

THE
DEBATABLE LAND

BETWEEN
THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT

WITH ILLUSTRATIVE NARRATIONS

BY
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[1801-1877]

Author of "FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD,"

Occurrences which, according to received opinions, ought not to happen,
are the facts which serve as clues to new discoveries."

—Sir JOHN HERSCHEL.

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PREFACE.

"In Scripture we are perpetually reminded that the laws of the spiritual world are in the highest sense laws of Nature, whose obligation, operation, and effect are all in the constitution and course of things."—ARGYLL.

ONE of the best known and most brilliant among the triumphs of astronomical science was the prediction, in advance of actual discovery, of the existence and, approximately, of the place in the heavens, of a planet belonging to our solar system and revolving outside of Uranus.

Certain data had long been known to astronomers: as that planets, if subject to the sun's attraction only, would revolve in ellipses; but that, being subject also, in a feeble but appreciable degree, to the attraction of each other, this minor influence causes them to deviate from their true elliptic paths; and that these perturbations, as they are called, are calculable, so that each planet's exact place on any given day, past or future, can be ascertained.

Again, though Uranus was discovered as late as 1781, this planet had been seen, mistaken for a fixed star which afterward disappeared, and its place registered as such, as early as 1690; and it had been so noted, at intervals, by several observers throughout the eighteenth century.

It was also admitted that discrepancies existed between the observed places thus ascertained to have been occupied by Uranus, and the places which, it seemed, that planet ought to have occupied, all known perturbing influences being calculated; and when, after actual discovery, its tables were accurately kept for a series of years, it was further ascertained that this discrepancy between the tabular

and the observed positions of the planet gradually increased up to the year 1822; then became stationary; then began to decrease. This indicated the permanent existence of an occult disturbing cause. That cause might be a planet exterior to Uranus.

With these data and assuming certain probable postulates as to the orbit and the mean distance from the sun of the supposed perturbing planet—after profound investigations exhausting the resources of analogy—a young Parisian observer* wrote to one of the principal astronomers of the Berlin Observatory, telling him where the required planet ought to be, and asking him to look for it. It was found that very night; and at less than two diameters of the moon's disk from the indicated spot.

If some LE VERREIER of Spiritual Science had taken note, twenty-five years ago, of certain perturbing agencies of which the effects were visible throughout the religious world, he might have made a prediction more important than that of the French astronomer.

For even then it could have been discerned—what, however, is much more evident to-day—that an old belief was about to disappear from civilized society; a change which brings momentous rebuts in its train.

This change is from belief in the exceptional and the miraculous to a settled conviction that it does not enter into God's economy, as manifested in His works, to operate here except mediately, through the instrumentality of natural laws; or to suspend or change these laws on special occasions; or, as men do, to make temporary laws for a certain age of the world and discontinue these throughout succeeding generations. In other words, the civilized

* Le Verrier. Mr. J. C. Adams, of the University of Cambridge, without knowing what the other was about, had engaged in a similar investigation and obtained a similar result, except that the spot indicated by him was nearly five lunar diameters distant from the true one. Dr. Galle, of Berlin, to whom Le Verrier wrote, received the letter on the 23d of November, 1846; and during the night of the 23d-24th November, he, aided by Encke, discovered Neptune.

world is gradually settling clown to the assurance that natural law is universal, invariable, persistent.

The advent of this change conceded, a thoughtful observer, endowed with proleptic faculty, might have foreshadowed some of its consequents.

If natural law be invariable, then either the wonderful works ascribed by the evangelists to Christ and his disciples were not performed, or else they were not miracles.

If they were not performed, then Christ, assuming to perform them, lent himself, as Renan and others have alleged, to deception. This theory disparages his person and discredits his teachings.

But if they were performed under natural law, and if natural laws endure from generation to generation, then, inasmuch as the same laws under which these signs and wonders occurred must exist still, we may expect somewhat similar phenomena at any time.

But an acute observer, looking over the whole ground, might have detected more than this.

He would have found two antagonistic schools of religious opinion; the one basing spiritual truth on the miraculous and the infallible, chiefly represented in a Church of vast power, fifteen hundred years old, which has held her own against bold and active adversaries, and even increased in the relative as well as the actual number of her adherents for the last three hundred years: the other, dating back three hundred and fifty years only, affiliating more or less with the spirit of the age, and so placing herself in the line of progress; yet with less imposing antecedents, with fewer adherents, and, alas! with adherents weakened in influence by a large admixture of Indifferents, and still more weakened by intestine dissensions on questions of vital moment; even on the religious shibboleth of the day—the question of uniform rule, or miracle; many of this latter Church still holding to the opinion that to abandon the doctrine of the Miraculous is to deny the works of Christ

Apparently a very unequal contest—the outlook quite discouraging! Our spiritual Le Verrier might at first so regard it, just as his namesake may have felt discouraged when he first confronted the difficulty of predicting where an unknown world could be found.

Yet if our observer had abiding faith in the ultimate prevalence alike of Christianity and of the doctrine of natural law, he might, in casting about for a way out of difficulty, have come upon a practical solution.

History would inform him that the works of Christ and his disciples, mistaken by the Jews for miracles, effectively arrested the attention of a semi-barbarous age, incapable of appreciating the intrinsic value and moral beauty of the doctrines taught. And analogy might suggest to him that if phenomena more or less resembling these could be witnessed at the present day, and if they were not weighted down by claims to be miraculous, they might produce on modern indifference a somewhat similar impression. Then, if he had faith that God, who has bestowed to overflowing the means to supply our physical wants, would, in His own good time, provide also for our spiritual needs—it might occur to him that the appearance, under our eyes, of powers and gifts more or less similar to those of apostolic times, was not unlikely to be the means employed. And, if he was a Christian, this surmise would be confirmed by reading that Jesus, himself exercising these powers and gifts, promised to his followers after his death similar faculties;* evidently not regarding them as exclusively his, or as restricted to the age he lived in.

Guided by such premises as these, our supposed observer of twenty-five years since—though living at a time when the terms "medium" and "manifestations" (in their modern sense) had not yet come up—*might have predicted the speedy appearance and recognition among us of SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA*, resembling those which

* John xiv. 12.

attended Christ's ministry and the Apostles' labors. As Le Verrier, guided by positive data and credible postulates, wrote, in 1846, to Dr. Galle, telling him what *ought* to be found in the heavens; so might a far-sighted Christian observer have written to a friend, in the same year, declaring what *ought* soon to be witnessed on earth.

The occurrence among us of spiritual phenomena under law not only tends to reconcile Scripture and sound philosophy; not only helps to attest the doctrine of the universal reign of law; not only explains and confirms the general accuracy of the gospel narratives; but it does much more than this. It supplies to a struggling religious minority, greatly in want of aid, the means of bringing to light, even before unbelievers in Scripture, the great truth of immortality; and it furnishes to that same minority, contending against greatly superior numbers, other powerful argumentative weapons urgently needed in the strife.

Less cogent considerations than these would suffice in proof that the subject treated of in this volume is of unspeakable importance in the interests alike of science and of Christianity.

In the following pages I seek to show that Religion, such as Christ taught, though sure to prevail in the end, is yet, for the time, hard pressed; on one hand by the hosts enlisted under the banner of Infallibility, on the other by the vigorous pioneers of Science: and that in this strait experimental evidence of the existence of modern spiritual phenomena, if it can be had, would assist her beyond measure. I seek to show, also, that if we but observe as dispassionately as the Berlin astronomer did, we shall obtain, as to the reality and the true character of these phenomena, proof as Conclusive as that which demonstrated the existence of our latest found planet.

Twelve years ago I endeavored to aid in clearing the way. As Uranus had occasionally been seen, but not recognized as a planet

for a century, so had spiritual phenomena been Observed and noted from time to time in the past, yet not then taken for what they really were—occurrences under law. Regarding them in this light, I brought what seemed the best authenticated among them to public notice.*

In the present work, partly historical though chiefly filled with detached narratives in way of illustration, I could not well avoid touching incidentally on certain doctrines which seem to me less beneficial than popular. If I have not succeeded—as who fully succeeds?—in dealing candidly and dispassionately with contending creeds, it has not been for lack of earnest endeavor.

I was tempted into the field which I here occupy chiefly by a profound conviction *that it affords phenomenal proof of a life to come*. But phenomenal proof is far more convincing than historical evidence. Had the electric telegraph been invented and employed for a brief period two thousand years ago, and had telegraphy then become one of the lost arts, the old records of its temporary triumph, how well attested soever, if unsupported by modern example, would have created but feeble belief to-day.

