A. Lee, of Buffalo, although I bear the same title and am a relative of his. Mrs. Mashon, of Mt. Morris, is a friend to you, and said she was formerly a neighbor of yours. Her testimony gave you a good moral character. It might be useful, if necessary, in your case with Burr.

“I do not know what your intentions may be with C. C. Burr, but am glad you noticed him as you did. He is a great impostor. Mr. Grimes is another.

“Yours fraternally,
“GEO. W. LEE, M.D.”

JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, March 23, 1852.

“DEAR FRIEND LEAH: It is alike a pleasure and a duty for me to thank you for your very welcome letter, which came to hand this morning. A letter from you had become of so rare occurrence, that this was, I assure you, particularly pleasant to me. It reminded me forcibly of some favors of the kind which past years bear record of, and which served, in no slight degree, to give me those more pleasurable emotions in which consists the happiness of life. I thank you very much for the message transmitted. There is something in the communication *very like that sister* from whom it purports to come. So like, that after reading it and pondering upon the language, I fell into a half reverie, and imagined I could see through the veil that separates us, and could read in the eyes that looked lovingly upon her brother, a confirmation of that which your pen transcribed for me. I will keep it a long time, as a remembrance, and will be again obliged, whenever a repetition of the favor may be experienced without taxing your patience and generosity beyond its friendly bounds. I presume I should have become a medium long ago if my condition had been suitable; I have no doubt of the wisdom of the Spirits in refraining from intrusting me with the commission such mediumship would have imposed. My nervous temperament is somewhat peculiar, and I am quite satisfied now that I would have been a poor servant of the cause, if anything like a position in the front ranks of it had been assigned me.

“As it is I am as ever a deeply interested spectator of the events as they transpire, and looking, with entire and unflagging confidence, for the time coming when the more glorious fruits of these newly developed truths will ripen for the eye best fitted to appreciate them. I think, sometimes, that this Spiritualism advances upon the world of mind as the inflowing tide of ocean floods the shore. It seems to come in waves; each succeeding one beats further upon the strand than its predecessor. Is it not so? And is there not in the one an approximation to the grandeur of the other? But you never stood, when a child, on Newport beach, and may not see the meaning of my remark. I have tried to watch these things clearly, and, without a spirit of assumption, I think I may say I have made no great mistake in the matter in its earliest stage. I predicted the very course, on the part of the priesthood, which they have since taken (see Charles Beecher’s report). I claim no shrewdness for this, because it is the only one they can take and maintain themselves to their last hour. It is their last stronghold! and when that falls they fall with it. Now of your proposed visit to Rochester. The friends will, of course, be very glad to see you, and will expect you to make less haste to get away. I told Isaac what you said about it, but have not yet seen Amy. Her health is much improved, and she is the same blessed woman she ever was, and, I know, wants to have a good visit from you and Katie Fox.

“Yours truly,
“J. E. R.”

SAME.

“ROCHESTER, May 23, 1852.

“DEAR FRIEND LEAH:

“So you have really broken your long and persevering silence! I am obliged to you for the letter, which was received last evening, and especially for the postscript added thereunto. You know it is said that a woman’s letter is never finished without a p. s.; but it is seldom so generous in its dimensions, or so full of sentiment, as to outweigh that to which it is appended.

“What a dishonest world this is! Your letter is half cheerful, half sad; and I, who know your life about as well as any one, do not wonder that it should be so. I am thankful, Leah, that the Recording Angel always tells a straight

story upon the pages of his manuscript; thankful for myself, for you, and for others, that we are not to be judged in that Court whose sentence is final upon ex-parte evidence. Had my lot in early life been cast as yours was, I do not think I should be as good as you are, or even as happy.

“And this task which the Spirits have imposed upon you of late years, is anything but a light one. It has its brighter side, as I well know, its lightening influences; and were this not the case, no one, not even yourself, could endure the wear constant and severe, upon the mind, for a single year. I can only advise you (just here), as I often have, to devote sufficient time to rest; and do not rob yourself of that which nature demands, and which she *will have* or impose a penalty.

“I am glad to know that you find friends, whom you do so much prize, among your lady visitors. You and I agree in one thing at least, that a true and noble-souled woman is worth a thousand of the average standard; and it is something to be able to appreciate and love such a character. Do you not think so?

“Isaac and Amy received your letter to them to-day and sent it to me to read.

“Your friend,
“J. E. R.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS (*Continued*).

E. F. NORTON—JOHN E. ROBINSON—GOVERNOR N. P. TALLMADGE—PAULINE M. DAVIS—SAME—JOHN E. ROBINSON—PROF. I. JAY WATSON.

“CINCINNATI, June 14, 1852.

“MISS CATHERINE FOX AND SISTERS:

“Permit me to offer a few thoughts in reference to your late visit to the Queen City. Having spent the day in calling on a number of the friends who visited you while here, I find but one opinion, and that of regret at the necessity of your having to leave so soon. I have just left the Walnut Street House. The captain informs me that no less than fifty persons had called to see you during the day. He said, ‘They came by carriage loads.’ Your friend Sweeney, the proprietor, is on the anxious-seat. The Spirit told him that a sister of his, residing in Texas, was dead. He received a letter this morning, after you left, conveying the sad intelligence of the death of that sister. I think he may be classed as a convert to the cause. I can but think that, had you remained another week, the receipts would have doubled. The friends feel that to wait till September is out of the question. Do prevail on one of your sisters, Mrs. Fish, Margareta, or Mrs. Smith, to return with you immediately. Will not the good Spirits approve of it? It does seem to me that Cincinnati is the best point in the West, both in a pecuniary point of view and for the advancement of the cause. Miss Cronk, of Painesville, and her father, are expected here soon, the circle having written and received an answer that they would come. Should they come, it will be for the benefit of the circle, and cannot interfere with your visit. My Spiritual friends are all telegraphing me while writing, in approbation, perhaps, of what I am saying. I forgot to give you the book containing the list of the names of the visitors. I will copy it and enclose it to you. Please advise your sisters, and believe me

“Yours truly,

“E. F. NORTON.”

“CLIPPER SHIP SEA SERPENT,
PACIFIC OCEAN, June 21, 1852. Lat. 22 N., Long. 118 W.

“MY DEAR FRIEND:

“My association with your family, during the past summer and winter, I trust is a sufficient apology for the liberty I take in addressing you. The past three months have offered a good time for reflection, and I acknowledge to a feeling of solicitude for you all. I know you have friends in all parts of the world, but, I am sorry to say, even some of your best friends sometimes fail to appreciate the severe tests through which you are compelled to pass, in order to prove the genuineness of Spirit manifestations. You will oblige me very much if you will write me particulars in regard to your success in your new home, surrounded by new friends, etc., etc.

“Mr. Greeley expressed a hope that you would stop at his home until your house is settled and ready for occupation. He also expects that Katy will accept his invitation to come immediately to attend school, and remain with them until you are settled in New York. It is only since my sea-life that I have fully realized the situation. You are exposed to the scoffs and ridicule of the masses, at all times and in all places. This great and important truth is destined to revolutionize the world, and will render your names a part of the history of the age. It has already done so. I shall claim as a right from you, occasionally, a full account of the progress of the cause. The subject has been a very dear one to me. In fact, I feel that I am living in a different sphere since I have been acquainted with the object of my own existence, and have a clearer perception of a life beyond. I can realize the truth of that saying, so common with the good old Methodists, viz., ‘I enjoy a peace that the world cannot give nor take away.’

“We are now almost one thousand miles from San Francisco, being only four or five days’ sail, with a fair wind. Unfortunately, however, the wind is turned unfavorable, and we may be as many weeks. This is our one hundred and fourth day at sea, without landing, having travelled some fifteen thousand miles.

“Our voyage, on the whole, has been very pleasant. The weather has been remarkably fine. We have not experienced one day of what the sailors term rough weather. Our passage round Cape Horn, the place so much dreaded by all voyagers, was unusually favorable. We were only three days in getting round, while it is common for ships to be from fifteen to thirty. The greatest treat of the voyage is the sunsets on this side. Their wondrous beauties baffle every attempt at description. Will you have the kindness to send by mail the piece of music, ‘Haunted Ground’?”

“With kind regards to all, I remain yours truly,

“E. F. NORTON.”

JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“ROCHESTER, N. Y., October 20, 1853.

“DEAR FRIEND LEAH:

“I have received your note of a recent date, and am obliged to you for it, as I always am for a letter from you. But, what is the matter with you? your letter is deeply tinged with sadness, and reads very much as I feel sometimes, though from a different cause from any which appeared in yours.

“You have, or had just then, a November mood on, and here it is October, and a clear and bright sky; and although it be autumn, it is one of no common beauty. What has crossed your path? Are you not blessed with friends good and true? such as you used to tell me of? and if your health is passingly good, what is there standing between you and your share of happiness? I suppose I might give answers to these questions by looking in upon my own life record: for a human is a human, and we are all of a piece in most things. But your letter leads me to these questions, and so my pen has asked them. You do not say a word about Spirits, or what *they* and *you* are doing, leaving me to guess everything which I would know about those things.

“You recollect Frederica Bremer paid you a visit on Troup Street when she was in this country. Her manner and remarks, as you related them to me, I

remember in a general way, particularly as she was, on account of her eminent literary character, a marked personage; and I was somewhat surprised this evening, when I read an extract from her recent book of travels in America, in which she gives an account of her interview with yourself and sisters. It is evident that she was false to you, or else she is *false to the public* who now read her work. I mention this as a passing matter of but little consequence in itself, disconnected with other considerations, but which are inseparable therefrom.

“She is, through her writings, the familiar and admired companion in countless homes here and elsewhere; and her opinions pass as of more value than those of most persons. I regret exceedingly that, for some cause, she has said either more or less than what seems to her the truth. In the long run it will make no difference to truth itself, but I do so hate to see one, whom I consider a noble spirit, swerve a hair’s breadth from the path of honor, merely to minister to the current opinions of a world that it should be too proud to bow to. It is but another instance, another illustration of the truth of what I have often said to you and our friend George Willets, that there never has been anything which so severely tried the integrity of men and women as does this Spiritualism.

“*The Rochester Union* tells us you have quietly settled down in a place called Harmony, Chautauqua Co. No other paper has the news.

“Yours,

“J. E. R.”

GOVERNOR N. P. TALLMADGE.

“FOND DU LAC, WIS., March 27, 1857.

“DEAR MRS. BROWN:

“I received yesterday from Judge Smith the communication through you from my wife deceased. It was remarkable and significant in every point of view. Judge Smith writes that her name was not known to him nor to you, and he did not know whether it be right or wrong. I wish to say to you, it is exactly right—both the Christian name and the middle letter; and it is remarkable that whilst Judge Smith spells my name, as almost all persons

spell it, with only one 'l,' to wit *Talmadge*, the name as rapped out, letter by letter, is *correctly* spelled with two 'l's,' to wit, Tallmadge.

"I was much gratified with your note of condolence appended to the communication. I know your sincerity, and I appreciate your sympathy. You know the pain of separation, and the severance of such earthly ties. But how my views have changed from what they were when my son William died! I had no peace for years till I began to communicate with him through you. Death now has no terrors for me. I feel that the separation from beloved friends and relatives is but temporary—and that, by a pure life here, we shall soon be again united in 'another and a better world,' where there will be no more separation forever.

"With kindest regards to your mother and sisters, I remain, very truly,

"Your friend,
"N. P. TALLMADGE.

"MRS. ANN LEAH BROWN,
No. 1 Ludlow Place, New York."

PAULINE W. DAVIS.

"PROVIDENCE, August 8, 1857.

"MY DEAR MRS. B.:

"A writer, whom I have been recently reading, says: 'I count life not by years but by the acquaintances I form and value, hence if I make a love I double or even treble that year.'

"In that sense I would like to be old, for I would like to have many real loves.

"I am glad of my visit to New York, for I learned that my heart was not cold when any one came near me with the power to rouse me.

"Deeply as I am interested in the new philosophy you are a chosen teacher of, still I am more interested in you as a woman; a woman whose heart is alive to all that is good and great, and that has been purified by a high love.

“It is not often, as I told you, that I make any demonstrations of affection (and I have been so long called cold that I begin to think I am rather so). Nor do I often express admiration; but toward you I was impelled to offer much; and now, in writing you, were I to utter all the warm feelings that awaken in my heart toward you, I fear you might think me weak and enthusiastic—or worse, insincere; which God forbid I should ever be.

“You are my opposite in almost everything. This may account for my admiration, but not for my love; for it is not every one that I can love. I have looked about to see what I could do among my friends, and what inducement I could offer you to come; which is very little indeed beyond a warm welcome to our little cottage and hearts. Our friends are nearly all absent, but some half-dozen gentlemen wish much to have you come. So your expenses would be insured, and you should have rest, quiet, and the perfect protection of our house; and I think you would enjoy the freshness of the country. It is so green and lovely now that it seems like June. I have been in Boston and saw my dear boy, who will come down to see you if you come. I also obtained for you a beautiful thimble, so do not bring one for yourself. Please let me hear from you at once, and if you will come—what day. We will then meet you with our carriage and take care of you. My husband is greatly interested in my story, but can’t realize the truth in the least. [This refers to a remarkable cure of Mrs. Davis by Mrs. B. which will be found in the chapter on Spirit Cures, page [364](#).--ED.]

“God bless you, my dear friend.

“PAULINE W. DAVIS.

“Mrs. J. is not well, but is out with my husband driving.”

SAME.

“PROVIDENCE, June 12, 1859.

“MY DEAR MRS. UNDERHILL:

“I have been waiting a long time, hoping to hear from you and to have that visit appointed. Now the country is so beautiful I must urge you to come and enjoy it with me. Last evening I met Mr. Bartlett, who inquired for you

and hoped you would come very soon. He gives a strawberry party on Saturday evening of this week. You shall see just whom you would like to see, and no others. You shall ride, walk, or rest, just as you like, and have a good time, that shall make you forget all the disagreeables of the past. How fortunate it is that we have the ability to forget some things, and that the heart prefers to retain the beautiful and cast aside the evil. Come next week, as then I shall have strawberries in abundance and cherries too. Mr. Underhill must come *for* you. If he comes *with* you, he will hurry you away too soon, I know, and there are a thousand things for us to talk about. My little Maybell is in splendid health and spirits. Give my kind regards to Mr. Underhill, and tell him to give you leave of absence now. Let me hear from you soon. If you come by the Fall River boat you have a beautiful sail up the river, and be here to breakfast about half-past ten o'clock.

“I will meet you with a carriage at the wharf.

“Yours with much affection,
(Signed) “PAULINE W. DAVIS.”

JOHN E. ROBINSON.

“NEW YORK, October 1, 1884.

“MY KIND FRIEND, MRS. UNDERHILL:

“Learning that you are about having published a new book on the general subject of Modern Spiritualism, and that, in connection therewith, you propose to avail yourself of such writings of mine as were suggested by a careful study of its phenomenal facts during the early days of their occurrence; I write now to say that, so far from having any objections to such a design, I acquiesce promptly and thoroughly in your request.

“Furthermore, if any letters of mine, either of a public or private character, can be of service to you, you need not, as a suggestion of delicacy, withhold my name. What is truth to me, I utter, if the occasion seems to call for its expression.

“It has occurred to me, in this connection, that some thoughts of my maturer years, which have quite recently passed through my mind, may be pertinent

to the general subject.

“Without being censorious, and desiring to keep strictly within the bounds of propriety, allow me to say that I have noted a marked tendency, especially in these latter years, of a more general atheistic quality in public thought upon the general subjects which lie at the base of all human religious belief.

“I might, perhaps, italicize what I refer to, as a near approach to a positive unbelief, in most grades of modern intellects; from the most gifted to those lower strata which take their initial thoughts from their superiors.

“Now it seems to me on reflection, during a long season when my thoughts have been almost my only companions, that the cause of all this general declension or ‘eclipse of faith’ is, that Science has taught too much, *unless it teaches more!*

“I would rather phrase it, however (for the emendation is a better solution), that the true teachings of science have not been followed out to their ultimates.

“Now, to my apprehension, this is a most grievous error, and was well expressed by the poet who penned the lines,

‘Oh, star-eyed Science! hast thou wandered there
To bring us back the tidings of Despair?’