Such reflections outweighed the reluctance one feels in bringing forward what has lain for a time under the world's taboo. Nor am I over-sanguine, nor especially desirous, of speedy result. New ideas, how true soever, are seldom respectable, in the worldly sense of the term. Like self-made men they win their way to distinction—as it is best they should—but slowly, by their own merits.

The reader will find some repetition in this volume. In discussing a subject with which the public mind has little familiarity it is difficult to avoid this; and, in such a discussion, a certain amount of iteration has its use.

* In a work published January, 1860 (*Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*), I traced back the occasional appearance of spontaneous spiritual phenomena for two hundred years, supplying many examples.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	5
INDEX	17
PREFATORY ADDRESS TO THE PROTESTANT CLERGY.	
SECTION 1. STATEMENT OF SUBJECT	23
Position of Clergy.—Every age has its needs.—A stationary policy impracticable.—Problems proposed for solution.	
SECTION 2. SUCCESSES AND REVERSES OF EARLY PROTESTANTISM	26
Conquests of Protestantism in forty years.—Most of Europe lost to the Pope.—The outlook in 1568.—The reaction during eighty years thereafter.—Expatriation of Moriscos and its effects.—Roman Catholic gains in England: in the United States.—How explain this?	
SECTION 3. INADEQUATE CAUSES SUGGESTING THEMSELVES	33
The Catholic reformation.—Loyola.—Persecution and the sword insufficient explanations.—Sceptical revolution of the eighteenth and counter-revolution of nineteenth centuries.	
SECTION 4. HOW EXPLAIN THE FOREGOING EPISODES?	39
Roman Catholic doctrines.—Scientific research restricted.—Dogma of Infallibility.—Can there be religious progress?—Triumphs of Science.—Grand truth in Protestantism.	
SECTION 5. THE SIN AT MARBURG AND AT GENEVA	49
Luther and Zwingli at Marburg.—Luther's radical error.—Calvin's sin.	
SECTION 6. THE FORTUNES AND THE FATE OF SERVETUS	53
Servetus and OEcopolampadius.—Servetus in Paris, in Vienne, and in Geneva.—His great work.—Escapes from Vienne, is tried for blasphemy and condemned to be burned alive.—Calvin's share in his death confessed and applauded.—Could such men conquer?	
SECTION 7. RELIGIOUS TOLERATION THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO	70
Castalio.—Socinus.—Zwingli.—Virtually no toleration in the sixteenth century.	
SECTION 8. SALIENT DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMERS	71
Their zeal.—St. Augustine's influence.—The "Institutes." Calvin's ideas on human depravity, origin of evil, predestination, and works.—Incredible lengths to which he went.—Contrasted with Luther—Luther on vicarious atonement, and faith without works.—Sabbath and Sunday in Augsburg Confession.—Diderot and D'Alembert.—Human will a beast of burden?	

	PAGE
SECTION 9. WHAT LESSON DOES THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION TEACH?	90
How long shall we wait?—Foundation of popular theology—Freer opinions of Luther.	
SECTION 10. SPIRIT AND TEACHINGS OF CHRISTIANITY COMPARED WITH THOSE OF CALVINISTIC AND LUTHERAN THEOLOGY	97
Master-principle of Christianity.—Profanations of Christian name.—Calvinism and Lutheranism and Christianity compared.—Who inherit Heaven?—Fascination of Calvins Theology.	
SECTION 11. EFFECT ON MORALITY OF CERTAIN FAVORITE DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMERS	110
All human actions bear fruit.—Effect inseparable from cause.—The scape-goat.—Mercy, not sacrifice.—Belief neither crime nor virtue.—Christ before Paul.—We must not preach cowardice.—True humility.—Overmuch introspection.—Power of faith and love.—Hell.	
SECTION 12. CORROBORATION FROM HISTORY	126
Luther's despondency.—Iron rule in Geneva,—Comedy and Tragedy.—The Scottish kirk.—Puritans courageous and cruel.—Quakers.—Roger Williams.—Laws to hang children.—World's debt to the Reformers.	
SECTION 13. CHRISTIANITY, SHORN OF PARASITIC CREEDS, A, PROGRESSIVE SCIENCE	141
Infallibility arrests progress.—Grammatolatry the worst idolatry.—Safer without doctrine of plenary inspiration.—Miracles or law?—Temple and Baden Powell.—Conscience supreme.	
SECTION 14. SPIRITUALISM NECESSARY TO CONFIRM THE TRUTHS, AND ASSURE THE PROGRESS, OF CHRISTIANITY	154
Renan's leadership.—Two variant theories.—The Indifferents.—Deism unsatisfactory.—Did spiritual gifts cease?—Christ never taught the miraculous, nor a finality.—Ecclesiastical "miracles" discredited.—Inspiration the origin of all religions.—Accordance of Spiritualism with Christianity.—The doctrines of Spiritualism.—It teaches no speculative divinity.—It denounces no religion.—Proof of immortality imperatively needed.—Sacred duty of investigation.	

BOOK I.

TOUCHING COMMUNICATION OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE TO MEN.

CHAPTER I.

OF HUMAN INFALLIBILITY	183
------------------------	-----

Subject proposed.—The great problem.—Direct revelation?—

CONTENTS.

xiii

PAGE

Theory of evil.—The tide against infallibility.—Church of Rome's stronghold.—Translations and canon of Scripture.—King James' instructions.—Proof of immortality indispensable.

CHAPTER II.

OF MEDIATE SPIRITUAL REVEALINGS 191

Infallibility, Scepticism, and a third element.—Why came spiritualism so late?—Belief in devil.—Possession.—Witchcraft.—Christ's treatment of these influences.—The Salem tragedy.—No infallible teachings.—A bishop's blunder.—Demoniac theory untenable—Phases of belief in Christendom.—Secularism.—A lost opportunity.—Movements in Anglican Church—Quakerism and Swedenborgianism: their truths, errors, and failure.—Spiritualism: its growth, successes, and the number of its adherents.—Temporary schism—How Spiritualism should be studied.—Hints and warnings.

CHAPTER III.

OF INSPIRATION 241

This subject in bad hands.—What inspiration is.—The source of all religions.—Two theories: Socrates sets forth one, and Cicero the other.—Demon of Socrates.—Socrates before his judges.—A French magnetizer alarmed.—Mental powers during somnambulism.—An illogical Prince.—Homer and Shakspeare: literary inspiration.—Raphael: artistic inspiration.—Beethoven and Mozart: musical inspiration.—The Titanic steps of the world.—Darwin's theory.—Man's first appearance.—Unprecedented step in Spiritual progress—Scepticism at fault.—The anointed.—What man may be.—Whence Christ's preeminence?—Spiritual communication touching His birth.—His powers conditional.—Danger of putting trust in incidentals.—How interpret "the Son of God"?—Christ's promise fulfilled.

CHAPTER IV.

DIFFICULTIES AND PREJUDICES 277

Inexperienced pioneers.—Physical and Spiritual science need differing modes of treatment.—An infant hypothesis.

BOOK II.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHENOMENA.

CHAPTER I.

THEIR COMING USUALLY UNEXPECTED 281

At the Russian Minister's.—The strange answer: what thinking entity made it?—Changed tenor of author's life.—A domestic invasion.—Apparition soon after death.—Midnight excursion to California by influence.—Why a

	PAGE
villa was sold at a loss.—A midnight visitor.—Apparition of a repentant domestic.—Repentance among "spirits in prison."	

CHAPTER II.

ANIMALS, PERCEIVING SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA	302
---	-----

What befell a Swiss officer.—The dog, cat, and canary-bird: how affected.—What preceded a child's death.—The dog in the Wolfridge wood: its life-long terror.

CHAPTER III.

UNIVERSALITY OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS	310
--	-----

Is Spiritualism a superstitious epidemic?—Bell-ringing in England: a cluster of narratives.—Satan in the bells.—Captain Marryat and the Lady of Burnham Green.—The House of Mystery.—Endemical disturbances throughout a hundred years.—Knock and it shall be opened.

CHAPTER IV.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA SOMETIMES RESULT IN SEEMING TRIFLES	336
---	-----

The butler's ghost: Lord Erskine's testimony.—A fashionable lady's "dog-ears and folds."—A mere trifle predicted.

BOOK III.

PHYSICAL
MANIFESTATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPIRIT-RAP	342
----------------	-----

With Leah and Kate Fox.—The spirit-rap tested throughout a house; on water; in trees; on a ledge of sea-shore rock.—Seeing the raps.—Touched by the agency which spirit-raps.—A phosphorescent light raps on a door.—Spirit-hands melt away.—Poundings by a homicide.—Tremendous knockings: house shaken.—Visit to a haunted house.—Overpowering clatter.—Effect of sudden light.