“Science has, as I apprehend it—and I would not be erroneous in my judgment, nor willingly harsh—generally impressed the intellects of its votaries in such a manner as to lead them intellectually to find *nothing beyond the elemental matter of the Universe as their eyes behold it*. Exceptions there have been, and are, to this general charge; but they are rare. To refer in especial to the fact stated (without being ungenerously personal), I may add that the acknowledged highest and most accomplished medical authority in New York to-day (so I am informed) hesitates not to aver, as his best and highest conviction, that when a human body is thoroughly dissected upon his table, he has shown to his class of students all *that was or is* of the specimen of humanity, save the extinct principle of animal existence.

“This is simply bald, blank atheism!

“It is an undoubted fact that such an opinion *may be held* by many a man of sincerity; but such products have been initiated by the gross sensuousness of the religious thought, that has given *form and substance* to what should never have been considered as coming within the range of things designated by and possessing those attributes.

“Let me explain, if I can, to the comprehension of such as may, perchance, read this, the nature of the Faith that is in me.

“I am willing in my elder days to live by it, and to be judged of it by the enlightened convictions of my fellow-men while I live upon this earth, and by that Deity in whom I verily believe.

“I know—we all know—of the imperious forces of nature which rock a continent or roll back an ocean from its shores.

“We also know something of gigantic and of microscopic life; of the intelligence of animated nature, through all its varied and wonderful forms; we know and study the wonders of the human intellect, even from (I might almost say) the first dawn of life.

“We are all, more or less, conversant with the action of principles which inhere in many species of vegetable life, in which we note a rare and exquisite faculty of sensation, which mirrors in its perfection the faculty of human consciousness, and human ingenuity.

“We look, not upward nor downward—for those terms are inadmissible in this connection—but outward from our standpoint; and what do we see? The heavens, as the ancients called what their limited vision revealed to them. Under Galileo’s lead we look again, aided by the telescope of moderate power, and, beyond that gathered in our first field of sight, we find another countless host of stars. Tired with the result we think and rest. Recuperating our wearied eyes, we substitute an instrument of higher power, and again peer into the realm of Infinitude. And again another congeries of stars is opened to our human vision. Repeat the process as we may, and as often as we choose, increase the penetrating power of our instrument, the same fact remains. There is no end, no limitation. But in all these results of our inquisitorial efforts we discover one preponderating law

—that of undeviating order. This is the one omnipresent principle by which their movements are governed.

“Law, in this sense at least, must be and is the result of dictation by the highest wisdom, and necessitates the existence of Deity. I use the term because it is the only one which is pertinent to the subject and idea to be expressed. The word God is the outcome of the earlier ages of comparative intellectual darkness. The highest mental status of mankind at that time could not apprehend a Ruler of the Universe except as clothed with a form somewhat analogous to that of a human being, and hence the rather presumptuous declaration that ‘God created man in His own image.’

“We can readily apprehend this.

“If, on contemplation, we look the *august question* squarely in the face, we can most certainly reach the conclusion that this Ideal is the highest possible one, and centres within itself *all things else* requisite to an intelligent apprehension of what we are striving to reach. To illustrate—if we have not already covered the basic ground of the thought—all the most potent and irresistible forces of Nature are strictly impalpable; and yet we know somewhat of their lurkings; and such star-eyed minds as that of a Morse can reverently and gently lead them in the direction of human pathways.

“This conviction may be considered as the final result of the eager inquiry of honest and intelligent human minds. I think it the reflex of the conviction of England’s Newton, and I accept and retain it as a finality of the question. It ennobles instead of dwarfing one’s conception of a Ruler of all things, and gives us a stable as well as a rational and intellectual standpoint of observation, of faith, and of love. Higher than the God of earlier worship, because entirely removed from the sensuous perceptions; not fashioned after the crude and dimly visioned ideals of elder time, it is sufficient for the highest yearnings of all Humanity, and must necessarily ennoble the faith of all with whom it shall live as the great exponent of Power, Truth, and Love.

“I remain, sincerely, as ever,

“Your friend,
“J. E. ROBINSON.”^[21]

The following letter will explain itself. Professor J. Jay Watson needs no description. He was an intimate friend of Olé Bull, who bequeathed to him his favorite violin, on which instrument he is himself a consummate performer, while his little son, Emmons Watson, bids fair some day to rival Olé Bull himself. His direction of the music at the Centennial of 1876, and his popular “dime concerts” in New York, attended by some hundreds of thousands, have made Professor Watson not less widely known than he is everywhere highly respected, for his philanthropy as well as musical genius and powers.

A. L. U.

“MRS. A. LEAH UNDERHILL:

“HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND—It is with unfeigned pleasure that I comply with your request to furnish you with an account of my strange experience while visiting San Francisco, Cal., in company with Olé Bull, the violinist, in 1870.

“I cheerfully give the facts as they occurred, and it seems eminently proper that the incident which I am about to relate should occupy a place in your forthcoming book, when we recollect that the problem involved was solved through your marvellous mediumistic powers.

“My father-in-law, Mr. Samuel Parsons, formerly an old and revered citizen of Gloucester, Mass., and who passed to the life beyond in 1865, had for many years been noted for his remarkable prophecies as to the coming of future events, as well as a strict regard for honesty and truth. We frequently talked of the change called death, and as we were both somewhat materialistic in our views as to a future state of existence, we mutually agreed that the one who should be first called to pay the debt of nature, would, if there was a possibility of Spirit return, with sufficient power to tangibly manifest his presence, surely do so; and in order that there could be no mistaking the individual identity, he would seize the one still in earth-life by the hair of his head and forcibly pull him from his bed to the floor.

“Laughable, and even ridiculous, as it may seem, this promise was at various times renewed, and frequently in the presence of mutual friends, who are still living. This agreement was made as a sort of harmless joke,

neither Mr. Parsons nor myself having, up to this time, investigated the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism in any form.

“During my visit to San Francisco, Cal., while managing the ‘Olé Bull Concert Combination,’ I had occasion to employ a number of persons, one of whom, having been proved glaringly dishonest, I was obliged to discharge.

“This individual, not being satisfied with my leniency in letting him off without legal punishment, vowed vengeance upon me, saying to several persons that I should ‘*never leave California alive.*’ As ‘barking dogs seldom bite,’ I paid little attention to his threats. One evening, after the conclusion of our concert, I was accompanied to my hotel by J. Heneage Carter, Esq., an old-time friend, and the originator of the once famous ‘Carter Zouave Troupe.’ After depositing the receipts of the evening with Mr. Ridgeway, clerk of the ‘Lick House,’ where our company were stopping, I retired to my room with my friend Carter. A brief chat ensued, no allusion whatever being made as to the threats of the discharged employee. Mr. Carter bade me a cheerful good-night and took his departure. I had no special anxiety upon my mind, had eaten no hearty supper, taken no beverage in the shape of wine or liquor of any description; in fact, I have scrupulously avoided dissipation in any form up to the present moment of my life; consequently there was nothing in my stomach calculated to induce nightmare or unpleasant dreams.

“Upon retiring I immediately fell into a tranquil sleep, from which I was unceremoniously awakened, without the slightest warning, by being suddenly and vigorously grasped, apparently by a strong hand, by the hair of my head and jerked with tremendous force from my bed, landing sprawling upon the floor. Immediately gaining my feet, I prepared to face a demon in the flesh of some sort, and groped about the room to find a friendly chair with which to defend myself, if need be. No further demonstration being made, however, I proceeded to strike a light, nor for a moment did I lose my self-control, although constantly expecting to be attacked by some unseen foe. Upon carefully examining my room there was not the slightest sign of any being, human or otherwise, with the exception of myself. Everything was still and as usual. I looked at my watch and found the time to be 5.40 A.M. My scalp smarted intensely, as it naturally

would after such harsh treatment, and had I been near an Indian camp I could readily have believed that I had lost that important appendage, and without any great stretch of the imagination either.

“As there is no effect without a cause, and *vice versa*, I soon seated myself and endeavored to solve the meaning of the remarkable phenomenon just experienced. In a moment a terrible thought flashed upon my mind. Perhaps some member of my family or near relative had died suddenly. Hastily making my toilet I proceeded to the nearest telegraph station and impatiently awaited the arrival of the operator. My despatch was directed to my sister in New York, with whom my family were stopping at the time, and simply read, ‘*How are you all? Answer.*’ The reply, ‘*All well,*’ caused me to breathe more freely, but the mystery was yet unexplained. I told the story to my friend Olé Bull, who became intensely interested, and often during our stay in California expressed a great deal of solicitude in the matter.

“I would here state *en passant*, that the agreement made by my wife’s father and myself did not recur to my mind. To be sure, Mr. Parsons had been dead more than five years, yet it seems to me quite remarkable that our old compact had not at once presented itself; but I felt convinced that this singular demonstration *meant* something. Upon my return to New York I visited you in company with Olé Bull, and you kindly gave us a private sitting. The alphabet being called for, the following was rapped out: ‘*John, the man whom you discharged in San Francisco, was on the veranda of the hotel, and determined to execute his terrible threat. I thought it a good time to redeem my promise, and pulled you out of bed by your hair. I was obliged to do this roughly in order to thoroughly awaken you.*—SAMUEL PARSONS.’

“With great respect I am

“Your sincere friend,

“J. JAY WATSON.

“BEVERLY, ESSEX COUNTY, MASS.”

[21] “The writer is quite aware that if this letter, or its substance, should be used as a part of the text of your book, it may be perused by some who will pronounce its final and legitimate conclusions as but a reflex or embodiment of

ancient Pantheism. I think, however, that the more critical of its observers—if such it may and I hope will have—will discover a wide divergence from that form of belief; which is really, if rightly apprehended, totally at variance with the central idea which I intend reverently to express.

“J. E. R.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON MEDIUMSHIP.

MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP—TO PROVE THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL—PASSIVITY AND HARMONY AT SÉANCES—HONEST AND CANDID SCEPTICISM—IMAGINARY AND SELF-INDUCED MEDIUMSHIP—DECEPTIVE COMMUNICATIONS—CAUTIONS—RAPPINGS—SPIRITS MADE VISIBLE—BEWARE OF FRAUDULENT MEDIUMS—NOT ALL SPIRITS RELIABLE—CABINETS.

Mediumship is a great mystery. Some persons are found to possess the gift (often from ancestral derivation, as in the case of the “second-sight” in the Scotch Highlands), while others are totally devoid of it. There are also many varieties both in the forms and phases of it, and in the degrees in which different persons possess the strange—I may say, abnormal—gift. There seem to be also great variations of *degree* in which it is possessed by different persons, constituting differences of mediumistic power.

I am satisfied that there are few families in which some one or other of its members does not possess it, at least in latent condition, more or less developed or undeveloped; and that, if they will sit patiently and *passively* (without anxiety or eagerness) round a table, without being discouraged and exhausted of patience by weeks or even months of failure, the manifestations will generally at last come, whether in the form of rappings, or that of tilting of the table, or in other phenomena inexplicable on the ground of the ordinary laws of physical nature, and compelling the recognition of the presence of extra-natural beings or forces—*i.e.*, “Spirits”—as the only explanation of the manifest and incontestable facts.

Again, apart from the various degrees of the faculty in the mediums, there is mystery hanging over the question of the various degrees of ability of Spirits who may be present—high, low, or of intermediate grade and character—to act through or with a particular medium. And still again, there is mystery over the influence of the members of the circle present, both upon the sensitive medium and upon the Spirits present. And upon the fundamental point of what constitutes mediumship, on what qualities, physical, mental or spiritual, it depends, hangs the greatest mystery of all.

One thing seems certain, namely, that at least in the present age or “dispensation,” the Spirits about us seem desirous of communicating with us, human Spirits still in the flesh, and glad of the opportunities afforded them through the mediums for doing so. “Psychics,” or “sensitives,” have been suggested as more suitable designations than “mediums,” but that of “medium” seems to have got too strongly rooted in popular usage to be now easily changed.

It is certain that history shows what may be called mediumship to have existed in all ages, climes, and civilizations, in various degrees, and that in all races, barbarian or civilized, there has been more or less of manifestation, to man still in the flesh, of the continued existence of disincarnated man, or Spirits. The extraordinary outpouring of the evidence of this great truth which our times have witnessed, and which, beginning in our country, has so rapidly made the circuit of the globe, seems, as has been declared by many of the higher classes of Spirits, to have grown out of the fact, that the science and philosophy of the century had become so deeply imbued with *materialism*, fast sapping the foundations of *all* religion, that it had become necessary, in the counsels of the high Spirits who are the ministers of the will of the Infinite Supreme we name God, to overpour the world with a new flood of irresistible demonstration of the truth and reality of the next life and of the immortality of the soul.

If there is one mental condition, on the part of mediums and sitters, more constantly insisted upon by good Spirits as necessary toward the attaining of good results in the manifestations, it is that of “*passivity*.” If a sitter earnestly desires a particular thing, has his heart and thought and will strongly set upon it, that is precisely what he is least likely to obtain, or to obtain it clearly and satisfactorily, if he obtain it at all. The expression is sometimes used that both medium and sitter must keep themselves in a *negative*, as distinguished from a *positive*, condition. If they are “positive”—especially if persons of strong will—their magnetic or Spiritual “positiveness” seems to work adversely instead of harmoniously with that of the invisibles.

The testimony from the Spirits is pretty unanimous that tranquil mental harmony in the circle is very necessary toward the attainment of good results. Discussion of subjects of difference, in however friendly a temper it may be conducted, is unfavorable. This is generally accepted as the reason why instrumental or vocal music is so commonly resorted to, as tending to lead the minds of all into the same channel. There may also be something in its action to attune the air-vibrations into accord instead of opposition, resulting from the differences of voice among a number of persons thus gathered together.

It is a mistake to suppose that faith in Spiritualism on the part of all present is a necessary condition of success at séances. It is true that it sometimes seems that the presence of particular individuals is fatal to any, or any but the feeblest, manifestations. In such cases it is not their ignorance and disbelief, nor a rational scepticism, that militate against success. On the contrary, Spirits like the visits of honest, candid sceptics or inquirers, who are not inaccessible to evidence, nor so resolutely and bitterly hostile, and so acrid in temper, that they neither can be convinced though one “rose from the dead,” nor are worthy of the attempt. They seem to resent the insulting presence and the unworthy mental condition and attitude of such persons, and ill-disposed to cast such pearls before such swine. Also, when sitters come with lies and fraud in their hearts, and trickery in their purposes, they bring with or attract to them lying and fraudulent Spirits who like to give them just what they come to seek. It is perhaps even more true in the Spirit life than in this, that like attracts like, and that birds of a feather flock together.

There are many imaginary mediums. They will tell you they see, hear, and speak to you under the influence of Spirits, when it is nothing but an emanation from their own brain, and perhaps from the forces of the circle combined. This I believe to be a self-induced condition, developed by the powerful influence of the human will acting upon their own physical force.

Beware how you become ensnared in the meshes of such mediums. They are only fit subjects for the lunatic asylums.

There are, I believe, some unexplored regions in the human brain which may be hereafter explained and better understood.

I will give you an example of this phase of mediumship.

A friend of mine, an excellent man but very ambitious to excel in doing good, and at the same time to take a high position in Spiritualism, was told by Spirits that he would be a medium. He was very sanguine and believed that he could revolutionize the world, if he should become one.

He was a clergyman and an honest man. One morning (after having waited a long time for the fulfilment of the promise that he would be a medium), he came to me with a roll of paper in his hand, his face beaming with joy, saying as he entered the room, "At last the prophecy has been fulfilled! See, listen," and he read a beautiful poem signed "Felicia Hemans."

He afterward wrote many interesting things, and I have no doubt there were or had been times when he was under the influence of good Spirits; but as soon as he became ambitious to set himself up as "high priest," that innate something which belongs to the natural man performed the office of his own mind.

That development is often very disastrous and unreliable, and should not be encouraged. I will give you an illustration in the following communication.

One Sunday afternoon, while sitting in his library, his hand was influenced to write a communication, of which the following is a copy:

"I departed this earth-life a few hours ago, in —— Street, No. ——. You will find my children mourning over my lifeless form. Go to them at once and assist them to bury my body.

(Signed) MARY."