CHAPTER II.

MOVING PONDERABLE BODIES BY OCCULT AGENCY	361
---	-----

Crucial test: Robert Chambers present.—Table, weighing one hundred and twenty pounds, suspended in air.—Table, flung into the air, rotates.—Terrible power shown.

CHAPTER III.

DIRECT SPIRIT WRITING	399
-----------------------	-----

Baron de Guldenstubbe: his experiences in direct writing.—Strangely suggestive!—My own experiences.—Seeing an illuminated hand write.—Specimens of writing.—Can the senses be trusted?—Direct writing by gas-light.—Specimen.

CONTENTS.

XV

PAGE

Experiences of Mr. Livermore and of Mrs. John Davis.—Writing on human hand and arm—Letters appear and fade under author's eyes.

CHAPTER IV.

SPIRIT TOUCHES 391

In Naples with Mr. Home.—Prince Luigis experience.—Spirit-touches by gas-light in New York.—The difficulties of disbelief.

BOOK IV.

IDENTITY OF SPIRITS.

CHAPTER I.

STUBBORN FACTS CONNECTING TWO WORLDS 396

A Spirit arranges its worldly affairs.—Sister Elizabeth and the family register.—The grandmother's promise and apparition.

CHAPTER II.

A CASE OF IDENTITY THREE HUNDRED YEARS OLD 409

Human love bridges the gulf: so may philanthropy.—Earth-binding influences.—The spinet.—N. G. Bach's dream; his hand writes.—The parchment.—Baltazarini.—Henry III.; song composed by him.—Marie de Cleves.—M. Bach's certificate.

CHAPTER III.

A BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT MANIFESTING HERSELF 434

An old promise kept.—Proof of identity from 500 miles off.—Apparition of the betrothed.—Typical test.—Portrait with emblem.—Deductions.

BOOK V.

THE CROWNING PROOF OF IMMORTALITY.

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT FAITH-ARTICLE, OF THE FIRST CENTURY 451

Early Christian faith based on Christ's apparition.—Study of apparitions important.

CHAPTER II.

APPARITIONS SHOWING THEMSELVES SPONTANEOUSLY 455

False ideas touching ghosts, very injurious.—Appearance soon after death.

CHAPTER III.

MY OWN EXPERIENCE TOUCHING APPARITIONS 459

Hour with Leah Fox.—An apparition seen, felt and heard.—A

PAGE

ghost speaks.—Interruption.—Spiritual sculpture.—Apparition in Boston.—Plan of locality.—Shining raiment.

CHAPTER IV.

A NEAR RELATIVE SHOWS HERSELF, THROUGHOUT FIVE YEARS, TO A SURVIVING FRIEND 482

Mr. Livermore's testimony.—The crucial test.—Figure reflected in mirror.—Exhibition of rare beauty.—Corroboration throughout years.—Figure throws shadow on wall.—Apparitions seen through three hundred sittings.—Spirit-flowers—Additional witnesses.—Mr. Livermore's letter to author.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT APPARITIONS ARE AND HOW FORMED 502

The spiritual body.—A temporary induement.—Spiritual sculpture.—An imperfect apparition completed.

BOOK VI.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS OF THE FIRST CENTURY
APPEARING IN OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

CURES BY SPIRITUAL AGENCY 510

Christ's mission.—Marquis de Guibert's hospital.—Cure through Leah Fox.—The instantaneous cure.—Insanity owed by spiritual influence: two examples.

CHAPTER II.

OTHER SPIRITUAL GIFTS 525

Gifts of prophecy, of discerning of spirits, of tongues, of working of "miracles," of seeing the hidden past, exemplified in our day.—The proleptic gift.

BOOK VII.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

CHAPTER I.

SUMMARY 530

Roman Catholic argument.—An alternative.—What should be discarded, and what retained.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT UNDERLIES CHRIST'S TEACHINGS, AS FOUNDATION-MOTIVE 537

When comes the Kingdom of Heaven?—The hunger and thirst.—Christ seeks to awaken the slumbering love of the Right.—His promise, on conditions—Questioning the unexplored.

INDEX.

	PAGE
Acts, human, all entail their appropriate results	112,113
Adventure, Midnight, in the Wolfridge Wood	306-309
Anglican Church makes advances to Greek Church	219
Animals have spiritual perceptions	302-309
Anointed, The	263
Apparition immediately after death	288, 456
Apparition in shining raiment	474
Apparition, Subjective, of the betrothed	440
Apparitions, Study of, important	454
Apparitions, My own experience touching	459-481
Apparition, an, seen, felt, and heard	462 463
Apparition in Boston: plan of rooms where seen	475
Apparitions in New York: seen throughout five years by Mr. Livermore	482-499
Apparitions, what they are, and how formed	502-508
Apparition, at first imperfect, afterward completed	508
Atonement, Vicarious, according to Luther	84
Augustine, St., his early life and vast influence	73
Bach, N. G., his dream, 415; writing by impression	418
Baltazarini, Henry III.'s favorite musician	429
Bealings bells	312-314
Belief neither crime nor virtue	117
Bell-ringing, unexplained, Cluster of narratives regarding	312-320
Bells, Satan in the, scares a bell-hanger	316
Bishop, A Catholic, his mistake	210
Burnham Green, The Lady of	323
Bums, Robert, his compassion for the devil	132
Butler, Apparition of a, seen by Lord Erskine	337
Calvin, his consistorial court and its tyranny	128-131
Calvin, his share in Servetus' death	61, 62, 68
Calvin, his doctrines	74-82
Calvinism and Christianity compared	102-105
Canon of Scripture	191, 192
Chambers, Robert, Test suggested by	362
Children, laws condemning them to death	131, 138, 139
Christ, his office, 267; his birth, 269; his powers conditional	271
Christ seeks to awaken the slumbering love of the Right	538, 539
Christ's teachings: what underlies them, as foundation-motive	536
Christ's promise touching spiritual gifts	197, 540
Christian morality, Master-principle underlying	98-100
Christianity, profanations of its name	100,101
Christianity, a progressive science	141

	PAGE
Christendom, Chief phases of religious belief in	214
Cicero, his psychical view of inspiration	249
Clergy, Position of	24
Compacts with devil: Christ did not believe in them	202, 203
the supreme interpreter	132, 153, 183
Creeds of Christendom: table of chief phases of belief	214
Crucial test touching an apparition	485
Cure, instantaneous	517
Cures by spiritual agency	510-524
Cures by magnetism in M. de Guibert's hospital	312
Cures of insanity by spiritual influence	523
D'Alembert, his scepticism and his benevolence	88
Darwin, his theory discloses no link between brute and man	262, 263
Davis, Mrs. John, example of spirit-writing	385
Decree, a quaint old one, indorsing Calvin's "Institutes"	61
Deism, Simple, ungenial and unsatisfactory	159, 160
Demoiac theory unphilosophical and untenable	212-214
Depravity, Original, Calvin's ideas on	75-77
Devil, Effect of belief in	199, 210, 211
Diderot, his opinions; imprisoned for teaching them	88
Disturbances, Endemical, throughout one hundred years	326-332
Doctrines of the Reformers	70-89
Doctrines to be discarded	534
Doctrines to be retained	535
Dog under the window, 305; in the Wolfridge Wood	306
Domestic invasion, The	287
Erskine, Lord, sees apparition of his father's butler	337
Evil, Glimpse of a theory of	187
Evil in man cannot be good in God	119
Faith, Rational, its power for good	124
Faith-article, Great, of first century	451-454
Fashionable lady's logic touching apparitions	338
Flowers, Spiritual, appear and disappear	493, 454
Foster, Charles, powerful test-medium	386-390, 413
Fox, Leah and Kate, 343; Leah, An eventful hour with	460
Fox, Kate, sittings with her,	354, 357, 375;
apparitions seen through her mediumship, during five years	482-499
Franklin, Benjamin, his eidolon appears	491-493, 496
Ghost, A, speaks	468
Gifts, Spiritual, have not ceased, 161; promised by Christ,	163;
desirable, 164; appear in patristic, times	166
Gift of tongues in 1830	178
Good deeds to the poor and helpless, service to God	107
Grandmother's promise, 404; fulfilled	407
Greek Church	32 (note), 217-219
Guldenstubbe, Baron de, examples of spirit-writing	370-373
Hell, Theological idea of	126
Henry III., of France, last of the Valois	424

INDEX.