He read the communication to his wife, who remonstrated, saying that she doubted it; but after considering the matter they both started to find the distressed family. It was not very far from them; but judge of their astonishment when they found no such place as had been mentioned. The *street* was there, but no *house*, and no number like the place designated. The communication, in its essentials, was *an entire fabrication*. In the evening they both called on me, and desired, if possible, that Spirits would explain through the rappings why he should have been so deceived. The rapping said, "My dear friend, this is an experience which you will not forget. You have been led by ambition, mistaking it for a higher motive. You have

besought Spirits to direct you, when you should have acted according to your own best judgment. Thus you have attracted a class of Spirits who are unreliable.” This was something which many were necessitated to learn in the school of experience, especially in those early days of Spiritualism.

I do not approve of sitting in promiscuous circles for development. I remember several years ago there was a circle held in New York for the purpose of making mediums. Our friend, Mr. George Willets, visited the rooms of the “developers” several times, and reported to us the unfavorable effect it produced upon him. My sister Katie on one occasion went with him. When she returned she felt badly and complained of strange sensations, caused (she believed) by sitting in that circle. It affected her unfavorably for some days. She was sad, and complained of seeing disagreeable things whenever her eyes closed. This gradually changed, but she could never be persuaded to visit such circles again.

In the case of the Dr. Phelps’s manifestations I think there was abundant evidence to prove that a natural development took place there. And I am sure that we fought against it long enough and hard enough to prove that we were not knowingly instrumental in bringing about anything of our own mediumship. We were all annoyed at the idea of being called mediums.

Another well-known case—were I to mention the name it would be clearly remembered—was that of a wealthy gentleman doing a large business in this city. He came to see me at No. 1 Ludlow Place, rejoicing in his newly developed mediumship. He was a large, finely organized man, and came to explain to me how wonderfully he was affected. He told me that his wife was not pleased because he sat in circles for development, and she thought he was losing his mind. This gentleman lived in Brooklyn, and if this should come under his eye he will recollect the circumstance. He was not a disciple of the “Rochester knockings,” but a professed admirer of speaking, writing, and impressible mediums. He thought it would be very fine to become a great public speaker (as he had been told he would be), and astonish the world; and therefore he believed it. He soon began to whirl around and pound himself and snort like an animal. I thought he was a raving madman; but when he spoke he seemed rational enough at times, but his lucid moments were few and far between.

At length the Spirit rapped out the following: “My son, sit down at the table.” He did so, apparently delighted. Again the alphabet was called for, and this was spelled: “Enclose the extremities of your fingers within your hands, cross your feet and rest your heels on the floor, and permit me to give you advice, namely: When you sit in the circle, exerting every faculty of mind and body, with your hands on the table and your feet on the floor, all your brain forces escape through your extremities and are absorbed by the more receptive members of the circle.”

He followed the directions of his guardian Spirit, and became quiet, and was so deeply interested in the rappings that he engaged a private hour and brought his wife the next day, who became equally interested and honestly confessed to me that she had blamed and condemned me as an impostor; and although her husband had not met in my circles, she charged me with being the original cause of her husband’s “misfortune”—as she considered it. From that time he was cured.

I think he was on the high road to the lunatic asylum; and, although some writers term the Spirit-rapping a manifestation of “lower grade,” in my own opinion communications come more direct from Spirits through the rappings, or when accompanied by them, than when written or spoken, etc., in magnetic circles where the mediums are quite as susceptible to an action exerted upon them by Spirits *embodied* as by the *disembodied*.

I have found it so in my own experience, and I never place entire confidence in anything unless the Spirits sanction it to me by sounds in connection with the alphabet, which was their first chosen method with us. Nor do I rely on the rappings unless what is said through them bears in itself the evidence of truth. I regret to see persons too much carried away by this or any *ism*. Give me a good amanuensis, one who can take down each letter as it is indicated (and not interrupt me by asking very often, “What does it say?” which breaks the telegraphic connection, for the time, through which Spirits operate, exactly as the telegraphic wires are affected by a thunder-storm)—give me, I say, such an amanuensis, and I can sit, as I have often sat, for hours at a time, receiving the letters through the raps and alphabet, with no idea of their connection or meaning, nor any such knowledge possible to any listener, and at the close every letter, word, and

sentence will be found perfectly correct, and the whole intelligible only when the whole is read in connected sequence.

It is impossible for any mortal to sit and reiterate the letters of the alphabet as fast as they can be repeated, hour after hour, and retain in the mind the structure of the sentences and chapters communicated. I defy any one to do it. Even Theodore Parker pronounced it a quietus on the Buffalo doctors. Try it yourselves, dear readers. Under the right conditions, I can sit and call the letters for hours together, and when the message is finished it will be found to be perfect and unbroken from beginning to end—in accordance with the intelligence of the Spirit, not that of the medium.

I have seen Spirits walk around the room, furnishing their own light sufficiently bright to show themselves distinctly to all persons present, when every precaution had been taken to lock and seal the doors and windows, to prevent ingress or egress of any person to disturb the circle; and I know hundreds, still living, who can testify to this statement.

Now, then, why should there be any need of so conducting circles for manifestations as to cause suspicion, or leave the minds of investigators in doubt? Should a medium be allowed to enter a cabinet without any precautions on the part of the sitters to require “test conditions,” and deliberately clothe him or herself in the habiliments of angels, and then softly glide forth into a dimly lighted room, scarcely visible to the eye, and call it a “materialization” or a “transfiguration”? Shame on such cruel deception. I am astonished that people are willing to be so imposed upon. When I was before the public, I expected and wished to give every satisfaction in my power. I believe all persons who wish to know the truth, and are willing to pay mediums for their time and trouble, should demand their rights, search the cabinets, and hold the mediums by joining hands until they are fully satisfied of the truthfulness of the manifestations. We have never objected to being held, and we have even submitted to being stethoscoped and gagged to settle the question of ventriloquism, after every other test had been applied.

I do not wish to be understood as condemning all cabinet séances. We, for our part, never used cabinets nor had occasion to do so. I know, through the best of testimony, that with honest mediums and select confidential circles,

marvellous phenomena have taken place through that means since my day. But I do disapprove of such séances before promiscuous parties, when not accompanied with precautions against the possibility of deception; for when “test conditions” are not required by the sitters, or insisted upon by the mediums as their only protection against malevolent suspicions, they open the door to fraudulent mediums for the practice of abominable deceptions.

Nor will I dismiss the subject without cautioning all against the error of always relying implicitly upon the communications of those whom they regard as Spirits far better, higher, and more enlightened than themselves or their friends. Still less should they, necessarily, obey their directions or counsels, especially in regard to their business or social concerns.

Many investigators find it hard to divest themselves of a sort of superstitious reverence for the Spirits in conversation with them. It is a mistake to suppose them to know everything, and a greater one to imagine them capable of doing everything. It is sometimes an error even to believe them to be the Spirits they profess to be. Spirits are of many varieties of condition, character, and degrees of progress. There are those prone to amuse themselves with a sort of practical joking and false personation; and such Spirits, being in a low plane, are apt to be glad of any opportunity to push themselves forward into the door opened by the presence of the medium, and play their fantastic tricks on the too credulous. We must judge for ourselves of the reasonableness, the probability, and the characteristic resemblance of what Spirits may say, to that which we might have expected from them. We must strive, by our daily lives and conversation, to attract to ourselves only Spirits of the better and higher orders in that world of the next life, which is far more densely populous than the one in which we ourselves still “live and move and have our being.”

At the same time I think that the cause of Spiritualism would be at this day further advanced in general acceptance, if cabinets, and with them the phenomena called materialization and transfiguration, had never been introduced. For, however genuine, as well as impressive, may be the manifestations of the presence and action of the Spirits which may have occurred in the employment of them, they afford *opportunities* for deception which dishonest mediums are but too ready to avail themselves of, and then when exposure comes (and it is generally Spiritualists who are

the most earnest in detecting and punishing the infamy of such deception), they are at once trumpeted all over the land, and more harm is done to the progress of the cause than all the good ever resulting from the genuine phenomena themselves. No such exposures ever occurred in all our long and varied experience, though never have mediums been subjected to more jealous and severe investigations; and there are few of the more modern phenomena which have not occurred through our mediumship, though the usual mode of communication practised at our circles was the one which I still consider the best and most direct, as it is the simplest—that of rapping to the alphabet.

I will only add, before dismissing the subject, that though it is so many years since I have ceased to practise the public exercise of my mediumship, I am not conscious that it has at all weakened or changed. On rare occasions I have given private sittings to confidential friends, and few days pass which do not bring me conscious evidence of the presence of Spirit friends. It was under their prompting, and indeed direction, that I have written this book, and often during its progress have they given me their counsel at moments of doubt on my part as to what to insert or to omit. Happy, in so many ways, as has been my domestic life, I should be ungrateful if I did not realize how largely the unseen friends and visitors of my home have contributed to that happiness.

CHAPTER XXX.

MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENTS.

FELICIA HEMANS—SPIRIT DICTATIONS OF MUSIC.

In compliance with the advice and wishes of the friend who has aided me in putting together the scattered parts of my volume, I now proceed to wind it up with what I might call a sample assortment of "Incidents" out of my Spiritualistic experience. This was not within my original scheme of the work, but in the course of several months of intimate intercourse with him, there naturally arose in conversation frequent allusions to such reminiscences, leading me to tell him, under his intelligent interrogation, the story of them. The result was that he came to insist that some collection of them would constitute a useful as well as interesting addition to my "Missing Link." He therefore embraced many opportunities of returning to them, and drawing from me repetitions of the narratives, and jotting down notes, from which he then insisted that I should write them out, with a little kind assistance from him. This collection might easily have been greatly enlarged.

FELICIA HEMANS—SPIRIT DICTATION OF MUSIC.

The following is a beautiful and curious experience which came one evening at Rochester, in the early days of our mediumship:

Maggie and I were sitting alone in my cozy little parlor in Troup Street, enjoying ourselves by a warm fire while the pouring rain and howling winds outside assured us that we should not be interrupted by callers. I was reading "Memoirs of the Wesley Family," when the alphabet was called for by the usual signal. I repeated the letters as they came through the alphabet, and wrote them as designated successively by the Spirit, viz.:

"GAGCBAGAGEFEFAGFEFGFEDAGGCCEDGGCB
AGCCDBC."

These letters could not, of course, be construed into words, and I cast them aside saying, "This must be the Spirit of Johnny Story," a simple boy whom we had known when living, who could never be taught to read. The alphabet was again called for and the message given by the Spirit was, "Apply the letters to your piano."

On doing so I recognized in them, to my surprise and delight, a sweet and tender melody. I was then told to set the music to "Haunted Ground" in Mrs. Hemans's Poems, but with the variation of changing "Haunted" to "Hallowed" in the last verse.

Professor J. J. Watson has kindly arranged the accompaniment for the organ and piano, as on the next page.

I have always considered this one of the most beautiful and interesting tests I have ever received. It certainly was not mind-reading. The letters as given had of course conveyed no sense to me, nor any idea of musical notes. In connection with the music thus given for the poem with its altered name, I presume that it is proper to reproduce the poem itself.

HAUNTED GROUND.

And slight, withal, may be the things which bring
 Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
 Aside forever—it may be a sound,
 A tone of music, summer eve, or spring,
 A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound
 Striking the electric chain, wherewith we are darkly bound.
 —BYRON.

THE HAUNTED GROUND.

Arr. by J. JAY WATSON.

Moderato. 1. Yes, it is haunted, this
 2. Have I not, under these

ORGAN. *Retardando.*

qui - et scene, Fair as it looks, and all soft - ly green ;
 whisp'ring leaves, Wo - ven such dreams as the young heart weaves ?

Yet fear thou not, for the spell is thrown, And the might of the shadow 's on
 Shadows yet un - to which life seem'd bound, And is it not—is it not

crescendo.

me a - lone.
 haunted ground ?

Retardando. *Retardando.*

THE HAUNTED GROUND.

Arr. by J. JAY WATSON.

1. Yes, it is haunted, this
2. Have I not, under these

Moderato.
PIANO.
Retardando.

qui - et scene, Fair as it looks, and all soft - ly green;
whisp'ring leaves, Wo - ven such dreams as the young heart weaves?

Yet fear thou not, for the spell is thrown, And the might of the shadow 's on
Shadows yet un - to which life seem'd bound, And is it not—is it not

me a - lone.
haunted ground?

Retardando.
Retardando.

THE HAUNTED GROUND.—MRS. HEMANS.

Yes, it is haunted, this quiet scene,
Fair as it looks, and all softly green;
Yet fear thou not, for the spell is thrown,
And the might of the shadow's on me alone.

Have I not, under these whisp'ring leaves,
Woven such dreams as the young heart weaves?
Shadows yet unto which life seem'd bound,
And is it not—is it not haunted ground?

Have I not lived 'midst these lonely dells,
And loved, and sorrowed, and heard farewells,
And learn'd in my own deep soul to look,
And tremble before that mysterious book?

Have I not, under these whispering leaves,
Woven such dreams as the young heart weaves?
Shadows—yet unto which life seemed bound,
And is it not—is it not haunted ground?

Must I not hear what *thou* hearest not,
Troubling the air of this sunny spot?
Is there not something to none but me
Told by the rustling of every tree?

Song hath been here—with its flow of thought,
Love—with its passionate visions fraught;
Death—breathing stillness and sadness round—
And is it not—is it not haunted ground?

Are there no phantoms, but such as come
By night from the darkness that wraps the tomb?—
A sound, a scent, or a whispering breeze
Can summon up mightier far than these!

But I may not linger amidst them here!
Lovely they are, and yet things to fear;
Passing and leaving a weight behind,
And a thrill on the chords of the stricken mind.

Away, away, that my soul may soar,
As a free bird of blue skies once more,
Here from its wing it may never cast
The chains by those Spirits brought back from the past.

Doubt it not—smile not—but go thou, too,
Look on the scenes where thy childhood grew—
Where thou hast prayed at thy mother's knee,
Where thou hast roved with thy brethren free;

Go thou, when life unto thee is changed,
Friends thou hast loved as thy soul, estranged;
When from the idols thy heart hath made,
Thou hast seen the colors of glory fade;

Oh! painfully then, by the wind's low sigh,
By the voice of the stream, by the flower-cup's dye,

By a thousand tokens of sight and sound,
Thou wilt feel thou art treading on hallowed ground.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENTS (*Continued*).

CROWD OF SPIRITS MADE VISIBLE BY LIGHTNING—SCARCELY CREDIBLE BUT TRUE—A GAME OF EUCHRE—MARGARET'S DREAM—MISTAKEN NAMES CORRECTED BY SPIRITS—AN UNWILLING CONVERT MADE GRATEFUL AND HAPPY.

CROWD OF SPIRITS MADE VISIBLE BY LIGHTNING.

One Sunday evening, in Ludlow Place, occurred the grandest manifestations of Spirit presence I ever witnessed or heard of. Our good friend Dr. A. D. Wilson and his friend Dr. Kirby had come in the Doctor's carriage; and, as a great thunder-storm was gathering fast overhead, he ordered the carriage home, to return at nine o'clock, or when the storm should be over. We sat round the table in my private room on the second floor, four of us—the two gentlemen, mother, and myself. Soon the vivid lightning flashed and the near thunder rolled and rattled overhead: while in the intervals the blackest of darkness was around us, the Spirits having directed us not to have lights. The "raps" bade us to sing: and, my mother leading, we sang the Methodist hymn: "I'm a pilgrim; I'm a stranger," etc. (my father and mother were Methodists). But as the peals and flashes came so mightily I was afraid, and thought it unseemly for us to sing in the presence of these grand manifestations of the lights and the voices of the heavens. Presently Dr. Wilson started up with the exclamation, "Oh my God! there's my mother," and we all saw a form in the doorway leading from our room to another in the rear. And then, to his friend Dr. Kirby, "And there's your mother with her arms around your neck!" And then again to my mother, "Oh, Mrs. Fox, there's your noble father by you!" And we all saw *the Spirits*.

The whole room was crowded with a glorious company of Spirits!

We would see them only by the flashes of the lightning. When the flash had vanished, all was blackness; but, on its return, there they were still, different forms and with varying features; and they looked as natural as when in this—our life. What were our feelings? How could I express, or who will need that I should attempt to do so? We all responded deeply to Dr. Wilson's

exclamation, "I would not have missed this for all the world! Oh, who after such a sight could ever again commit a sin?"

It would seem that while we had no Spiritual sight to see them clairvoyantly in the darkness, they could bear the electric brightness of the lightning which revealed them to our eyes.

A deep awe rested on us all, and we all united in the following beautiful old Methodist hymn which my mother sang. Many a time afterward we have sat in the hope of a repetition of this glorious spectacle; and Dr. Wilson would come when there seemed some prospect of thunder and lightning. But it never came again. Perhaps there was something in the quiet solemnity of that Sabbath hour which prompted it to the Spirits; and once shown, it was enough: for memory could not but keep it ever fresh in our minds, as it is and will forever remain in mine.

What's this that steals, that steals upon my frame,
Is it death, is it death?
That soon will quench, will quench this vital frame,
Is it death, is it death?
If this is death, I soon shall be
From every pain and sorrow free,
I shall the King of Glory see,
All is well, all is well!

Weep not, my friends, my friends, weep not for me,
All is well, all is well,
My sins are pardoned, pardoned, I am free,
All is well, all is well.
There's not a cloud that does arise,
To hide my Saviour from my eyes,
I soon shall mount the upper skies,
All is well, all is well.

Tune, tune your harps, your harps, ye saints in glory,
All is well, all is well.
I will rehearse, rehearse the pleasing story,
All is well, all is well!
Bright angels are from glory come,
They're round my bed, they're in my room,
They wait to waft my Spirit home,
All is well, all is well!

SCARCELY CREDIBLE, BUT TRUE.

A strange adventure befell me, at the age of between eight and nine years, which has always left a vivid impression on my mind; and I cannot resist the prompting to insert here a short summary of it. I will leave my readers to judge of it for themselves.

I had obtained grandmother's permission to visit some little girls at the house of their father, Mr. Cox; which was granted on condition that I should be sure to come home before nightfall.

It was about a mile and a half distant from home by the main road, though less than a mile through the woods. Much of that part of the country was at that time uncultivated and abounded with wild beasts of every description of the period.

I got safely to Mr. C.'s; and had a day so happy that it was only the threatening clouds of an approaching storm which warned me that it was high time to start for home. I set out by the roadway, but Mrs. Cox called me back and sent two of her daughters to escort me through the woods by the shorter paths, familiar to them on their way to school. We had gone about half the distance through the woods, when sharp lightning and heavy thunder announced that the storm was close at hand; and the children left me at a point from which, as they supposed, I could not miss my further way. They gave me directions how to proceed. I followed them, as I supposed; but the darkness soon became intense, and the storm burst in all its fury. The thunder and lightning were terrific, the rain fell in torrents, and I was a very little girl alone in the woods. I heard the distant cries of the inhabitants of the wilderness, and hurriedly pressed forward in the hope of following the right track, but constantly changing my idea of which direction to take. After long wanderings in this way, I fancied it to be about midnight, when the howling of the winds rose to be nearly that of a tornado, and the crashing of falling trees, torn up by the roots, seemed to surround me in all directions.

I had been twenty times on my knees, in childish prayer to God to take me home; but perhaps God in heaven is too abstract an idea to be realized by a child of that age, and I would instinctively find myself addressing my great-grandfather, who was the only person whose death I had ever witnessed. I had known him to be good and kind. He was a man of unusual stature and strength. Him I could understand to be in heaven, and powerful to save me. I remember I prayed with my eyes closed, fearing I should behold some

terrible phantom, for in our family experience and tradition there had been many strange stories.

I wandered all through that terrible night, and only rested on my knees, when praying to God and the angels (especially him, my grandfather) to protect me. Storm-beaten and drenched as I then was I sat down and cried bitterly. Suddenly my attention was arrested by an unusual sound, as of boughs breaking and twigs crackling. I looked in the direction of the sound and saw, standing high upon the trunk of a fallen tree, a large, good-natured looking dog, which I supposed to be Mr. Cox's dog, "Rover." Immediately fear left me. I felt him to be *rescue and safety*. I called to him, "Rover, Rover!" and tried to get near him, but he turned from me leading the way. I followed; he looking back frequently, as if to see whether or not I followed him. After wandering some time through zig-zag routes, he brought me to Deacon Demarest's place, which I recognized, as the house had recently been burned and I could not mistake it. At this point he loitered a moment, and came so near me that I reached out my hand to caress him, but could or did not touch him, although he pressed against me palpably several times.

He "waggled himself" so like a dog, and seemed so kind to me that I became fondly attached to him. On I went, following him through cross-lots and over fences, startling the cattle to their feet, and causing a great jingling of cowbells, never looking back, but intently following the dog, fearing to lose sight of him for a moment, lest he should leave me. At last we came to my home. The house stood about a hundred feet from the road. There were two gates of entrance to the door-yard or grounds: one a foot-gate, the other for carriages, etc. I opened the small gate and held it open, supposing the dog would pass through it; but judge of my amazement to see him instead of doing so, scale the great gate with a bound and meet me face to face on the other side, but no longer a dog! (Perhaps, at that instant, it was a fleeting vision of a dog, but it is certain he disappeared and was no more seen), while the noble form of my great-grandfather, with his loving smile, for a moment stood before me at the gate, by the early morning light. I gave a scream which brought my grandfather from the house to the door, exclaiming, "Great God! the child has been out in the woods all night."

I was put to bed, from which I did not rise for a week. At times it was feared that I never should rise from it, such was the effect of the exposure, fatigue, and fright of that terrible night. Mr. Redfield (mentioned on page [8](#), etc.) had

spent the evening and night at our house, and was told how I had disobeyed my orders to return home before dark, and that I was evidently detained at Mr. Cox's. He said, before starting in the morning, that he would stop at Mr. Cox's on his way to mill, and see about me. On his informing Mr. Cox that I had not returned home, the latter hastened to our house in great fright lest evil had befallen me from the animals or other adventure of the woods. He found me of course safe and asleep in my grandmother's bed. He was a devout Methodist, and knelt by my bedside and prayed over me with thanks to God that I had been preserved through the terrors of that night of storm in those wild woods, and, as I was told afterward, sobs of all the female members of the family accompanied his prayer.

There are many persons of the neighborhood still living whose recollection can verify this story, and with whom it is talked over when we meet, such as Evander Smith, John Onderdonk (a cousin of mine), Philip Demarest, Albert Collins, etc.

A GAME OF EUCHRE.

Dr. A. D. Wilson, one of the most prominent physicians of New York, was one of my dearest and best of friends. He had once—before my marriage—had the experience of playing a game of euchre (through me as medium) with an old Spirit friend of his, who, when in the flesh had been his frequent companion at the game. I do not recall the particulars of that former game sufficiently to relate it with accuracy; but one day Dr. Wilson was telling the story to Mr. Underhill, who thereupon asked the Spirits if they would play a game with him, which he was promised should be done. This promise was made some three years before its fulfilment came about, during which time Mr. Underhill had frequently reminded the Spirits of their unfulfilled promise. It was an interesting experience, and I felt desirous of again witnessing it. One evening at about eight o'clock (it was in about 1862), our nephew C. O. Smith (a lad who figures as Charlie in the sketch of our Ohio campaign) was seated at one end of the table studying his lessons under bright gaslight. My husband and myself were the only other persons in the room—which was the library, front room of the second story. Mr. Underhill was reclining on the lounge, and I was seated near the middle window. By a simultaneous impulse (and such *simultaneous impulses* were a frequent experience with us) my husband and myself started up and seated ourselves

at the table. I will continue the story as I have it written by Mr. Underhill himself.

“Leah and myself sat opposite each other, Charlie being seated at the end of the table between us, with his books. I asked the Spirit once again if he would fulfil the promise given long ago to play a game of cards, as was occasionally done between Leah and myself. ‘I’ll try,’ was answered. I asked, ‘Who is it? Will you give me your name?’ The alphabet being then called for, the name was given me privately, not by rapping, which Leah would of course have heard, but by touches on my foot, in correspondence to the letters of the alphabet. It was ‘Calvin,’ which I kept to myself, since it seemed to be meant to be for myself alone; but as Leah was inquisitive, she repeated the request for the name, to which no response came. On her persevering with the request, it was rapped out, ‘I can’t be pumped.’ This was just like Calvin, who, when he had once declined to answer a question would never be forced to do so. The cards were then called for by the Spirit, and I was directed to put the pack under the table. Presently it was rapped, ‘Cut for deal.’ I stooped down and cut the pack on the floor, and laid my cut alongside of the pack. The Spirit then said, ‘Look,’ and there under the table lay his cut, on the other side of the pack. It was better than mine, and gave him the deal. It was a right bower. We then distinctly heard a shuffling of the cards under the table, and the Spirit called on me to cut them. I said to him, ‘But you have the advantage over me, as you have all the cards under there to yourself.’ He replied, ‘Yes, I can see them all, but I will play fair.’ He then told me to put my hand under the table, and my three cards were placed in it. I was again directed to look, and found that he had also dealt himself three. The other two due to each player were then dealt in the same way. On being directed to look again under the table I saw that his turn-up card was a jack. As the trump did not suit my hand, I said, ‘I pass.’ The Spirit took it and discarded. I then led, by laying my card on the table. The Spirit responded to my play by placing his card into my hand which I held under the table to receive it. In that hand he made a march. We thus played out that game in four deals, which he won, making five points to my two. I did not doubt his having played fair. I then told Leah who my antagonist had been, and she said, ‘How like Calvin that was to answer my pertinacious interrogation by saying that he would not be pumped.’”

One morning, when my sister Margaretta came down to breakfast, she was looking pale, and tears were in her eyes. She related a dream which had greatly affected her.

“I was,” she said, “sitting in the north room at home (in father’s house). The door was open. Suddenly the sun seemed to be eclipsed: while the atmosphere was filled with particles of dust, which at times were wafted in clouds which nearly obscured my vision. (The road is visible from the door for the distance of half a mile.) I observed a form slowly approaching amid the shower of dust and débris; and as it came nearer I recognized in it my sister Maria, dressed in deep black, and ran to meet her. She raised her hands, saying, ‘O Maggie! isn’t this dreadful?’ As we met, a leaf (as from a book) dropped at our feet. I picked up the leaf and read from it these words:

“Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind’s breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!”

We were all deeply impressed, and felt it to be a warning of some sad event in the near future.

It was early, we had not yet breakfasted, and were sitting together feeling very dejected, when my brother (who lived thirty miles east of Rochester) walked into our room, and finding us all in tears, threw his arms gently around mother’s neck and asked her what was the matter.

We told him Margaretta’s dream, well knowing that he must have sad tidings to relate to us, as he had ridden all night to get there at that hour of the morning. He wept, and sobbing aloud said: “I am the messenger of sorrowful tidings. Dear little Sanford Smith is dead.” This was sister Maria’s little son, seven years of age. David then told us how the darling child had passed away. He died of croup. They did not consider him dangerously ill at first, but hastened for the doctor. When his mother stood over him, trying to make him more comfortable, tears dropped from her eyes upon his precious face. He pulled her down and kissed her, and with his little handkerchief wiped her tears away, saying, “Ma, don’t cry so. I will be your guardian spirit, and rap just so”—making the sounds with his darling fingers on the head-board. He was a beautiful and interesting child: and it nearly broke their hearts to

lay him away from their earthly sight, though conscious of his spiritual presence.

While Margaretta was dreaming that truly wonderful dream, my brother David was on his way to inform us of the child's death.

MISTAKEN NAMES CORRECTED BY SPIRITS.

Dr. A. D. Wilson and Dr. Kirby, both men of high distinction, introduced to me by Dr. John F. Gray, and who afterward became thorough Spiritualists and my dear friends, made a bad start in their first experiences at my circles. They both went away somewhat disgusted with the wrong names which the Spirits of their relatives had attributed to themselves. Dr. Wilson's father having given his name as "Patrick;" and Dr. Kirby's wife having called herself "Mary Anne." They compared notes as they went out together. Dr. Wilson said that his father was not Patrick, but Peter; and Dr. Kirby that his wife's name was Nancy.

Soon after Dr. Wilson came across his father's old diploma. He had graduated at Edinburgh before coming to New York, where he became a professor in (I believe) Columbia College, and there was his name recorded at full length as "Patrick." He was not an Irishman, but a Scotchman, and did not fancy being called "Pat," and used to sign with his initial; and somehow or other Peter got so fastened upon him that his own son never knew his real name to have been Patrick till he found it on this old diploma. Dr. Kirby complained to his mother-in-law that his wife Nancy had given her name as "Mary Anne." "Why, did you never know that Nancy was christened Mary Anne?" was her reply. The two doctors again compared notes together to better purpose than before; and we all had a hearty laugh when they came together to tell us this curious and excellent test they had both happened to receive. They were both distinguished homœopathic physicians, as was also their intimate friend, Dr. Gray, by whom they had been introduced.

AN UNWILLING CONVERT MADE HAPPY AND GRATEFUL.

One evening (in Ludlow Place) so severe a storm was raging, and it was so bitterly cold, that I had no fear of any visitors coming in, and had settled myself for comfort in the basement room, and allowed the fire in the parlor to go out. But the bell rang, and Susie announced a party of four or five

gentlemen. They had been brought by one of my good friends from the St. Nicholas Hotel. They were all Southerners; and one of them, an old gentleman, had been seduced out to go with the party to "some place of entertainment," without knowing what or where. (He was bitterly prejudiced against Spiritualism and us.) When he got in and learned into what he had been entrapped, he was very angry, and refused to pay his dollar or to go any farther. Susie reported that he was up in the hall, and their hack had been dismissed. I sent word to invite him down to the warm room, unless he chose to remain out in the cold, for which I should be sorry. He finally came down, but sat apart in a corner of the room as distant as possible from the group of us gathered round the table near the fire. He was, as I afterward learned, an old man now left alone in the world with his wealth; a large family having been swept away from him, chiefly by yellow fever. He replied somewhat gruffly to my invitation to him to draw up to the fire, and my friend scratched a few lines to me telling me to take no notice further as he was a sceptic, and very angry at the trick they had played upon him. Before long came some raps, saying, "Father, do come to the table and get warm," signed with the names of his wife and a number of his children: and they happened to be rather unusual names, of which I remember only Tabitha, Rebecca, and Sarah. As one after another he heard them rapped out, he turned in his seat and became evidently excited and affected, and even tears began to stream down his aged face. He came to the table, where he received such satisfaction that his long-lost dead were really there and speaking to him, that when the party broke up he expressed great gratitude; and said that though he had refused to pay his dollar, he insisted on my acceptance of the \$20 bill which he laid on the table.

He afterwards wrote me a beautiful letter, from the extreme South, telling me that he had been a materialist, with no belief in the immortality of the soul; but that now all life was changed for him; that he now knew that his wife and children still lived and loved and were near to him, and that he would soon be with them again. And he gave me such grateful blessings as were a compensation for the hardships and suffering I had sometimes to encounter in the course of my career of mediumship. The friend who had done him the unwelcome service of thus entrapping him within my doors is still living, and owns a large orange plantation in Florida; and I have no objection to refer to him any reader whose prejudices may require any

confirmation of the strict accuracy of this narrative of one of the pleasantest reminiscences of my life.

A SPIRIT KNOWS BETTER THAN THE POSTMASTER.

One morning we received a message, by rapping, to this effect:

“Your Uncle John is on his way, and will be here to-morrow morning.”

He was then on a visit to my sister at Consecon, Canada West. We dearly loved Uncle John, and were delighted at this announcement; and as we had never been deceived by anything thus volunteered by our Spirit friends, we made all preparations for his arrival, and told several friends that he was coming. Morning came, but no Uncle John. We went to the boat-landing from across the lake (“Hanford’s landing,” then about a couple of miles from Rochester, though the city has now pretty well grown down to it); but no one knew anything about him. We then went to Amy Post, and told her how we had been deceived and disappointed by the Spirits. Mrs. Post was seriously affected by the false prophecy, or announcement, and could not be reconciled to the situation without some further explanation from those who had deceived us. All we got from them was this: “Go to the post-office and you will find a letter which will explain.” On doing so we were told that there was none in our box. We (Mrs. Post, Miss Coles, Sister Kate, and myself), after a little talk over it, asked the Spirits why they persisted in such falsehoods, with more questions which I cannot distinctly remember. We received the reply (by rappings): “Go back and say you have just been told there *was* a letter there. Tell them to look among the promiscuous letters, and it will be found.” (Spirits can emphasize by the strength of their raps as well as we can by italics.) Of course we did accordingly, and the clerk returned with a large letter, asking if my name was Leah A. Fish; which, of course, it was, with a variation in the order of Christian names, and probably I had asked for the name of A. L. Fish, perhaps omitting the full name of “Leah.”