xix

	PAGE
Home, D. Dunglas, Sessions with	391
House-haunting, Character of evidence in proof of	331-334
House-haunting, Examples of	330-327, 357
House of Mystery	325
Humility, True basis of	122
Identity of Spirits, Numerous proofs of	396-450
Identity of Spirits, A case of, three hundred years old	409-433
Immortality, proof of it the great desideratum	179, 194, 452
Indifference as to religion; its great prevalence	158
Infallibility, Dogma of, 43; a dangerous popular error	207
Infallibility utterly untenable,	143-145;
no danger in dispensing with this doctrine	146,147
Inspiration, what it is, 212 origin of all religions	169,243
Inspiration of genius, 255 poetical, 256; musical	258
Insanity cured by spiritual influence	523, 524
Institutes, Calvin's	74
Intemperance, Startling statistical item concerning	110, 111
Intervention, Direct, of God does not happen	185
King James' instructions to translators of Bible	193
Labor-power: its vast increase since 1760	45
Lady of Burnham Green: midnight adventure	323
Law, universal and unchangeable, reign of	148-151
Light, suddenly struck, what spiritual phenomena it disclosed	358
Livermore, Mr., his testimony as to spirit-writing	384
Livermore, Mr., I his experience as to apparitions	482-499
Livermore, Mr., additional witnesses confirm his testimony	495
Livermore, Mr., his letter to author	500
Loyola: his character and influence	34
Luigi, Prince, of Naples, Anecdote of, 238; his experience	393
Luminous hand, seeing it write	375-377
Luther, at Worms, 48, 49; at Marburg, 50; his intolerance,	51 52
Luther, his doctrine of vicarious atonement	84-86
Luther, his ideas on charity and on works	85, 86
Luther, his free opinions, 94; rejects St. James	96
Lutheranism and Christianity compared	105
Macaulay, on religious progress	44, 142
Magnetizer, A French, his alarm	250-251
Maid and cook; the author's first experience in Spiritualism	282
Marburg:: meeting there between Luther and Zwingli	50
Marie de Cleves, ladie-love of Henry III., of France	427
Marryat, Florence, her testimony regarding apparitions	321
Marryat, Captain, his midnight adventure	323, 324
Materialism found to be cheerless on full trial	190
Mercy not sacrifice Christ's doctrine	116
Midnight visitor, A	293
Miracles, Opinions on	148
Miracles, Christ does not speak of them	162
Miracles, Ecclesiastical, discredited by Protestants	160,167

INDEX.

	PAGE
Morality, effect of certain orthodox doctrines on	110
Morgan, Lady, her "dog-ears-and-folds" explanation of the cause of alleged apparitions	338
Moriscoes, expatriation of	31
Moving ponderable bodies by occult agency	361-367
Music, old, found by N. G. Bach, fac-simile of	416
Mystery, The house of	325
Numbers, comparative, of Protestants and Catholics	31-33
Number of Spiritualists	233-235
Number of Quakers, 223; of Swedenborgians	228
Opportunity, A golden, lost by Catholic Church	217
Orthodox theology founded on two of Paul's epistles	92, 93
Parables of Christ versus doctrines of Reformers	106, 107
Paralysis of motor nerve suddenly cured	513
Parchment, Old, autograph of Henry III.; fac-simile of	420
Persecution of early Christians: its effect	36
Pope and Austrian government at issue	218
Possession, in Jesus' day	200
Predestination: Calvin's idea of	77
Problem, The great	184
Proleptic, or prophetic gift	526
Protestants applaud Calvin's part in Servetus' death	69
Protestantism: its successes, 27; its reverses	30
Protestantism, Grand truth in	48
Public opinion opposed to doctrine of the infallible	189
Puritans, Calvinism among, 134; their laws	135, 138, 139
Quakers, their persecution by Puritans	135-137
Quakers, their original doctrines, their mistakes, their failure	221-224
Questioning the unexplored	542
Rappings, spiritual, see Spirit-rap	342-360
Reformers, Doctrines of	70-89
Reformers, the world's debt to them	140
Renan, whither he leads us, 155; his Christianity	533
Repentance in the next world, Example of	299
Repentance, mode of exit for "spirits in prison"	300
Repentant housekeeper, The	297
hunger and thirst after, the	537
Rochester Knockings, see Spirit-rap	342
Roman Catholic argument	531
Roman Catholicism: its gains in England, 32; in America	33
Roman Catholicism: its reformation, 34; its doctrines	40-43
Sabbath and Lord's Day, according to Augsburg Confession	86, 87
Salem witchcraft: its origin and its frightful effects	206, 207
Scape-goat, The Jewish, involves a false principle	115
Scepticism in eighteenth century	38
Science and Spiritualism need differing modes of treatment.	278, 279

INDEX.

xxi

	PAGE
Scientific research restricted by Church of Rome	42
Scientific tests of spiritual phenomena recently obtained in London	278, 279
Scottish Kirk: its tyranny	132, 133
Secularism gaining ground, 215; especially in England	216
Senses, Human, are they untrustworthy?	380
Servetus, 53; his creed, 54; trial and death	64-68
Sister Elizabeth: example of "discerning of spirits"	401
Socrates, his demon, 246; his opinions on Spiritualism	244-248
Somnambule increase of intelligence	252, 253
"Son of God," True interpretation of	274, 275
Song, Original, composed by Henry III. of France	422, 423
Southey's opinion touching the use of spiritual phenomena	333
Spinet, of Baltazarini; engraving of	413
Spirit arranging its earthly affairs	397-400
Spirit-hands melting away, note	351, 352
Spirit-raps, the proofs of	342-360
Spirit-raps throughout an entire house, 344; on the water, in trees, 315; on a sea-shore ledge of rock	345; 346, 347
Spirit-raps, seeing them made by a luminous hammer	348-351
Spirit-raps, in phase of violent poundings	353-859
Spirit-touches, examples of, 391-395; by gas-light	395
Spirit-writing, fac-similes of	372, 373, 378, 383
Spirit-writing, Direct, various examples	369-389
Spirit-writing on human arm and hand, Examples	386-390
Spiritual aid needed	25
Spiritual body, The	503
Spiritual gifts of our own time	523-528
Spiritual phenomena, Southey's opinion as to their use	333
Spiritual phenomena sometimes result in trifles	336-341
Spiritual phenomena, their universality	310-335
Spiritual sculpture, 472; example of	505
Spiritualism, Modern, was it a superstitious epidemic?	311
Spiritualism, summary of its doctrines	171-175
Spiritualism accords with Christianity	170
Spiritualism denounces no religion	177
Spiritualism, why came it so late?	198
Spiritualism, dangers of, when unworthily prosecuted	208, 209
Spiritualism, number of its adherents	233-235
Spiritualism, how it should be studied	237-240
Spiritualism, an unprecedented step in	264
Spiritualism, The author's first experience in	282-286
Spiritualism regarded as a domestic invasion	287
Spiritualism, Modern, a necessary aid to Christianity	154-170
Spiritualists, Temporary schism among	235
State of man here determines his state hereafter	114, 172, 173
Statement of subject	183
Stationary policy impracticable	26
Statistics of Protestantism and Catholicism	31-33
Swedenborgianism, its grand truths,	226;
its grave errors, and consequent failure	228-232
Swiss officer, what befell him	302
Sword, The, does not explain Catholic successes	37

	PAGE
Table, A heavy, suspended in the air, without contact	363, 364
Table, A, is flung into the air and rotates	365-367
Terrible power exhibited in a private parlor	366
Tests, typical and literal	443
Titanic steps of the world	260, 261
Toleration unknown in sixteenth century	70, 71
Trance-speaking, Involuntary, example of	291, 293
Translations of Scripture	101
Trifle, A, predicted	340
Truth, A grand, in Protestantism	48
Violet, an English lady: episode regarding her,	434-450;
her portrait obtained, 448; her apparition	474
Wesley disturbances: a lesson they teach	212
Westphalian treaties	30
What befell a Swiss officer	302
Why a villa was sold at a loss	295
Witchcraft caused by belief in devil, 201; its horrors, 202; in Salem	206, 207
Writing, Spirit, direct, 369; on human arm and hand	386, 390

BOOK II.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHENOMENA.

Facts like these, with which the world is filled, embarrass strong minds more than they are willing to acknowledge."—BAYLE.

CHAPTER I.

THEIR COMING USUALLY UNEXPECTED.

OUR eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face, until the time arrives when the mind is ripened: then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not is like a dream."—EMERSON.

WHEN I recall what happened to me in March, 1856, I am reminded of Emerson's suggestive words.