The clerk had made a plain mistake. The Spirit had been right.

The letter explained everything. Uncle had started from Consecon, but had been overtaken at Coburg by a subpoena to attend an important trial, in which he was the principal witness.

Spirits are but disembodied men and women, and are not much more omniscient after their disembodiment than they had been before it. They had given their message truly before he had been overtaken at Coburg with the subpœna. They had followed or accompanied Uncle John, but had no cognizance of outside circumstances which had occurred subsequently to their announcement, and then quitted him. There is instruction in this, as well as a curious interest.

OPENING OF A COMBINATION LOCK.

Professor Mapes had a friend who knew that he was investigating Spiritualism, and told him that he (the friend) had a test which none of his mediums or Spirits could meet, but that he would give the mediums \$600 if they could do so; that being a sum he had unexpectedly come into and would gladly give if it could be done. The Professor brought him to me, and he pulled out his \$600 and produced a combination padlock, which he had set to a certain word, and he offered me the \$600, to which I was welcome if I could open it. I told him that neither the Spirits nor I would do anything for money, and I refused to attempt it unless he put back his money into his pocket. This he had to do, but he continued to sit in the public circle, for which he paid the regular admission fee of one dollar. Nothing came for him till, just as the party was breaking up, there were rapped out the letters, *l-o-o-n*, followed with the sentence "Open your lock," which nobody understood till some person, repeating them aloud, said, "That spells *loon*," which Mapes's friend heard, and, starting up excitedly and with an oath, cried out, "Why, that is my word!" The lock was at once opened at the word. He again threw the \$600 to me, saying that I was heartily welcome to it. But he at last was compelled to put back his money. As he bade me good-night he left in my hand a \$10 gold piece, which I could not refuse to accept as a token of his gratitude and his feelings. He came frequently afterwards and became a thorough and hearty Spiritualist. Prof. Mapes, in introducing him, said he was a whole-souled man, though a positive and rough one, and somewhat addicted to oaths, which rather displeased me.

A VISITOR MAGNETIZED INTO A MEDIUM HIMSELF.

Judge Haskell, of Leroy, a distinguished man and a member of Congress, was one of my old Rochester converts and earnest supporters. He used to say

that we acted on him like magnets, and magnetized him unconsciously, so that after an evening with us he found himself receiving raps himself, an influence upon him which would last several days, sometimes as long as a week, and that he used to talk freely with the Spirits in his own bed, receiving the raps on the headboard. He evidently had in himself the basic conditions for the mysterious gift of mediumship, and might have gone far if he had chosen to cultivate and develop it. Indeed, he often found himself, in his speeches, departing widely from what he had intended to say, and even speaking against his opinions, under an influence controlling him against his own mind.

CURIOUS STORY ABOUT A MUTILATED LIMB.

I went with mother to visit my sister, Mrs. Osterhout, who lived in Canada West, near where my father had formerly resided. A bad accident occurred to a young man named Charlie, whose leg was so crushed by a heavy log rolling upon it that it had to be amputated above the knee. As we sympathized with the family, mother and I went over on the first night after the amputation to watch with him and help take care of him, while supporting his mother with our company. The limb had of course been buried. During the night he moaned and cried incessantly, and begged us *to turn his foot over*. We did not understand him until he said, "Tell Joe (the hired man) to turn my foot over; they have buried it with the toes downward." We went and told Joe about it, who made no account of it, regarding Charlie as not in his right mind; but the latter continued so long with the same cries which proved such severe actual suffering, whatever might be the illusion possessing his mind in regard to his buried limb, that we were compelled to satisfy him by directing Joe to reopen the hole, which could scarcely be called a grave. It was a fact; the leg was found exactly as Charlie had insisted it was, with the toes downward. It was accordingly turned over in the box in which it had been buried, so as to rest in its natural position on the heel, and poor Charlie immediately dropped to sleep, nor did he make any further complaint. The reader has probably heard or read of analogous stories about pain being felt in the extremities of limbs which had been amputated; continuing in some cases long after the amputation. The Apostle says: "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

DISTURBANCES IN THE TROUP STREET COTTAGE.

One Sunday night, at Rochester, in that pleasant house on Troup Street, there was one of those tremendous snow-storms which no longer appear to fall there as often or so deep as they did at that time. Margaretta and I were alone in the house. Alfie, our housekeeper, had gone out for the day, and we had no expectation of her being able to return through such a snow-storm. The house was built on ground which sloped down to the rear from the front level of the street. We were sitting in the dining-room, which was a sort of rear addition to the cottage, and had a veranda from which a door opened into the room, while another door led by a few steps to the cellar in which was a well—though we never used the water from it, as I mistrusted its healthfulness; indeed I had a strange feeling about that well, as though it might have been the scene of a crime. The wind coming furiously from that direction piled up the snow-drift all the height of the lower sashes of the windows, and of course blocked access to the door from without. There were often so much knocking and other sounds about that cottage that I believed it, like the others, to be haunted.

Margaretta and I were making ourselves comfortable. We had drawn the table near to the stove, and upon it was one of the country mince pies, such as New York does not know, and she had just lifted the teapot when knocks of the most fearful character thundered directly under her feet. The blows implied a heavy mallet and a powerful arm, which so startled her as to cause her to let fall the teapot. Neither of us could stir from the spot. There was no cellar under this *rear* addition to the cottage, but the door from the cellar, which was under the main building, opened into the tea-room very near to where I sat. Tremendous pounding commenced against the cellar-door, causing it to fly open and close again several times as by the same hand. Immediately after came from outside groans as from some one apparently perishing in the storm, seeming to indicate extreme suffering and anguish.

As we huddled together and sat paralyzed, we heard the cheerful voice of our good Quaker friend, Mr. Willets, and a knocking at the door of a character not mysterious, and as soon as we were able to get the door open, Mr. Willets, a gust of wind, and no small drift of snow, entered together. “Well, girls, I got anxious about you, and, as Alfie is away, my wife and I thought you might have no water and wood for to-morrow morning, and it would be harder to get at you then; for this snow is going to last all night.”

He stayed a little while, when he found we were sufficiently provided, and then this good man and friend made his brave way out again.

Before Mr. Willets had left, Calvin also came to us under the same alarm, and to cheer us with his presence, and he stayed all night. And although there was no more moaning outside, yet the same heavy pounding on the floor *continued through the night*. Though we at least went to our bed, the agitation and excitement prevented our having anything more than a disturbed sleep; and whenever we would awake, there were still the sounds, which lasted till morning; and the neighbors too told us the next day how they had also heard and wondered at them. I have forgotten to mention that Mr. Willets and Calvin went out into the storm to see if they could find anybody or any signs of anybody outside the house, but they found nothing but the undisturbed levels of the snow.

Nor was this the only occasion of such violent and protracted knockings both there and elsewhere. At my house in Ludlow Place, New York, we sometimes could not help believing that there were burglars in the house, and utterly reckless in their noises. We sometimes called in the policeman to search the house as some of our friends must remember. For the sake of male protection, I had (their friends being ours and ours theirs) invited Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Johnson to occupy rooms in my third story, and to share our table (for which we had to permit them to contribute the small sum estimated to cover the additional cost of the latter), and several times had Mr. Johnson come down during the night and insisted that there must be burglars in the house:—and this, notwithstanding all his past observations. There were some reasons for suspicions of crime having been committed in that house also. Now what sort of Spirits were they who thus disturbed our nights? And why? Of course I, many a time, interrogated them, but never got any satisfaction from their answers. They would never give any special motive or reason for their thus coming, and would only say that they *could* do it, and that they *would*.

They never did any mischief beyond the fright and causing us to go up and down stairs and all over the house: perhaps they were not allowed to do so, by other spirits, who nevertheless had no power to prevent their coming.

Was it their purpose to keep us up to the task that had been imposed on us, and in a state of submission from a sense of our powerlessness against them?

I could not answer these questions then, nor can I now. A friend has suggested that they were perhaps miserable and earth-bound, and unprogressed spirits whom our mediumship gave access to us and certain limited means of action on material objects in our atmosphere, and they may have found a diversion from the poor life they are as yet living, and some amusement in frightening us, somewhat as children enjoy the mere making of noise and startling people, without attaining or seeking any other object. There are plenty of people daily passing into the Spirit condition, where they undergo no speedy change, of whom this is very supposable.

A predecessor (daughter of Mr. Calhoun) in the occupation of this house, some years before, told me that they had heard similar noises, and Mr. Calhoun told me that he and friends had sat up in the night with pistols to catch the burglars presumed to cause them.

A CAUTION AGAINST CRUELTY TO ORPHAN CHILDREN.

In Canada West, not far from the residence of my sister Mrs. Elizabeth Osterhout, there lived a family consisting of a husband, wife, and three children, and a "hired" girl, whom Mr. —— favored. Mrs. —— was rapidly declining; and she feared that her husband would marry the girl, after her death. Knowing the violent temper of the girl, she besought her husband not to marry her, and thus, necessarily, place the children under her care. He promised his wife he would not: but his promise was soon broken, and to his sorrow he found, when too late, that his wife's fears were being realized. The children were neglected and cruelly beaten for the least offences. They were sad, and were often seen crying and hungry. The neighbors fed the little ones whenever an opportunity offered; and the children told strange stories about their mother coming to them at night. They said she came and covered them with blankets which their step-mother would not allow them to have on their beds; and they said that when she found the blankets on their beds she would whip them; and when they told her that *they* did not put them on the bed, she would accuse them of falsehood. But she soon had reason to know that a power beyond the children was at work there. The step-mother had taken the feather bed, which their own mother had made for them, and tied and hung it up, because she said they would soil it.

Soon after this, quantities of feathers were lying about the sleeping-room, which could not be accounted for; until, on close examination, they discovered the bed-tick was burned all over in exactly the form of human hands.

This could not be charged to the children; and the occurrence was talked over by every one in the neighborhood.

Still the children were shamefully treated, starved and beaten for the most trifling things. There was another child born into the family, and the elder ones were made to take care of it, and were abused whenever it cried. One day Mr. —— was obliged to leave home to be gone over night. The youngest of the first wife's children was suffering with cholera infantum, and cried for want of care. This disturbed her ladyship. She left her bed in a passion, jerked the little sufferer out of its bed, setting it hard on the floor, while the other two were ordered to take care of the sick child; and as she turned to leave the room she was met face to face by their Spirit mother, who, with open hand and extended arm gave her a slap on the forehead. She turned to the children saying, "Your mother has killed me." Her forehead instantly turned black where the Spirit hands and fingers had touched her, and the marks corresponded exactly with the forms burnt in the bedtick.

She died three days after the hand had slapped her; and the discolored brow was hidden in the tomb.

This is no fancy sketch, as some may be disposed to imagine. It is verily true as the terrible punishment was deserved.

MRS. HOPPER'S MYSTERIOUS END.

A well-authenticated and most mysterious occurrence, and one which has always left in the minds of the residents of Rockland County a strong inclination to credit a belief in witchcraft—I confess to something of the kind myself—took place in my father's school-day time. I have listened to his recital with staring eyes, ready to catch the slightest incident connected with it.

Mrs. Hopper, a very beautiful woman, was possessed of some very strange power. It was said that even when quite young she would perform strange feats with children who were in the habit of associating with her; and it was clearly ascertained that she had been seen in different places at one time.^[22] I cannot say anything of my own knowledge of all this, but there is no doubt of the facts which I am about to relate.

Mrs. Hopper had not appeared in her usual spirits for several days. She complained of not feeling well, wished to be left to her repose, and appeared to be looking forward to something they could not comprehend. One of her bridal gifts was a favorite colored boy, a lad about seventeen years of age at the time of her departure. (Slavery still existed in New York.) She was an only child and much petted by her parents and friends.

Her mother, on learning she was ill, went to spend a few days with her, in the hope of cheering her spirits and benefiting her health. One afternoon she seemed more than usually restless, and called to Jack (the colored boy) to bring his hat and coat to her to repair them. While mending his clothes, she said to Jack, "Who will mend your clothes and care for you when I'm gone?" He tried to console her, and said, "You aint a goin' to die, Missus, you're too young." She told her mother she needn't stay with her as she was quite well and her mother was needed at home. She also told her husband she would rather he would sleep in another room and leave her alone that night. They all complied with her wishes. The next morning her husband found the doors ajar, and on entering the room discovered that her bed had not been slept in, and on closer examination discovered her comb and pins on the stove and all her wearing apparel torn open (in front) from head to foot, and lying on the floor just as they had been stripped from her body. They searched the house and barn but could not find her. They explored the neighborhood, but no trace of her nor footprints could be found. The neighbors turned out to hunt for the missing woman. School was dismissed and the children joined in the search.

Near the place where she lived was a swamp. (My cousin took Mr. Underhill and myself to see the house. It is a short drive from his home—"Mountain View House.") The swamp named was quite extensive at that time.

The party hunted three days; taking horns along, which they sounded, whenever they strayed apart, to call them together again.

I believe it was my father's aunt who first discovered the body of the missing woman (which they had traced by her hair; some of which they found hanging in the limbs of the trees). Her body was lying on a dry elevation, in the swamp, in a state of entire nudity; and so surrounded by mud and mire that they were obliged to make a log-way to enable them to reach and remove it. My aunt removed her apron and covered the body with it.

Her story is still repeated by many of the oldest inhabitants, and to-day remains no less a mystery.

I believe she had covenanted with evil Spirits, and the time or limit of her agreement was ended. "Try the Spirits. By their fruits ye shall know them."

Never yield your judgment to Spirits, however good they may be, unless you are sure you are doing right. Obey the small voice within, and always bear in mind that the highest gift from God is your own good sense. So say my guardian Spirits.

"TOUCH SAMANTHA."

A very amusing incident occurred in one of my afternoon séances. Mr. Decker, with his wife and sister-in-law (acquaintances of mine from Rochester), visited me and took seats in the circle. There were already about twenty around the table. Mr. Decker was a believer in the manifestations himself, but his wife's sister, Samantha Pierpont, knew very little about the subject, and was afraid to sit in the circle.

He urged Samantha to come to the table, which she did after much persuasion. When it came Mr. Decker's turn to ask questions he called on the Spirits to "touch Samantha," but he had scarcely uttered the words when he disappeared from the circle and was seen coming out, feet foremost, from under the table at the very farthest extremity, causing a great scattering among the visitors. Mrs. Ward fainted, and two other ladies had to be taken out of the room. The séance was broken up for that afternoon.

Mr. Horace Dresser was one of the party, and Mrs. Ward had accompanied him to my house.

This seems to have been a counter practical joke, played upon himself by some humorous Spirit (of whom there are many) for the one with which he was persecuting poor Samantha.

“I FEEL MY HANDKERCHER TIED TIGHTER EVERY MINIT.”

When I first moved into Ludlow Place I met, in the street, a colored woman with a brush and pail in her hand. She was very pretty and jolly, and I engaged her to help clean the house. I set her at work in the china closet, and, before she had been ten minutes there at work, she turned to me and said, “What yer got in dis yer house?”

I replied, “I don’t know what you mean. Explain yourself.”

She muttered awhile, and in a moment more she said, “Well, mebbly yer don’t know, but I feels my hankercher tied tighter every minit.”

“NO BRIMSTONE YET.”

It has often struck me that there was something more than mere chance in classes of persons who would gather round the table in my circles. There would be occasions when *none* but persons of superior intelligence and elevation of character would meet there, as though some kindred influences had prompted them thus simultaneously. When a few persons of this order began to come, I have often said to mother, “We are going to have good manifestations this evening, as a galaxy of fine heads and noble faces are gathering round the table.”

Mr. Greeley has more than once remarked upon this to me, saying, “Leah, I never, in any assembly, meet so many noble heads and the same order of intelligence I meet at your receptions.”