Up to that time I had been living, as so many millions live, in vague unbelief that there are, in this world, any spiritual agencies cognizable by the senses. I had barely heard of the

"Rochester Knockings," and had wondered what supreme absurdity would follow next.

I was then in Naples where, for two and a half preceding years, I had held the post of American Minister. The members of our diplomatic corps, living on pleasant and intimate terms, were in the habit of dropping informally into each other's apartments, for an hour or two in the evening. To this habit I am indebted for a strange experience which I shall entitle

THE MAID AND COOK.

On the twenty-fifth of March I passed the evening with the Russian Minister, Monsieur K——. Besides his family there were present the Chevalier de F——, Tuscan Minister, and his lady; together with several visitors from different parts of the world. During most of the evening we spoke English, the Tuscan Minister's wife being from England and another lady present from America.

Madame K——, a Parisian by birth and a lady of varied information, asked me, in the course of conversation, if I had ever heard of automatic writing. I confessed that I had not. Then she expressed her belief that some persons had the power of replying, in that way, to questions, the true answers to which were unknown to them.

"Pardon me," said Madame de F——; "I am very sure you would not say so unless you were quite convinced that you had proof sufficient: but I could not believe anything so wonderful, unless I witnessed it myself."

"Let us try, then," said Madame K——; and the proposal was eagerly assented to: each person sitting down, putting pencil to paper and awaiting the result. We were all unacquainted with Spiritualism and unbelievers in it.

Nothing, for some time: then one hand, that of a Mrs. M——, began to move, making irregular figures but no words or letters.

Then, at my suggestion that we should test the matter, Madame de F—— asked a question: "Who gave me these pins?"—pointing to three large gold-beaded pins that fastened her dress, and adding: "If Mrs. M—— can answer that, I shall believe."

For several minutes that lady's pencil remained motionless; then, very slowly, it executed a few flourishes, finishing by writing out, in a cramped and not very legible hand, several words, *the last two written backward*.*

Madame de F—— begged to look at the paper and gazed at it for some time, turning very pale.

"What is it?" some one asked eagerly.

"Magic, if there be such a thing," she replied. "It reads: '*The one that gives you a maid and cook.*'"

"How ridiculous!" exclaimed Mademoiselle K—: "it is no answer whatever to your question."

"You think not, Mademoiselle?" rejoined Madame de F——; "let me tell you the facts. These pins were given to me by my cousin Elizabeth, who lives in Florence. At my request she sent me, from that city, a lady's maid, who came into my service ten days since, and a cook who arrived day before yesterday."

The paper was passed from hand to hand, calling forth repeated expressions of astonishment, which were increased when some one suggested that the concluding portion of the flourishes which preceded the writing closely resembled a capital E; the initial letter of the donor's name.

In myself this incident, trifling if it seem, excited far more than astonishment. During several hours of silent reflection, that evening at home, there came over me the indescribable emotion that is felt when one first awakes to the possibility that there may be experimental proof of another life. Ere I slept I had registered in my heart a vow—since kept—not to rest till I had proved this possibility to be a probability or a certainty—or a delusion.

Accordingly next day I called on Madame de F——, who had carried off the sheet of paper containing a reply which had at first seemed so enigmatical, but which proved to be so singularly appropriate; and, on stating to her that I desired to preserve

* Let any one try to write even two such words backward, and he will discover the great difficulty of doing so. It should be added that Mrs. M—— was not only without experience in Spiritualism, but prejudiced against it.

it for record, she kindly ceded it to me. In reply to an inquiry on my part, she stated, in emphatic terms, her conviction that the circumstances alluded to in the mysterious writing were not—indeed, could not be known except to her own family. It was but a few weeks, she reminded me, since she herself arrived in Naples. Her cousin was unknown here, even by name; she herself had never mentioned her to any one in the city; much less alluded to the fact that the gold pins were her gift. But, in addition, she had never spoken to any one outside her family circle, about the servants who had recently arrived; or whence they came, or who sent them. And finally she stated that she had but just made the acquaintance of Mrs. M——, having only exchanged cards with her.

Intimately acquainted as I am with the circumstances of this case, to say nothing of the character and standing of the parties concerned, I am justified in asserting unqualifiedly that, whatever else the solution, collusion and deception are out of the question.

But, the facts accepted, how strange were the deductions! Restricting myself to commonly-received data, I found nothing that approached a satisfactory solution.

It was thus I reasoned the matter with myself. Had the reply to Madame de F——'s question been merely the

[illustration missing]

name of her cousin, the donor of the pins (Elizabeth), it would have been equally relevant but much less surprising. We should probably have ascribed it to chance. Or, as Madame de F—— was doubtless at that time, thinking of her cousin's name, we might have regarded it only as an example of a word thought of by one person, and unconsciously reflected (if that be the proper expression) from the mind of another; a phenomenon with which all vital magnetizers are familiar (even if they cannot explain it), and one of the reality of which Cuvier himself indicates the possibility.*

But the results I had obtained went much farther than this and were of a far more complicated character.

I inquired of Madame de F—— whether, at the time she put her question and was expecting a reply, she was thinking of the fact that her cousin had sent her two servants. She replied, that, very certainly, such a thought had not crossed her mind. Of course, if she had been asked who sent her the servants in question, she would readily have replied that her cousin had done so. But, in that case, the question would have called up the idea. As it was, the fact, though *within her knowledge*, was not *present to her mind*. If she herself had been required to answer her own question, she would doubtless have replied to it in a straightforward, simple manner, as: "My cousin Elizabeth;" or using some similar expression. We cannot imagine, that she would have gone out of her way to tell us that "it was the same person who had sent her a maid and a cook."

Then what thinking entity was it, which thus called up, out of the latent stores of Madame de F——'s memory, this dormant idea? What occult intelligence went out of its way to answer her question after this roundabout fashion? Who selected the unexpected form of reply?

* Anatomie Comparee, tome ii. p. 117. His admission is that, when two living beings are brought, under certain conditions, near each other, there exists sometimes "une communication quelconque qui s'etablit entre leurs systemes nerveux."

At first I scrupled about assuming that there was any external personality concerned. But a little reflection convinced me that if I dismissed that idea, I was shifting, not solving, the difficulty. For the question then recurred in another shape: What agency determined the special character of an answer thus indirect and far-fetched, yet strictly relevant and accurate?

And then (I went on to reflect) without assuming a personal entity, how are we to explain results that are never presented to us except as the mental operations of a sentient being; such as selection of appropriate facts from among many stored away in the memory, perception of the connection of these facts with a question which did not apparently refer to them, pertinent application of the selected facts to frame a truthful reply; nay, even an apparent intention, by giving to that reply an out-of-the-way and unlooked-for turn, to prove to us the presence of a reasoning and intelligent agent?

I was unable to answer these questions then; and, except on the spiritual hypothesis, I am unable, after fifteen years' experience, to offer any rational explanation to-day.

Probably most of those who assisted at the experiment I have recorded went away moved to simple wonder only; perplexed for the time, but ere a month had passed, forgetting in the passing excitement of some fresh novelty, both wonder and perplexity; or at most, perhaps, relating now and then, to incredulous listeners of a winter evening, that very odd coincidence about three gold pins and a maid and a cook.

To me its lessons are still as fresh as on the day I received them. They preceded, and induced, a course of study that eventually changed the whole feelings and tenor of my life.

Within the last twenty-five years multitudes, in this and in all other civilized countries, have been overtaken, as unexpectedly as I was, with evidence of the reality of spiritual phenomena. And, to hundreds of thousands among these, conviction has come in the quiet of the domestic circle; has not been

avowed to the world, and has not disturbed their relations with the churches they had been wont to frequent.

An illustration I here supply, out of many examples that Live come to my knowledge, one which is the more noteworthy because it exhibits various phases of spiritual intervention. I entitle it

A DOMESTIC INVASION.

In the year 1853 there lived, in the town of R——, Massachusetts, a family of the utmost respectability and in easy circumstances, whose name, though known to me, I am not at liberty here to give. Let us call them Mr. and Mrs. L——.