One evening there was such an assemblage of some twenty-five or thirty persons, of whom none were misplaced in such good company. One young Quaker lad, of seventeen or eighteen, had accompanied his father. He was a fine, bright and gentlemanly youth. It was the practice that each person took his turn, as they sat, to address his questions to the Spirits. When the right came to him to ask his questions, he waived it in favor of his older neighbor, who, however, declined to accept it, and insisted on his using his privilege.

Accordingly, he wrote his question, screening his paper with a book as he did so. His first question was, "Is my friend John here?" Three raps gave the answer *Yes*. He then asked a second question to which came the reply: "Not quite so bad as that; I haven't smelt any brimstone yet." This elicited a general laugh, and he was pressed to show his question, to which he objected, until he was overborne by his father. It proved to have been, "John, are you in hell?"

KITCHEN WORK BY NIGHT.

We have been awakened by the most fearful sights and sounds when no human being other than ourselves was stirring in the house. On several occasions I could not rest until I called a policeman in, and had the house searched from garret to cellar.

The manifestations were sometimes calculated to excite our sympathy, at other times they have lured us by false representations. I will give an instance.

Mother and myself were in the sitting-room on the second floor alone, quite late at night (not far from midnight), when we distinctly heard walking, talking, and opening and shutting of doors. I said to mother, "Can it be possible that the girls are in the kitchen at this late hour?" She replied, "No, I saw them go up over an hour ago, and Susie said good-night to me." I then thought I noticed the odor of cooking from the kitchen. The girls had a habit of sitting up late, and I determined to go down and detect them in their tricks (on one occasion I had found them entertaining a large party, when they had supposed I was in bed and asleep). We started cautiously, listening as we went, and occasionally hearing movements, appearing to us slyly made, as if careful on their part not to be overheard. We took no light with us, as we did not expect to need any. The lower hall seemed lighted from a window opening into it from the front basement, and a bright light shone from under the kitchen door which enabled us to see everything around. I went cautiously to the door, opened it quickly and found utter darkness and silence. As I opened it I distinctly heard a clatter as of griddles, etc., dropping. Judge of our surprise when suddenly we were instantaneously seized and hustled about, and then both transported or lifted to the floor above by an irresistibly powerful "force." I believe that it was a device

cunningly conceived by mischievous Spirits at play, to lure us down, and then frighten and bewilder us.

“SICH A GETTIN’ UP STAIRS.”

One evening when Margaretta and I were alone in my private room (the front room of the second story), some friends wanted a dark séance; for which purpose Katie went down with them into the basement room. The parlor floor was unoccupied, and at a late hour the servants extinguished the hall light, supposing all to have gone. But the dark séance in progress with Katie in the basement continued so long past midnight, with no sign of its breaking up, that I at last sent Margaretta down to let them know the hour and put an end to it. Of course all was dark on the two lower floors, but she could easily make her way. But as she was about to knock at the lower door, she was suddenly seized by some person who hurled or shot her up, as it seemed to her, and landed her on her feet at the head of the stairs on the second floor, where her scream called me out from my room, and she related what had occurred. It was evident that there were some Spirits there who did not choose to have the séance going on below interrupted.

There is an old negro melody which tells how

“Sich a gettin’ up stairs
I never did see,
Sich a gettin’ up stairs,” etc.

Margaretta had been pitched, as it were, in an instant, up the two flights of stairs. The reader may refer to the next story for a somewhat similar way of being carried up stairs which once befell mother and myself.

THE DEATH OF ISAAC T. HOPPER.

Hon. John W. Edmonds met occasionally with a private party, numbering from twelve to sixteen persons, nearly all singers of a choir belonging to a church in this city. This was my first private party formed after my settlement in New York, in 1852.

The rules of the party were to meet at precisely eight and close at ten o’clock. Judge Edmonds came and went as he pleased, often to the

annoyance of the party through the interruptions thus produced. He came in one evening about nine o'clock and took his seat in silence. The party were singing their sweet anthems, and all seemed drawn together in harmony. At the close of the singing our attention was suddenly called to a peculiar sound in the extreme corner of the room. Mr. Bostwick was secretary of the circle. I have his minutes of it, which differ materially from Judge Edmonds' account, written from memory by Dr. Dexter, and published in his book.

I here give it exactly as it occurred.

This singular sound signaled the alphabet, which I called, and the following message was given to us all:

“MY DEAR FRIENDS: I am free from all suffering and anxiety. I am re-united with the beloved partner of my youthful days.

“ISAAC T. HOPPER.”

Judge Edmonds exclaimed, “Gracious Heavens! can this be true? I have been with him from noon until seven o'clock this evening; and when I left him he seemed likely to live a month.” Then, taking a small pamphlet from his pocket, he said, “I read this to him; he listened attentively and expressed his opinion upon it favorably.” He then said, “Mrs. Brown, can't you send one of your girls around to see if this is true?” I said “No, Judge; I could not send my girls out at this hour of night.” The party all cried out, “No, Judge; go yourself. We will await your return.” He went, and was gone about an hour.

When the door-bell rang we sat in breathless silence. The Judge paused in the door-way a moment, then solemnly, and with trembling lips, said, “When I got there he had been dead an hour.”

WILLIAM M. THACKERAY.

Mr. Thackeray during his stay in New York visited my public séances, but never asked questions in a crowd. His course of investigation was unlike those of all others. The first visit he made he sat and listened to the sounds; and when his turn came to ask questions, he politely asked me to accept his arm and walk with him through the parlors (fifteen minutes were allotted to

each visitor) and he said, "You must be weary by this time. Do your investigators always tax you as they have this evening?" I told him I considered this party very little trouble in comparison to most others. The raps followed us as we walked, and were heard by all in the room. He apparently paid little attention to the sounds as we walked. Suddenly he stopped in the middle of the room, and said to me: "I have read much of your family, and the persecution you have been subjected to; and the various expositions of the wise ones; but they have not been able to convict you."

The rappings became tremendous, and the floor trembled beneath our feet. They were made all about the room and on the furniture. I invited him to call during my private hours, which he subsequently did, and conversed with the Spirits freely.

When he bade me good-by for the last time, he expressed pleasure at having met us, and thanked me for my kindness in permitting him to visit us during our private hours. He expressed himself delighted with his visit, and said he was thoroughly convinced that no earthly power could make the sounds as he had heard them: and he laughed heartily at Dr. Flint's theory of the knee-joints. Though compelled to restrain the public expression of it in the *Cornhill Magazine*, of which he became editor, it is certain that Mr. Thackeray was a full Spiritualist, even though not one of those bolder Spirits among men who feel, and live up to, the duty of proclaiming to the world, cost what it may, the divine and regenerating truth which has been received into their own souls. But great difficulties, it must be confessed, stood in his way. The bigotries of his country and times made it impossible for him, under the necessities of a profession wholly dependent on the favor of public opinion, to go further than he did, while it is certain that he was too noble and true a man ever to cater to those bigotries by a word of depreciation of Spiritualism.

"WITCH STORIES."

I.

Amy Emmet, a well-known character in Rockland County, N. Y., was reputed a witch. And I have been told by a perfectly reliable gentleman of many strange things which occurred in the case of an own sister of his, who

is still living. She (his sister) would roll over the floor, like a hoop, for a long time; and, when relieved from such terrible control, would lie helpless and nearly exhausted.

My parents and grand-parents knew her and believed her to be possessed by evil powers.

II.

Mary Treadway was a little girl; a playmate of my mother. She suffered greatly under the power of some evil influence. She would scream and say, in terror, "See her! See her!—Now she's pinching me." Then, apparently for saying so, she would be stoned nearly to death. She would be black and blue all over after being pinched, covered with bruises, and often hit in the face with stones tied up in rags. Her mother made a deep pasteboard sun-bonnet, hoping that the poor child might be relieved by wearing it; but the stones would hit her in the face just the same, even when she would bend her face down near the ground to avoid them. Mother saw the stones strike her, apparently coming from the mirror. After having been troubled in every possible way, she suddenly became completely covered with a living mass of vermin.

Her parents were well-to-do, respectable, cleanly people. Her tormentor died, and she recovered.

GEORGE THOMPSON.

"MRS. A. L. UNDERHILL:

"DEAR FRIEND—Having learned that you are about to publish a somewhat detailed account of your experience in connection with the phenomena of Spiritualism, and fearing that you might not remember an occurrence which took place at your house on Troup Street, in the city of Rochester, N. Y.—I think in 1849, when George Thompson (the English abolitionist) came to this country to lecture against slavery—I take the liberty of referring to it.

"While lecturing in Rochester, he expressed a desire to witness something of what he had heard so much about.

“Mrs. Kedzie and myself, with a few other friends called on you. After being seated around a table, the rapping indicated that many Spirits were glad to manifest to him.

“Mr. Thompson took a seat on the opposite side of the table from you, and commenced asking questions by writing them. A very warm friend of his, who had travelled extensively with him in India and elsewhere, purported to be in communication with him. Many incidents of their travels were recalled to his memory by the Spirit. I distinctly remember one question which Mr. Thompson asked orally. It was this. ‘What was the present which you sent to my wife from India?’ Answer, ‘A cashmere shawl.’

“Afterward we asked Mr. Thompson if his answers were all satisfactory? He replied promptly, ‘They were quite right, quite right.’

“The fact in this case was, that the questions put, and answers given, were not known to you or any one present, or in the United States of America; and all the answers given were ‘quite right.’

“Will sceptics explain, satisfactorily to themselves and others, how this is done?

“JOHN KEDZIE.

“NEW YORK, June, 1884.”

A CHILD’S LETTER.

Letter from a child eight years old. I insert this letter from a darling little child partly for love of her, but chiefly because she soon after, as I have been informed, developed, without any instruction, into a splendid musical medium.

“NEWARK, O., July 20, 1851.

“MY DEAR FISH:

“I promised to write you a letter, and I have a few words to say to you, it is not very long; and I hope you are well, and I send my love to you all. I think that I’ll never forget you. I wish that you’ll never forget me. We are all well

and the baby has three teeth. Now you must come back, we all want to see you.

“I hope that Mr. Brown is better. You must remember your promise to me. I have been looking anxiously for a letter from you. I hope you will excuse me, for this is the first letter I’ve ever written before. Tell Maggie that she must not forget her promise to me.

“My dear Fish, I love you very much. I want to say something to you but I don’t know what. The fields are green, the woods are grand, and home is dear to me, but I would give a year for one sweet month to talk with the Spirits. O I would clap my hands for joy. Mr. Blackman has acted the part of a coward. He has not the independence of a man to come out and publish the truth like a gentleman. I would have sent you one of his papers if they had pleased me.

“Good-bye, my dear Fish.

“LOUISE MOONEY.”

EXTRACTS FROM DANIEL UNDERHILL’S MINUTE BOOK, BEARING DATE JUNE 5, 1862.

“While Leah and myself, with a few friends, were sitting at the table conversing, the following communications were spelled out:

“There must be some desperate struggles before the Union army can hold the Rebellion under control. Then many treacheries will be perpetrated through the semblance of peace; after which many new and arbitrary enforcements will be carried into effect, so that the difficulties cannot be determined for some time. Rebellion is among you everywhere, and the only curb is the law and the right to control. Even your leading journalists are not reliable, and their loyalty is speculative.

(Signed) “RED JACKET.”

“No more peace; no more love; no more truth; all is gone. My spirit sorrows, my light grows dark, my hope fails, and my form no more appears on earth among my tribe. My feather gone, my axe dull, my arrow broke, and my hand no more pull the string. My eyes no more take aim. My work to do, and I no power.

“Great Spirit make pale-face look up where help can come, and then we will fly through air in cars of fire, to call the light and heat down to wake up the love, hope, charity, and faith which have no power now, to conquer in the war of hatred, envy, and rebellion.

“I have spoken.
(Signed) “WAR EAGLE.””

EXTRACT FROM COMMUNICATION PURPORTING TO COME FROM D. UNDERHILL'S
FATHER.

“If every grain of sand on the sea-shore were a dime, and every dime should be doubled at every second, it would not be half the value to you a few years hence, that one evening's sitting with your guardian Spirit will be to you when you are as I am now.

(Signed) “LEVI.”

PRACTICAL JOKES PERFORMED AND REBUKED.

Though it is my rule not to introduce trifling incidents which were constantly occurring to us in our domestic privacy, yet, finding them in my private papers of 1849, I will here insert the following two because it occurs to me that it may have had a significance intended as a lesson to me.

One evening, being for a wonder without callers, Maggie and I thought we would have a little fun at mother's and Cathie's expense. (Mother was very easily disturbed by any unusual manifestations.) It will be seen that, though we began it for our fun, the Spirits took it soon out of our hands and carried it out themselves in pretty strong earnest.^[23]

Maggie went into the parlor bed-room, and I laid down on the sofa. She took a cane and I a shell from the table to rap with. I precautionally placed matches near me in case of need. She rapped *once* (with the cane) upon the ceiling, but before I could make any attempt at using my shell the house was in an uproar. The piano was violently sounded, the match-box rattled against the ceiling. I called to Maggie to know if it was she who was pounding the piano so violently. Mother cried out, “God have mercy on us!” She saw a very tall man—or the form of one—standing in the open doorway, and recognized him as her father. Mother was so frightened that she started up,

and as she did so tore down the window-shade, which let in the light of a bright moon. I was unceremoniously seized upon and lifted through a circular aperture in the ceiling (large enough to admit four small pipes, leading from the parlor stove into a sheet-iron drum in the room above, in which Calvin slept). (See diagram on page [209](#).) I was there held suspended for several minutes by two iron hands (as they seemed to me), the one felt icy cold, and the other almost burning hot. Calvin, in bed in the room above, lay quietly listening to the uproar, but made no remark. I entreated him to come down to us, but he positively refused, saying, “No, you have raised the Devil, and must take the consequences.”

This uproar continued all night, and people gathered around the house to listen to it. We found, by experience, that nothing we could do in our attempt at a little fun played off on mother, would equal the performances of the Spirits at our expense.

The second of these private domestic incidents, designed perhaps for rebukes and lessons, was as follows:

To make this story understood, it will be necessary to describe the situation of the old homestead. The public road runs north and south; and both houses face eastward. The old house stands about two hundred yards from the road, surrounded by trees. Father’s house (which was being built at the time he was living in Hydesville) stands near the road, with ample yard room surrounding it. When turning into the lane, there is a slight descent until you reach a little bridge, called the “Tell-tale Bridge,” over a small stream, which in wet seasons runs through the vale; after which you gradually ascend until you reach the level on which the main buildings stand. It is called the Tell-tale Bridge because the hoofs and wheels always announce the approach of visitors.

It was Sunday evening. A party of David’s friends drove over from Newark to have a séance with the Spirits. It was decided that they should hold their meeting at mother’s, with the girls (Maggie and Katie). I remained at David’s, with Uncle John, Calvin, and the children—the youngest being a babe ten months old. My brother and his wife joined the party. Uncle John suggested that some refreshments would be acceptable and help to while away the time. By the time we got through supper it was near twelve o’clock, and the hired man came home belated. The servant girl was tired,

and all save myself retired for the night. The baby fretted for its mother, and I walked the floor with him until he fell asleep. Still there were no signs of the adjournment of the party. I could hear the sounds distinctly, and concluded they had entirely forgotten to notice the time (it was then two o'clock). So I slipped on the hired man's coat and hat and ran down, to learn if there were any intimations of the party breaking up. I did not wish to be observed. The night was lovely, and the moon shone brightly; and my only refuge of concealment was a few shocks of sweet corn left standing between the window and the fence. They could have seen me through the window if they had looked out from the sitting-room in which they were holding their séance. I procured a number of small stones and practised throwing very successfully, hitting the mark between the windows a little distance from them. Having thus acquired confidence in my aim, I threw one larger than the others, which went through the window crashing the glass into fragments. A general scream broke from all in the room. I ran down into the hollow near the bridge, and hid in the tall, wet grass, knowing well enough that mother would soon be out to explore the grounds. I heard her say, "I do not believe that a Spirit did it. I know it was some of those good-for-nothing, mean coon hunters; they have heard us, and they have done this to annoy us." Then father said: "They have no business to throw stones through the windows. If that stone had hit any one, it might have proved a serious thing."