Mrs. L—— appears to have been one of a class of which I have already spoken as resembling Reichenbach's "sensitives," if not identical with them: a class which has furnished what are called "mediums," and what might appropriately be called "spiritual sensitives." She shared many of the peculiarities of that class; peculiarities which, in her case as in many others, seem to have been hereditary.*

Her grandmother, one morning, preparing to go out walking and turning round to leave her bed-chamber, suddenly perceived, standing before her, the exact counterpart of herself. At first she imagined it to be an impression from some mirror; but, having ascertained that it was not so and seeing the appearance gradually vanish, she became very much alarmed; the popular idea occurring to her that to see one's *double*, or wraith as the Scotch term it, portended death. She immediately sent for the preacher whose church she frequented, the Rev. Mr. Eaton, and consulted him on the subject. He inquired whether

* Out of 161 sensitives whose names are registered by Reichenbach, as among his odic subjects, 143 are from families marked by a similar peculiarity. Of these he found the faculty to have been inherited, in 28 cases from the father, in 50 from the mother, in 11 from both parents: and in 54 other cases it was shared by a brother or sister.—*Der Sensitive Mensch*, vol. ii. § 2062 to § 2666 (Stuttgart, 1854).

it was before or after mid-day that she had seen the apparition; and, learning that it was early in the forenoon, he assured her (whether from sincere conviction or merely to allay the extreme excitement in which he found her) that the augury was of long life, not of approaching dissolution. As it chanced, she lived after that to a good, old age.

Mrs. L——'s mother, Mrs. F——, was accompanied by knockings and other sounds in a house in Pearl street, Boston, at intervals as long as she resided there; namely, through a period of twelve years. Sometimes these sounds were audible to herself only; sometimes also to the other inmates of the house. Finally, they annoyed her husband so much, that he changed their residence.

Mrs. L—— herself, when about ten years of age (in the year 1830), had been witness to one of those phenomena that are never forgotten and produce a great influence on the opinions and feelings of a lifetime.

There was, at that time, residing in her mother's house, in the last stage of hopeless decline, a lady, named Mrs. Marshall, to whom Mrs. F——, from benevolent motives, had offered a temporary home.

Cecilia—that is Mrs. L——'s name—had been sitting up one evening a little later than usual, and, childlike, had lain down on the parlor sofa and dropped to sleep.

Awaking, after a time, she supposed it must be late; for the fire had burned low and the room was vacant. As she attempted to rise, she suddenly became aware that the figure of Mrs. Marshall, robed in white, was bending over her. "Oh, Mrs. Marshall," she exclaimed, "why did you come down for me? You will be sure to take cold." The figure smiled, made no reply, but, moving toward the door, signed to Cecilia to follow. She did so in considerable trepidation, which was increased when she perceived what she still believed to be the lady herself pass up the stairs backward, with a slow, gliding motion, to the door of her bedroom. The child followed; and, as she reached the landing of the stairs, she

saw the figure, without turning the lock or opening the door, pass, as it were, through the material substance into the room and thus disappear from her sight.

Her screams brought her mother who, coming out of Mrs. Marshall's room, asked her what was the matter. "Oh, mamma, mamma," exclaimed the terrified child, "was that a ghost?"

The mother chid her at first, for nursing silly fancies; but when Cecilia related to her circumstantially what she had witnessed, Mrs. F—— shuddered. Well she might! Not half an hour before she had assisted at the death-bed of Mrs. Marshall!

It was remembered, too, that a few minutes before she expired, that lady, with whom Cecilia was a great favorite, had spoken in affectionate terms of the child and had expressed an earnest desire to see her. But Mrs. F——, fearing the effect of such a scene on one so young, had refrained from calling her daughter.

Did the earnest longing mature into action when the earth-clog was cast off? Was the dying wish gratified, notwithstanding the mother's precautions?

Later in her youth Cecilia, to her mother's great alarm, had from time to time walked in her sleep. This somnambulism was strictly spontaneous, no mesmeric experiments of any kind having ever been allowed in the family. It did not result in any accident; but, on several occasions, while unconscious and with her eyes closed, she had aided her mother, as expertly as if awake, in the household duties.

She had another peculiarity. In the early part of the night her sleep was usually profound; but occasionally, toward morning, in a state between sleeping and waking, she had visions of the night which, though they were undoubtedly but a phase of dreaming, she discovered, by repeated experience, to be often of a clairvoyant or prophetic character; sometimes informing her of death or illness. These intimations of the distant or the future so frequently corresponded to the truth that, when they

prognosticated misfortune, Mrs. L—— hesitated, on awaking, to communicate them.

Such a dream, or vision, she had one night in the early part of the month of November, 1853. A sister, Esther, recently married, had gone out, with her husband, to California, some weeks before; and they had been expecting, ere long, news of her arrival. This sister seemed to approach the bedside, and said to her: "Cecilia, come with me to California." Mrs. L——, in her dream, objected that she could not leave her husband and children, to undertake a journey so long and tedious.

"We shall soon be there," said Esther, "and you shall return before morning."

In her dream the proposed excursion did not seem to her an impossibility: so she rose from bed, and, giving her hand to her sister, she thought they ascended together and floated over a vast space; then descended near a dwelling of humble and rude appearance, very different from any which she could have imagined her sister to occupy in the new country to which, in search of fortune, she and her husband had emigrated. The sisters entered, and Cecilia recognized her brother-in-law, sad and in mourning garb. Esther then led her into a room in the centre of which stood an open coffin, and pointed to the body it contained. It was Esther's own body, pale with the hue of death. Mrs. L—— gazed in mute astonishment, first at the corpse before her, then at the form, apparently bright with life and intelligence, which had conducted her thither. To her look of inquiry and wonder the living appearance replied, "Yes, sister, that body was mine; but disease assailed it. I was taken with cholera and I have passed to another world. I desired to show you this, that you might be prepared for the news that will soon reach you."

After a time Mrs. L—— seemed to herself to rise again into the air, again to traverse a great space, and finally to reenter her bed-chamber. By and by she awoke, with this dream

so vividly stamped on her mind, that it required some time to satisfy her that she had not made an actual journey.

"I have had such a dream!" she exclaimed to her husband. But his discouraging "What, Cecilia, at your foolish dreams again?" closed her lips, and she passed the matter off without explanation, either to him or to any other member of the family.

It so happened that, the evening of the same day, Mrs. L—— sat down to a quiet family game of whist. Her husband and a younger sister, Anne, were of the party. In the course of the game Mrs. L—— handed the cards to her sister, whose turn it was to deal. Suddenly she saw Anne's arm assume a rapid rotary motion, and the cards flew in all directions. Turning to chide her for what she thought a foolish jest, she observed a peculiar expression spread over her face: the look was grave, earnest, thoughtful; and the eyes were fixed, as with affectionate anxiety, on Cecilia's face.

Very much alarmed, the latter cried out, "Oh, Anne, what is the matter? why do you look so?"

"Call me not Anne," was the reply; "I am Esther."

"Anne!"

"I tell you it is Esther who speaks to you, not Anne."

Mrs. L——, excessively terrified, turned to her husband, crying out, "Her mind is gone! she is mad! Oh that such a misfortune should ever have fallen on our family!"

"Your dream, Cecilia! Your dream of last night! Have you forgotten whither I took you and what you saw?" said Anne, solemnly.

The shock was too much for Mrs. L——. She fainted.

When, by the use of the usual restoratives, she had recovered, she found her sister still in the same trance-like state, and still impersonating Esther. This continued for nearly four hours. At the end of that time Anne suddenly rubbed her eyes, stretched her limbs, as if awaking, and asked in her natural voice, "Have I been asleep? What is the matter? What has happened?"

Some four weeks afterward the California mail brought a letter from Esther's husband, informing the family of his wife's sudden death, by cholera, on the very day preceding the night of Mrs. L——'s dream.

When, about six months later, the brother-in-law, having returned to Massachusetts, heard from Mrs. L—— the description of the rude dwelling to which, in her dream, she had seemed to be conveyed, he admitted that it corresponded, accurately and minutely, to that of the house in which his wife actually died.

The above incidents were related to me by Mrs. L—— herself,* with permission to publish them, suppressing only the family name.

That lady also stated to me that, at the time referred to, the modern spiritual manifestations were unknown in the town of R——, except by some vague rumors of knockings said to have been heard in Rochester, and which Mrs. L——'s family had always treated as a matter too absurd to be seriously noticed. It need hardly be added that they had never sought or witnessed rapping or table-moving or trance-speaking or automatic writing, or any similar phenomena, now so common in this and other countries.

It was, therefore, with mingled feelings of grief and astonishment that they observed, in Anne, a repetition on several subsequent occasions of the same manifestation which had startled them during the rubber at whist.

* At the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, on October 15, 1860. The narrative, written out, was submitted by me to Mrs. L—— on the 17th of October; and she assented to its accuracy.

Had I not been the author of a work which had attracted the attention, and awakened the sympathies, of Mrs. L——, I should never have learned these particulars; for, during three years preceding 1860, that lady and her family had ceased to speak, outside of the domestic circle, on the subject of their spiritual visitations. The feeling which prompted this reticence sufficiently explains why the family name is withhold

The next time that her sister's fixed gaze and changed manner indicated the recurrence of this abnormal condition, Mrs. L—— asked, "Is this Esther again?"

"Not so, my daughter," was the reply. "It is not your sister, but another friend who desires to address you."

"What friend?"

"John Murray."

This was the name of an aged preacher under whom Mrs. L's mother had sat in the early part of her life, and who had died many years before, never personally known to Mrs. L——. After this, the impersonation, by Anne, of the Rev. Mr. Murray was of frequent occurrence. On such occasions she usually addressed those present in the grave and measured tones that are wont to characterize a pulpit discourse. The *subjects* were always religious, and the spirit in which they were treated was elevated and often eloquent far beyond the natural powers of the speaker.

Nor was this all. Mrs. L—— herself, at first very much to her dissatisfaction, became influenced to write by impressional dictation. Long she resisted, additionally urged to opposition by the great repugnance of her husband and of her friends, who regarded, almost with horror, this sudden invasion of the household circle. "It must be some of these terrible spiritual extravagances that are going about," they used to say, in a tone very similar to that in which nervous people deplore the approach of a deadly epidemic.

After a time, however, when it was observed that these communications were pure and reverent in character, inculcating the highest principles of religion and morality, and that no further abnormalities succeeded, Mr. L—— and many of their friends became reconciled to the intrusion; and finally listened, with interest and pleasure, to the lessons, oral and written, which were thus mysteriously conveyed to them.

In the above remarkable narrative I invite attention to the evidence, therein incidentally presenting itself, *of identity*.

We may believe confidently in the spiritual origin of a message or of a lesson and yet maybe justified—we are sometimes fully justified—in doubting the identity of the spirit purporting to communicate.*

But what are we to make of Anne's exclamation: "Your dream, Cecelia! Your dream of last night! Have you forgotten whither I took you and what you saw?"

Not a single particular of that dream had been related by Mrs. L—— to Anne or to any one else. No wonder she fainted! No wonder she felt certain—as she told me she did—that it was Esther herself, and no other, who inspired the words. To what other credible source can we refer them? The hypothesis of chance coincidence is utterly untenable. As little can we suppose reflection by thought-reading: to say nothing of the incredibility of a simulated four-hour trance.

Of apparitions to relatives and dear friends at or near the time of death I have elsewhere† furnished authentic examples. This is more common than any other class of apparition. Numerous examples occur in German works, and the Germans have a special term (*anzeigen*) to designate such an appearance.‡

But besides being commonly unexpected and often unwelcome, these phenomena have sometimes resulted in annoyance and loss to the parties who witnessed them; though usually

* Especially where celebrated names are given; and this may happen without intention to deceive. The name of Socrates or Aristotle or Confucius might be assumed by some spirit favoring the school of philosophy of the sage whose name he gives.

For myself, I have never received a communication purporting to come from any celebrity whom, in life, I had not known: and but rarely from any one except those with whom I had been connected by ties of consanguinity, or of affection.

† In *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, at pp. 371-370, and throughout chapter 3, Book ii.

‡ "Er hat sich angezeigt" is the phrase usually employed.

without apparent intention to injure, on the part of the unseen agents.

An example is given in a London periodical,* attested by date, place, and name. It comes through an English clergy-man. The Rev. S. E. Bellbough, of Hadleigh, Rochford, Essex, writing in June, 1860, incloses a letter from a lady with whom he says he is "well acquainted and cannot doubt for a moment her trustworthiness." He goes on to say: "All well-authenticated facts connected, or apparently connected, with the supernatural are valuable as materials from which, in course of time, general laws may be deduced;" and adds an expression of regret that so many persons, in narrating such facts withhold the guarantee of genuineness contained in a signature. The letter, which he incloses and which I have slightly abridged, tells the story. Let us call it

WHY A VILLA WAS SOLD AT A LOSS.

DEAR SIR: A few evenings since you expressed a wish to obtain, in writing, the circumstances which caused me to leave my former abode. Here are the facts.

"In January, 1860, I purchased a semi-detached villa, near Chiswick. The previous occupant was a lady who, sixteen years before, had built that and the adjoining villa. The latter had been sold to an elderly gentleman and his wife, who proved most respectable and quiet neighbors. My own family, as you know, consists of myself, my daughter, and a female servant.

"The front bedroom, eighteen feet by twenty-five, I selected for my own use. The very first night of my occupancy—there being a bright fire and a night-light burning—I heard a singular noise, commencing before midnight and continuing for some time; but I paid little attention to it. The same sound continued, with few interruptions, for many weeks, and grew

* *Spiritual Magazine* of July, 1860.

to a serious disturbance; regularly waking me from my first sleep at from half-past eleven to twelve o'clock, or occasionally at about twenty minutes past eleven. The sounds seemed to proceed from naked or thinly-slipped feet, walking to and fro, the length of the room, with heavy tread: so heavy that it caused a vibration of the crockery on the marble washstand, and of light articles on the toilet-glass.

"My first impression was that my next-door neighbors had restless nights; but, on making their acquaintance, I found that this was not the case. Next I sought to account for the strange sound in connection with a timepiece in my bed-chamber; and this I had moved from place to place, but unavailingly. The sound continued, and the ticking of the timepiece could be heard quite distinct from it.

Another experiment was equally without result. I frequently placed myself so, as it were, that I might arrest the footsteps, but this caused no cessation or alteration of the sound.

"Sometimes I used to open the window and sit by it in the spring mornings. This made no difference the sounds went on, all the same, until four or five o'clock.

"I discovered that to others the sounds conveyed the same impression as to myself. Three or four times I awoke my daughter; and to her as to me, they seemed to proceed from a heavy footfall. Again, on one occasion when a friend, who was visiting me, had been put in the room which my servant usually occupied, the girl slept on a sofa in my bedroom. Up to that time I had not mentioned it to her. Twice, when awoke in the night, she cried out, terrified: 'Oh, Ma'am, what is it? what is it?' and hid her head under the bed-clothes.

"At last this disturbance became not only annoying but so terrible to me that I resolved to leave the house. At a great loss I obtained a purchaser.

"When this was settled I heard, for the first time, from an old nurse who came to inquire after the former inhabitants of the house, that the lady who built it and who had died there,

and from whose brother I bought it, suffered from painful and incurable disease, and that it was her sad fate, after a short sleep, to walk the room till four or five in the morning; then to sink on her bed, exhausted.

"On inquiry, an opposite neighbor confirmed this statement They had often seen the old lady walking to and fro, when sickness in their family caused them to be about in the early morning.

This may be no solution of the singular affair. But I relate it in connection with the other events.

"I am, dear sir, yours respectfully,

"MARY PROPERT.

"To the Rev. S. E. Benbough."

This will be recognized as one of a class of phenomena, often discredited, known as "house-hauntings." The remarkable point in the case is its business aspect. The lady from whom the story comes, and who seems to have been a dispassionate observer, found the disturbance so seriously real and so persistent that, at a great loss, she sold her house to escape it. I think it possible she might have been saved from this loss had she been willing—but no doubt the proposal would have shocked her—to enter into communication with her nocturnal visitant. In support of this opinion I here adduce an anecdote of

A REPENTANT HOUSEKEEPER.

There is a young lady, Miss V——, well and favorably known to me, frank and cultivated, a member of one of the old New York families. A few years since she was spending, a week or two with her aunt, mistress of a spacious, handsome, and hospitable old mansion on the Hudson River. This mansion, like some of the ancient chateaux of Europe, has long had its haunted chamber. Little was said about this, but the room was not used except on pressing occasions. During Miss V——'s residence there, visitors accumulated to overflowing;

and the aunt, with an apology to her niece, asked her if she minded giving up her room for a day or two to the new-comers and running the risk of a visit from a ghost. Miss V—— replied that she was not afraid of visitors from another world, so the arrangement was made.

The young lady went to sleep quietly and without fear. Awaking about midnight, she saw, moving about her room, an elderly woman in neat, somewhat old-fashioned dress, apparently an upper-servant: but the face was unknown to her. At first she was not afraid, supposing it to be some one employed in the house who had come on some errand or other: but a moment's thought reminded her that she had locked the door before retiring. This startled her, and her alarm increased when the figure approached the bed, bent toward her and seemed to make an earnest but unavailing effort to speak. Greatly frightened she drew the bed-clothes over her face; and when, after a little, she looked up again, the figure had vanished. She sprang to the door of her room and found it still locked on the inside. "Can there be such things as ghosts?" she thought, as she returned to bed; "that was a reality, if sight could be trusted." In that conviction, after a restless hour or two, she fell asleep; but next morning in the bright light of day, it did not seem to her quite so certain; and after a few months it faded—as with young people such things will—to a dim belief.