I shuddered, and was thankful it was no worse. Mr. Coddling said, "No, Mrs. Fox, I think you are mistaken. I heard several electric explosions just before it hit the window." (Those were my smaller pebbles.) Father said, "Do you believe a Spirit threw that stone through the window? If it was a Spirit it was an evil one."

By this time they were all out in the yard looking for the culprit, and not more than twenty feet from where I lay cowering in the long grass wet with dew. As soon as they all re-entered the house I ran for dear life, doffed my hat and coat, and jumped back into the bed with the baby. I had lain there but an instant when the most terrific rumbling explosion went through the house, shaking it to its foundations and waking every sleeper. I have never witnessed, before or since, such a manifestation. Uncle John rushed to my room, saying, "In heaven's name, what has happened?" The parties from the other house came in and related what had happened there; but I was so shocked by the manifestation just made that I found no difficulty in

suppressing my laughter. I had been well punished for my folly. I had not intended to carry the joke so far, and I prayed to be forgiven. I did not dare to confess. I knew it would not do at that time, as the public would have regarded us as impostors, and this as a specimen of our tricks. I suffered alone for my sin. I heard them discuss the matter frequently. One day, full fifteen years afterward, my brother was giving me his opinion, saying, "Leah, I do believe that was a mischievous Spirit that threw the stone and smashed father's window." I looked at him quizzically, and said, "Yes Dave, I believe it was too."

He caught me by the hand and said, "You did it! you rogue. I know you did!"

I confessed, and we have had many a hearty laugh over it since; but I had not ventured to confess it to the family for fifteen years.

A PROPHECIC DREAM.

On pages [76-77](#) above, in the chapter devoted to the "Mediumistic Vein in our Family," is given an account of my aunt, Mrs. Elizabeth Higgins, having seen a prophetic vision, miscalled "dream," which nearly nine years afterward was actually enacted over her grave, which now speaks for itself in the cemetery of Sodus, Wayne Co., N. Y. I omitted there to mention another instance in which she "dreamed" of a strange event, some weeks in advance of its actual occurrence. I was a child at the time, but perfectly remember it, besides its having often been talked about in the family.

When the family migrated from the city of New York to Sodus, Wayne County, N. Y., it had been intended to go by the canal. Grandfather had preceded the removal of the family by about a year. One morning Aunt Bessie (afterward Mrs. Higgins) announced that, "We shall not make our journey by water." "Why not?" asked her mother. "Because I dreamed last night that we travelled by land, and there was a strange lady with us. In my dream, too, we came to Mott's tavern in the Beech Woods, and they could not admit us because Mrs. Mott lay dying in the house. I know it will come true." She always felt that certainty in regard to *certain* dreams. "Very unlikely indeed," was the reply, "for but a year ago, when you stopped there, Mr. Mott's wife lay dead in the house." "You will see." "Then he must have married again, and he will lose his second wife."

Every particular came to pass as she had predicted. Mrs. Johnson, a stranger to the family at that time, accompanied them. By a change of plan they made the journey by land, as by that means (by grandfather's orders) they took the horses (three teams) to use in the new home in the "West."

When they reached Mott's tavern, late in the evening, they were told they could not be accommodated, as the house was full, and Mrs. Mott was dying. Bessie said to the clerk, "I was here just one year ago to-day, and Mrs. Mott lay dead in the house." He replied, "Mr. Mott was married two months ago, and it is his second wife who is now dying." It was arranged, however, for them to stay in the adjoining house, owned by Mr. Mott and occupied by his son.

Referring back (see page [75](#)) to my great-grandmother's visions of phantom funerals (sometimes more than a year in advance of their actual occurrence), I desire to add that such *pre-visions* funerals were not of persons whose age and state of health might have suggested such anticipation, but that they were of persons of all ages, and on two occasions the deaths were by accident, namely, by drowning and by a fall from a house.

In the case of Mr. Urie (page [82](#)), the runaway that caused his death was not that of a single horse, but of a high-spirited span of horses. The mistake was an accidental one made by a copyist.

I may add, generally, in regard to many of the strange occurrences related in this volume, there are witnesses still living who can attest the correctness of my statements.

JAMES A. GARFIELD.

One of the most pleasant of my reminiscences of our Ohio campaign, about three and thirty years ago, is my intercourse with the great and good man whose honored name heads this paragraph. He was a frequent visitor to my séances, to which he used to bring also members of his family and friends. He combined, with his eminent intelligence, culture and love of the truth, great geniality of temperament and manners. He was a convinced and warm Spiritualist, and his autograph name is a frequent one in my register.

Not a few also of the representatives of foreign countries visited us at Washington and New York, and were surprised to receive communications in their several languages.

To the above array of the Author's "Miscellaneous Incidents" I will add one of recent occurrence, for the sake of the evidence which it involves of two points, namely,

First, of the reality of Mrs. Underhill's still continued mediumship;

And secondly, of the interest really taken by her controlling Spirits in this work of hers.

In the course of our united labors over it, extending through a period exceeding four months, there have arisen a number of occasions on which we have differed over various points of expediency in regard to the arrangement and treatment, the insertion or suppression, of her voluminous materials or notes, and have discussed them freely, with some tenacity of opinion on both sides, while with reasonable candor and openness to conviction, certainly on her side. She has generally maintained that her Spirits had "impressed" and directed her so and so (the chief of them seeming to be Dr. Franklin and her grandfather), and a Spirit claiming to be Dr. Franklin has sometimes intervened in these discussions, either voluntarily or on being appealed to by us. I will describe one of these occasions, to afford the reader the opportunity of judging for himself of the genuineness of this Spirit intervention in these friendly discussions between two mortals still in the flesh, both of them actuated by an equal sincerity of zeal for the truth and for the good of humanity.

We were sitting in her library, on the opposite sides of a library table. The only other person present was a most highly estimable friend of hers, lending her his friendly aid in copying, who was seated some seven or eight feet off. Both of her hands were on the table. My knee was suddenly grasped by a strong, firm hand, evidently to call my attention. "Is this you, dear Dr. Franklin?" I asked. "Yes," was the reply given by three pressures of the hand which held my knee strongly between its thumb and fingers. I did not doubt the Spirit to be what he claimed to be, and I asked his opinion on the point in

question. He usually addressed me as “my son” or “my dear son.” He did not habitually seem to impose his will, but rather to give his opinion, which I must say was generally on the lady’s side, and to which I generally conformed, even when saying that I still thought differently.

Presently I felt my knee again grasped in the same way, but this time by what was evidently a smaller and a female hand. It proved to be that of my “sister Mary,” of whose existence Mrs. Underhill knew nothing. Her object was to tell me to write to another sister, Adelaide (still in the flesh, and at some three thousand miles of distance) because, as she said, the latter was “distressed and suffering” on account of my recent silence (for which there had been special reasons causing procrastination). Of these private family names and matters, Mrs. U. had no means of knowing anything. Her hands, I repeat, were on the table, and there was no human agency through which, in either of the two instances, the grasping of my knee could have been caused. The knowledge of my private family matters goes far to prove that in the one case it must have been really done by my sister (a Spirit), and this identification of her in the one case goes far to confirm that of the other as Dr. Franklin, both having in the same way declared who they were.—ED.

[22] The mysterious phenomenon of “the double”—called by the Germans *doppelganger*, and the subject of various German tales—while one of the most calculated to provoke incredulity, is undoubtedly an occasional reality. I have heard more than one person whose veracity I cannot doubt relate how they have been seen at the same time in places hundreds of miles apart. Any one may inquire of Mr. E. H. Britten on this subject. Undoubtedly such persons are mediums.

[23] They probably meant it as a reproof of the girls’ attempt to mix up their childish nonsense with a subject too great and grave for such trifling on their part.
—ED.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ACTION OF SPIRITS THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF A FIVE-MONTH'S-OLD INFANT.

VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS AROUND THE BABY—WRITING IN GREEK THROUGH HIS HAND.

In the preceding Chapter VI., I have mentioned some marvels about the infant mediumship of my little nephew, the elder of Cathie's two boys, Ferdinand Diedrich Loewenstein Jencken. Since the writing of that chapter and its consignment to unchangeable type, I have come across a copy of a newspaper which had got mislaid and was supposed lost, the *London Medium and Daybreak*, of May 8, 1874. The possibility of such things as were mentioned on my pages [89](#) to 95 having been done through the dear little fingers of a babe in arms, must have been hard to many readers to believe or to realize; though it ought not to be so difficult to those who pause to reflect that it was not those five-months-old fingers that thus acted, but the force and the will of Spirit powers controlling and guiding them. For the double purpose of supporting what I have written and of carrying still farther the marvellousness of this perfectly attested case, I now quote from page 290 of the *Medium and Daybreak* the following article, which, on its face, bears the direct testimony of Mr. Jencken himself and of J. Wason, Esq., a respectable English solicitor. Of Mr. Jencken's unimpeachable authority enough has been said on page [90](#).



Katie Fox Jencken.

From the London Medium and Daybreak, May 8, 1874, p. 290:

MEDIUMSHIP OF A BABY.

“A brief account, for which we are indebted to Mrs. and Mr. Jencken, of the progress of their infant boy, may not be uninteresting to the Spiritualistic public. We hence render it, *ipsissima verba*, as received by us.

“The baby medium, whose writing we have had engraved, was born on September 19, 1873. Of a sensitive and delicate organization, great difficulty was felt in preventing the life-cord snapping during the first few weeks of his existence. Care and a good nurse, however, saved the little fellow, who is now a healthy, blue-eyed baby, with a singularly well-formed head and large forehead.

“Six weeks after his advent, the wet nurse complained of constant noises, resembling gentle knocks or taps. These were at first ascribed to rats or mice; finally, the truth could not be resisted, and the gentle rappings on the doors of the wardrobe, on the iron head-rail of the bedstead, were admitted to be by unseen beings. On the 16th of November last, Mr. Jencken, desirous of testing the fact of the medial powers of his boy, obtained distinct raps and messages, holding his little boy near to a small round pedestal table. Soon afterward the alarmed nurse related how luminous hands had been seen by her making passes over the baby; the rappings increasing in intensity; shadowy forms had likewise been seen moving from the hearth to the bed. A whistling sound then attracted attention; whispered words and other mysterious manifestations were observed. On one occasion, during the absence of Mrs. Jencken, a Spirit-form opened the door of the nursery, entered, and left the room all but immediately, quietly gazing at the little boy with luminous eyes.

“During the month of December, small articles were frequently taken from the nurse; on one occasion a shadowy form appeared bending over the bed on which the nurse and baby were lying. Terribly frightened, the nurse grasped the child to leave the room; soft echoes, however, warned her not to fear. On December 16th, shortly after Mrs. Jencken arrived at Brighton, the little fellow uttered his first spoken words—‘Ma-ma, darling ma-ma’—much to the alarm of the nurse. On February 2d, the little fellow was carried by a Spirit-form from the nursery, on the same landing, to the door of the drawing-room, where Mrs. Jencken, who had been impressed to go to the door, received him into her arms.^[24] A half-suppressed cry of anguish from her informed Mr. J. Wason and Mr. Jencken what had happened. On entering the bed-room the nurse was found asleep on the bed. During the whole of this time the rappings continued. On one occasion a halo of light was observed to surround the baby’s head, finally enveloping his whole form. On other occasions clear luminous rays of light were noticed to stream from the eyes of the baby. On March 6th, he wrote for the first time. This was done in the presence of Mr. Wason, whose account is now published. A few days subsequently, two sentences were written by the baby medium, under the following circumstances: Mr. and Mrs. Jencken were seated at the dinner-table, the nurse with the baby occupying an armchair some eight or ten feet off. Suddenly a pencil was seen between the fingers of his hand. ‘Ah, he is

going to write,' exclaimed Mrs. Jencken, and placed a sheet of paper on the nurse's knee; his little tiny hand then moved rapidly, and wrote the words:

“I love this little boy, God bless
his Mamma. J. B. T.
“I am happy.’

Shortly afterward the pencil was again placed in his hand by an invisible agency, a sheet of paper fluttered through the room and settled on the nurse's knee; the little fellow then wrote:

“I love my Grandmamma,’

signing the paper with a mark the late Dr. Jencken used to employ when on earth. The paper and pencil were then jerked into the middle of the room. Since then, owing to Mr. Jencken's strong objection to any tests being applied, no further writings have been obtained. The rappings, however, continue, so also that strange luminosity of the eyes, so intense at times as to alarm his mother and nurse. Numerous letters have been received by Mr. Jencken from different parts of England, Holland, Russia, and other places, asking him to test this marvellous power of his little boy, who, not six months old, has written messages; but to all these applications the answer has been a polite refusal, the medical gentleman attendant having warned the parents against any trial of strength of this singularly gifted child.

“In conclusion we may repeat the prophecy respecting this boy, which prediction was spelt out at the house of Mr. H. P. Townsend, New York, some five years ago, the message received then being to this effect: that Kate Fox would go to Europe, marry, give birth to a child, whose medial powers would be unexcelled; so great indeed would they be, that compared to her child the mother would be a mere cipher. Jocosely, for years afterward, Kate Fox was called the cipher in the house of Mr. Townsend. Thus far this prediction has been verified. If this little fellow be allowed by Providence to attain to years of maturity, he may perhaps verify all that the Spiritual beings, who foretold his birth within ten hours of its occurrence, have foreshadowed.

“Dear Mr. Burns:—The sentence signed ‘Susan,’ photographed [and now reproduced in our engraving.—ED. M.], was written through the hand of the infant boy, aged five months and fifteen days, of Mr. and Mrs. Jencken, on

March 6th last, at No. 5 Lansdowne Terrace East, Brighton, by invisible agency, in my presence and that of Mrs. Jencken and her nurse, the pencil having been placed in the baby's right hand by invisible agency, when I caused a memorandum of the fact to be written at once as a record, and afterward had the writing by the baby's hand and the memorandum with the signatures of the witnesses photographed, and I send you a copy of the whole, which you are at liberty to publish in the *Medium*, together with this letter, if you think fit. The circumstances under which the photographed document was written are as follows:

“Mr. and Mrs. Jencken and the child were taken from London to Brighton for the benefit of Mrs. Jencken's and the baby's health, and they had been, on March 6th before mentioned, at Brighton over three months; and I was at this time their guest, or rather sharing their lodgings with them. Mrs. Jencken's and the baby's health improved, but Mr. Jencken became seriously ill at Brighton; violent nervous headaches with neuralgia and a general derangement of the stomach and digestive organs. I told him I thought his travelling from his chambers in the Temple to the lodgings in Brighton—105 miles daily, which, by calculation, showed he had travelled over 8,000 miles while at Brighton within four months—was the probable cause of his illness; but he took a different view, and consulted his friend, a German physician of note, who agreed with him that these rapid journeys daily were not the cause of his ill-health. I contended that a German M.D., however able, had no experience as to the effect on health of daily long journeys by cab, omnibus, and railway, but I could make no change in Mr. Jencken's view. On the day in question, viz., March 6th last, baby's nurse was holding baby on her lap in the parlor, by the fire, about 1.30 P.M. I was writing at a table near. Mrs. Jencken was in a room adjoining and opening into the parlor, the door between being half open. Suddenly the nurse exclaimed, ‘Baby has a pencil in his hand!’ She did not say that the pencil had been put into the baby's hand by invisible agency, and I having had experience of babies clutching my finger pretty tightly, took no notice, but continued my writing. Nurse almost immediately after exclaimed, ‘Baby is writing!’ in a still more excited voice, which drew Mrs. Jencken's attention, and she rushed into the parlor to the nurse and baby, and this roused me, when I got up and walked to the nurse, and looking over Mrs. Jencken's shoulder, I saw the pencil in the child's hand and the paper under it with the writing as photographed.

“I may add that ‘Susan’ was the name of my departed wife, who was remarkably fond of children, and her Spirit (as is believed) had on several occasions previously manifested itself by writing and by raps through Mrs. Jencken, who, before her marriage, as most of your readers are aware, was the celebrated American medium, through whose family at Rochester, U. S., the truths of Spiritualism (now so stupendous) were first manifested.

“The value will now be seen of the advice given by ‘Susan’ to Mr. Jencken, ‘to go back to London,’ which Mr. Jencken did, and almost immediately recovered his usual health and strength, which are those of a strong, healthy man.

“Hoping your readers may take the same interest in this anecdote that you do, and that it may conduce to increase the interest felt in Spiritualism, believe me, sincerely yours,

“J. WASON, *Solicitor*.

“WASON BUILDINGS, LIVERPOOL.”

SPIRIT WRITING.

“Photograph of a Sentence written in Greek characters by Direct Spirit-Agency, without the Intervention of a Human Hand, at H. D. Jencken, Esq.’s, Rooms in Brighton, February 28, 1874.

“Paper (marked by a sceptic with his initials) and a pencil were placed on the table, all the circle (one sceptic and five Spiritualists) joining hands; lights extinguished, a scratching noise, as of a pencil writing on paper, was heard. On the candles being relighted, the sentence, as photographed below from the original writing, was found written on the initialed paper. Time occupied, about five minutes. Present—One sceptic, Mr. and Mrs. Jencken, Mr. James Wason (of Liverpool), and two other parties of respectability, who were for Spiritualism ‘when in her silver slippers and walking abroad with applause, but not when in rags and tatters;’ they did not wish their names to appear.

“Facsimile of the photographed writing.

ὁ πιστεύων ἐν εἰς ἐμὴν
ζήσεται

“Translation: ‘WHO BELIEVES IN ME SHALL LIVE.’”

Think of this child, born on September 19, 1873, writing a Greek quotation from the New Testament, and in the Greek characters, on February 28, 1874, at the age of five months and nine days! But it was not the mere baby fingers that wielded the pencil, though they were made to hold it.

[24] See Medium 206, page 167.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“THE MISSING LINK.”

An Improvisation.

BY MRS. HELEN J. T. BRIGHAM.

Dark night lay over the land,
O'er the graves of all the dead,
And all hearts were stirred, and filled
With feelings deep and dread;
Not without doubt and fearing,
But as chilled by sudden gloom,—
No ray of comfort peering
Through the door-way of the tomb!

Their souls were sad and trembling
On the river's dreary brink,
They prayed that in death's shadows
They might find the Missing Link!
Yet love still seemed to be lost,
Or like bird with broken wing,
So weak, and lone, and helpless,
That it could not soar and sing.

How could this mouldered body
Be renewed again, they said,
When the golden day goes down
To the midnight of the dead?
See the little tender heart
That love had so softly pressed,
With its tiny dimpled hands
Folded on its icy breast,

While the mother's soul of love,
Bends over the precious dead.
Is it now by death transplanted
Where no bitter tears are shed?
Where, in answer to her prayer,
In a region bright and fair,
Safe beyond all earthly care,
Angels lead her over there?

Dear ones stood with broken heart,
Torn from all their loves apart,

Fathers, mothers with their dead,
While their hopeless words were said!
O land of crape and mourning,
 Land dark with midnight gloom,
Is there no hope beyond us,
 And beyond the silent tomb?

A land where there are no dead,
Where no farewell tears are shed,
Where there is no funeral pall
Evermore—Does death end all?
Like an infant's cradle rocking,
Then there came a gentle knocking,
And little children's hand
Opened up the Spirit-land.

O Missing Link! O blessed hand!
That opened wide the heav'nly land!
Those who once filled earth's fond places
Watch and wait with angel faces.
God speed thee, Book, that bears this truth—
Eternal life, eternal youth!
Go, bear the gratitude of souls
Far as Truth's endless being rolls!^[25]

[25] It is generally known that the “inspirational speaker,” Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham, has for several years conducted, at Republican Hall, West 33d Street, the religious services of the “First Association of Spiritualists” of New York, on Sunday mornings and evenings, with an improvised eloquence of extraordinary sweetness, strength, and holiness. The custom is this: After a prayer, etc., she improvises responses to questions or topics proposed by the audience, and also poems on subjects suggested by them on the spot. In the evening she improvises a single consecutive discourse, or what may be called a sermon, on some subject prompted to her by her Spirit guides. The practice in the morning is that as many of the promiscuous audience as choose deposit on the desk their questions, tending usually to the elucidation of topics more or less connected with Spiritualism. She has possessed and exercised this Spiritual gift since very early childhood. A few weeks ago, among the subjects for poems thus laid on her table was a copy of the title-page of this volume. Her improvisation in regard to it was the above poem, introduced by the following prefatory remarks.

“We have with us this morning a lady, a Medium, who has been known for years among the Spiritualists as one who has sown the seed in the early forming of our faith, and scattered it with open heart and hand. This lady, well known to you as Mrs. Underhill, Leah Fox, has written a book, to be called ‘The Missing Link in Modern Spiritualism,’ which you will soon have an opportunity of reading for yourselves. The dedication of it is most beautiful, as follows: ‘To my husband, Daniel Underhill, who, before I had other claims than those of the Truth and the

Right, when other friends wavered, nobly sustained me, this narrative is dedicated, gratefully and lovingly.' This is an expression of just appreciation. It is the soul of the Worker, and the soul of Justice, and the soul of a Wife. Nothing is needed to be added to it, but this is suggested as a subject for a poem." She then proceeded to deliver it.

Two other subjects having been also suggested at the same time, she responded to them as follows:

"THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL.

"A drop from the infinite ocean, a ray from the infinite light,
One thought from the God eternal, one impulse of his love and might,
Held by the love of the Father in His circling arm's embrace,
One grain of sand on the wide-spread land, is a soul in this human race.
It cannot fall from his being, it never can die from sight,
For His soul is ever in it, and eternity is His light."

"THE BENEFICENCE OF SUFFERING.

"No pain can be in vain, no loss an endless cross,
From every earthly grief shall come a sure relief,
From every leaden sorrow the jewel of to-morrow."

In the ranks of Mediumship there are no small number of noble men and women possessing this splendid power. They are called Inspirational or Trance Speakers. They speak as the mouth-pieces of Spirit guides, using not the singular pronoun, but the collective "We." The only two whom I happen to know are Mrs. Brigham and Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten. One of the most competent of judges has said of Mrs. Britten: "No living orator could improvise, on half a dozen different high and deep subjects, in style to compare with her. I have heard most of the great orators of our times, pulpit, forensic, and parliamentary, and she is the most eloquent man of them all." She and Mrs. Brigham have been well called "the Eagle and the Dove."



A. Leah Underhill.

FINALE.

This volume has lengthened itself out much beyond the author's intention, and it is more than time to close it with the word which, in human life, is rarely uttered without some tone of pain in the trembling voice. It is only as I write it that I myself realize all there has been of nearness and of feeling, constituting a link of personal relation and sympathy between writer and reader; at least on her humble side. It seems as though, throughout the double process, reciprocal in its nature, we have come, by a sort of Spiritual communion, to know each other as friends—speaking for myself, I had almost said of loving friends.

But “finale” is a less melancholy word to the Spiritualist than it is to those who are less penetrated with his knowledge that what men mistakenly shrink from as “death” is but the beginning of higher and happier life, developed in re-birth, like that which gives its bright wings to what was the creeping worm.

And now, in thus gratefully taking leave of the readers who may have accompanied me, hand in hand, through pages of which every one has proceeded from my very heart and soul, I think I may also ask them to accompany me one single step further, in the following, which was once, letter by letter, dictated through me by Spirits at a circle in New York.

I give it now as copied from the By-Laws of Circle No. 1.

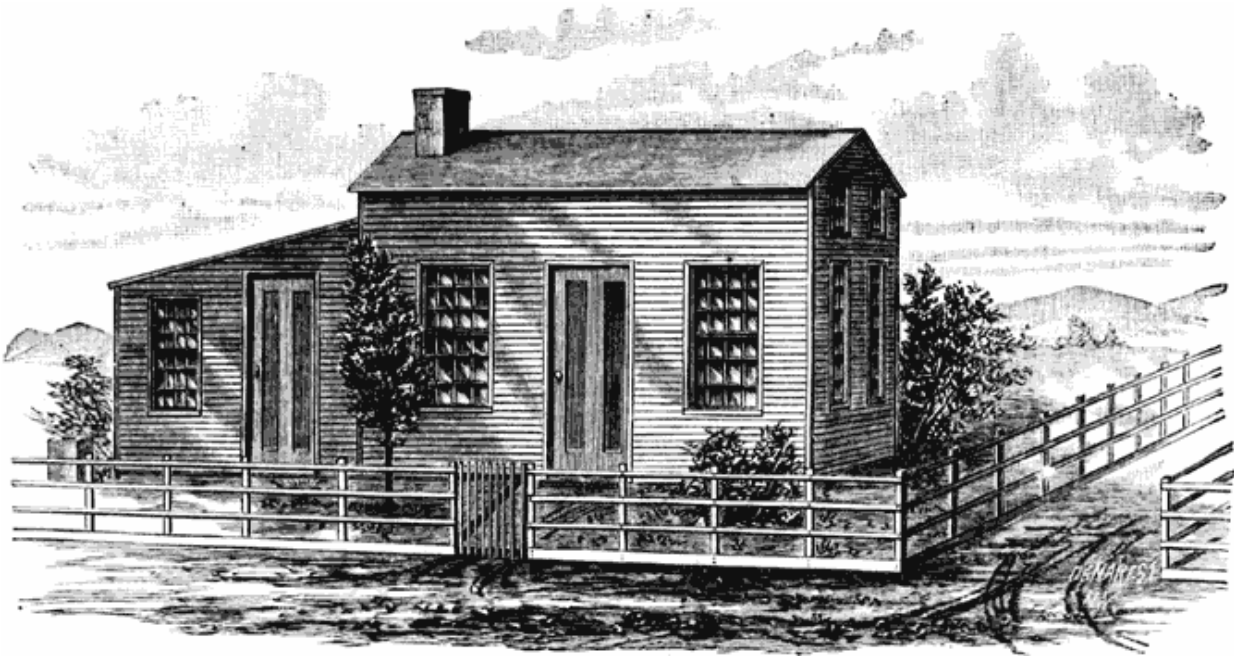
PRAYER.

“Almighty and most merciful Father, who hast created us in thy wisdom, and sustained us by thy love, look down with compassion upon thy children here assembled, and assist us, we beseech thee, in our search after Thy truth.

“Roll from our minds the clouds of error, ignorance, and superstition, that the light of Thy wisdom may shine upon us, cheering our hearts, enlightening our understandings, and rendering bright our pathway to Thy holy mansions, eternal in the heavens.

“Suffer Thy holy Spirits to minister unto us, as our guardians and guides, to lead us from darkness to light, and place us on the plane of everlasting progression.

“Drive far from us the darkness of our own errors and the mischiefs of our evil imaginings, and endue us with wisdom to receive and to know Thy truth. Teach us to seek knowledge with a single eye to our advancement and Thy glory, and defend us from all false doctrine. Enable us to know and to feel Thy love, and that, through Thy ministering Spirits, it is shielding us by day and watching over us by night, so that when we take our departure from this sphere, we may realize that the love of the Lord is the feast of the soul.”



THE HOUSE AT HYDESVILLE.

Now (by the act of its wealthy and respected owner, Artemas W. Hyde, Esq.), bearing the inscription,
“Here Spiritualism Originated, in 1848.”

Transcriber’s Note

The text in the two pages of sheet music, one for organ and one for piano, has been added to the rest of the song on the following page, for the

convenience of readers who cannot see the illustrations. Also, transcriptions of the hand-written letters have been added.

Clicking on the image of a handwritten page will lead to an image in higher resolution. Clicking or pointing on the Greek sentence will show the transliteration.

Illustrations have been moved slightly for reader convenience. Footnotes have been moved to the end of the chapters.

Anomalies and inconsistencies in the original have been preserved, for instance: the name of one of the Fox Sisters, Catherine, was spelled in many different ways: Cathie, Kate, Katy, etc.

Errors in punctuation were silently corrected. Also the following corrections were made, on page

69 “preivous” changed to “previous” (except by previous arrangement.)

74 “paternal” changed to “maternal” (Her maternal grandfather was French)

269 “became” changed to “become” (having become open and)

278 “betwen” changed to “between” (sobbing between the children)

401 “apppendage” changed to “appendage” (lost that important appendage)

422 “stea's” changed to “steals” (that steals upon my frame).

I love this little
boy. God bless
his name

I B 7,

Dear boy

Written by the infant boy
of Mr Jencken on the

11 March 1874. aged 5 months
18 days

Mr Jencken & Mrs Jencken
nurse present.

The writing on the other
leaf was written by our
infant child, aged 5 months
& 18 days. in our presence, in
a clear light, the pencil
having been placed in the baby's
right hand by an invisible
agency.

London 11 March 1874.

H. D. Jencken
R. D. Jencken.

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My dear Mr. & Mrs. Matherhill -

Can you come
and take tea with us
to-morrow evening? I do hope
so. I want you socially - not
spiritually. Mr. Chase Johnson
and Mr. Owen will be here,
and both of them hope to
meet you. Tea at six
o'clock. Our number is
52 East 87th St. near the
Fourth Ave.

Hoping to see you
I am most truly yours.

Alice Perry.

Sincerely,

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My dear Mr. Melshill -

Can you and Mr
Melshill. dine here with
us tomorrow evening?

Half past six is our hour.

You will meet Mr. Davis
of Washington, and prob-
ably Mr. Greeley.

Hoping to see you

I am very truly yours,

Alice Cary.

52 East 20th St.

Reston, Va.

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March 30. '58

Dear Leak

I have a gathering
of Spiritualists at my house
on the first Monday Evening
of every month. The first
one will be next Monday
April 5th Will you come?
You will meet many old
friends

Yours J. W. Edwards

159 Livingston Avenue
Between 31st & 32^d Street

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New-York  Tribune.

New York, Dec 4 1876

My Friend:

I thank you for
your note just received,
I will try to call on
you soon, but I am
very busy

I have a letter
from my mother today.
They are at Avonboro,
near Providence in
the south-west corner
of France. Mrs. Greeley
cannot walk a step, be-
ing a fearful sufferer
from Rheumatism, but
her nerves are better.
The girls are both well
and well. I may try
to find you next Sunday.
Yours, Grace Greeley.
Mrs. L. Underbill

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THE HAUNTED GROUND.

Arr. by J. JAY WATSON.

Moderato.

1. Yes, it is haunted, this
2. Have I not, under these

ORGAN. *Retardando.*

The first system of music features a vocal line in treble clef and an organ accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked 'Moderato.' The organ part begins with a series of chords and then transitions to a slower 'Retardando' section.

qui - et scene, Fair as it looks, and all soft - ly green;
whisp'ring leaves, Wo - ven such dreams as the young heart weaves?

The second system continues the vocal line and organ accompaniment. The organ part consists of chords and arpeggiated figures.

Yet fear thou not, for the spell is thrown, And the might of the shadow 's on
Shadows yet un - to which life seem'd bound, And is it not—is it not

crescendo.

The third system continues the vocal line and organ accompaniment. The organ part features a 'crescendo' marking, indicating an increase in volume.

me a - lone.
haunted ground?

Retardando. *Retardando.*

The fourth system concludes the piece. The vocal line ends with a final note, and the organ accompaniment features a 'Retardando' marking, indicating a final slowing down.

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THE HAUNTED GROUND.

Arr. by J. JAY WATSON.

Moderato.

1. Yes, it is haunted, this
2. Have I not, under these

PIANO. *Retardando.*

qui - et scene, Fair as it looks, and all soft - ly green;
whisp'ring leaves, Wo - ven such dreams as the young heart weaves?

Yet fear thou not, for the spell is thrown, And the might of the shadow 's on
Shadows yet un - to which life seem'd bound, And is it not—is it not

me a - lone.
haunted ground?

Retardando. *Retardando.*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a song titled "The Haunted Ground," arranged by J. Jay Watson. The score is written in 6/8 time and consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Moderato" and the dynamics are "PIANO." The piano part features a prominent triplet pattern in the left hand, which is marked "Retardando" in several places. The lyrics are: "1. Yes, it is haunted, this / 2. Have I not, under these quiet scene, Fair as it looks, and all soft - ly green; / whisp'ring leaves, Wo - ven such dreams as the young heart weaves? / Yet fear thou not, for the spell is thrown, And the might of the shadow 's on / Shadows yet un - to which life seem'd bound, And is it not—is it not me a - lone. / haunted ground?" The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

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