Then, however, a circumstance occurred which renewed a faith, not again to be shaken, in the reality of her midnight visitor. Accepting the invitation of an intimate and highly valued friend to spend some days with her, she found that her hostess, in a quiet way, had been making experiments in Spiritualism and had obtained sundry communications. Miss V——, curious on a subject of which she had heard much and seen very little, joined her friend during several sittings.

On one of these occasions an (alleged) spirit announced itself as Sarah Clarke,* a name unknown to both ladies. The communication

* This is not the real name. I obtained this narrative from Miss V—— herself, in the winter of 1869-70; at first with permission to give names and exact dates. But afterward, on conferring with her aunt, she found the old lady unwilling to incur the notoriety consequent on doing so: and thus Miss V—— had to withdraw the permission to use any names in connection with her story.

was to the effect that she had been, many years before, housekeeper in the family of Miss V——'s aunt; that she had endeavored, unsuccessfully, to communicate, directly with V—— when that young lady last visited the old mansion; that her object was to confess a criminal act of which she had been guilty and to ask her old mistress's pardon for it. A restless desire to do so (she added) had caused her to haunt the room she occupied when on earth. She then proceeded to say that she had been tempted to steal and hide away several small pieces of family plate, including a silver sugar-bowl and a few other articles which she enumerated; and that she would be very thankful if Miss V—— would tell her aunt this and express her (Sarah's) great sorrow for what she had done, and her hope for pardon.

The next time Miss V—— visited her aunt, she asked her if she had ever known a person named Sarah Clarke.

"Certainly," she replied, "she was housekeeper in our family some thirty or forty years since."

"What sort of person was she?"

"A good, careful, tidy woman."

"Did you lose any silver articles while she was with you, aunt?"

The lady reflected. "Yes, I believe we did; a sugar basin and a few other things disappeared in a mysterious way. Why do you ask?"

"Did you ever suspect Sarah of taking them?"

"No: of course she had access to them; but we considered her far too trustworthy to be guilty of theft."

Then Miss V—— related the message she and her friend had received; and, on comparing notes, it was found that the list of articles, as given by Sarah to the two ladies, corresponded with the things actually lost, so far as the aunt could recollect.

What that lady thought of her niece's story I know not all she said that, if Sarah had taken the things, she most freely forgave it.

The remarkable point in this story remains to be told. From that time forth, *the haunted chamber was free from all disturbance*. Sarah Clarke never again appeared to any of its occupants.

Knowing the standing of the parties I am able to vouch for the truth of this story. Let us consider what it discloses as to the next world.

There is repentance there as here. There is restless regret and sorrow for grave sin committed while here. There is anxious desire for pardon from those whom the spirit wronged during earth-life. In other words the natural effects of evil doing follow us to our next phase of life; and, in that phase of life as in the present, we amend, and attain to better things, by virtue of repentance.

In this the mode of moral progression after death is similar to that which alone avails on earth. "Repent!" was Christ's first public exhortation. To the "spirits in prison" on the other side—spirits not yet released from earthly bondage and earthly remorse—the same exhortation, it would seem, is appropriate still.

Such indications as these induce Spiritualists to believe that the next world is more nearly like this than Orthodoxy imagines it to be.

Another corollary is, that when such spiritual phenomena present themselves, an endeavor to establish communication with the manifesting spirit may result in benefit alike to a denizen of the other world and to a disturbed inhabitant of this. In this way Mrs. Propert, getting rid of the midnight footfalls, might have been in quiet possession of her villa at this day.

I invite attention, also, to the strong proof of identity furnished by Miss V——'s story. The name of the housekeeper was unknown to both ladies when her (alleged) spirit gave the

message. There was nothing to suggest such a name, or such a confession as was made. Yet, on inquiry, both name and confession were found to correspond with facts that had taken place thirty or forty years before: to say nothing of a new fact, tallying with all the rest: the cessation of the spiritual visits, as soon as the visitor had no longer any motive to show herself.

I pass now to another class of manifestations, in which, it will be remarked, the same element of unexpectedness is found.

CHAPTER II.

ANIMALS PERCEIVING SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

The ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way."—NUMBERS xxii. 23.

THOSE who deem incredible certain details of the interruption which befell Balaam during his unwilling journey to meet the King of Moab, may find, in modern incidents, cause for belief that there might have been an important truth underlying the story.

I think it the more important to adduce some of these incidents because, if sufficiently authenticated, they set at rest the vague theories touching "expectant attention" and "dominant ideas," that have been propounded to explain away, as figments of the brain, all perceptions of spiritual appearances. First let us examine one which occurred in Holland.

WHAT BEFELL A SWISS OFFICER.

I take the following from a well-known English work on Sleep, by Dr. Binns. The author gives it on the authority of Lord Stanhope, who had it directly from the gentleman to whom the incident occurred, Mr. C. de Steiguer, a nephew of the celebrated Avoyer de Steiguer, of Berne. That gentleman, in relating it to Lord Stanhope, said: "I do not believe in apparitions, but there is something very extraordinary in the subject; and I would not relate what I am about to mention if many persons, some of whom are now alive, could not bear witness to its truth."

Lord Stanhope then proceeds to give "as nearly as possible

an exact translation of the expressions which he (Monsieur do Steiguer) used." Here it is:

"I was early in life in the Dutch service, and had occupied my lodgings, for some weeks, without hearing anything remarkable. My bedroom had, on one side of it, my sitting room; on the other, a room in which my servant slept; and it communicated with each of them by a door.

One night, being in bed but not asleep, I heard a noise as if some person was walking, in slippers, up and down the room. The noise continued for some time.

"Next morning I asked my servant if he had heard anything. 'Nothing,' he replied, 'except that you walked up and down the room last night, when it was late.' I assured him that I had not done so; and, as he appeared incredulous, I told him that, if I should again hear the sounds I would let him know.

On the following night I called him, desiring him to bring a candle and to take notice if he saw anything. He informed me that he did not; but that he heard a noise as if some person were approaching him, and then moving off in a contrary direction.

"I had three animals in my room; a dog, a cat, and a canary-bird; each of which was affected in a peculiar manner, whenever the noise was heard. The dog immediately jumped into my bed and lay close to me, trembling as if from fear. The cat followed the noise with her eyes, as if she saw, or attempted to see, what caused it. The canary bird, which was sleeping on its perch, instantly awoke, and fluttered about the cage, in great perturbation.

"Occasionally a noise was heard as if the keys of the piano in my sitting room were slightly touched, and as if the key of my desk was turned and the desk opened; but nothing moved. I mentioned these things to the officers of my regiment, all of whom slept by turns on the sofa in my sitting room, and heard the same sounds."

M. de Steiguer had the floor and skirting-board taken up, but could find not even a trace of rats or mice.

After a time he became unwell; and, his illness increasing, he sent for a physician who urgently advised him to change his lodgings though he would give no reason for this advice. Finally M. de Steiguer had himself removed.

He stated further to Lord Stanhope that when he became convalescent and insisted on knowing why the doctor had so strongly urged him to leave his rooms, the latter informed him "that they had a bad reputation; that one man had hung himself in them, and that it was supposed another had been murdered." *

This narrative bears the stamp of authenticity. We cannot believe that Lord Stanhope would have allowed Dr. Binns to use his name and that of his Swiss friend, in attestation of such a story, without a deep conviction of its truth.

The witness appears to have been a cool-headed and dispassionate observer; but let us suppose him nervous and imaginative. Did his servant share his temperament? Were the senses of all the officers whom he called in, as additional witnesses, misled by the excitement of expectation? Let us concede these extreme improbabilities. Another difficulty remains. Was the dog, was the cat, was the canary-bird, nervously expectant? Were their senses deceived by "dominant ideas"?

As regards the most sagacious of domestic animals, what has been usually called popular superstition has assigned to it an occasional power beyond mere spiritual perceptions—a species of presentiment in certain cases of approaching death. I do not venture to affirm that dogs ever have such a power; yet I know of one strongly-attested case which goes to prove that sometimes they have an instinct which greatly resembles it.

* EDWARD BINNS, M.D., *Anatomy of Sleep*; second edition, London. 1845; pp. 479, 480.

WHAT PRECEDED A CHILD'S UNEXPECTED DEATH.

For thirty years past I have been well acquainted with Mrs. D——, daughter of the late Rev. Mr. R——, long and favorably known in Indiana. Her grandparents, named Haas, were living in Woodstock, Virginia, when her mother, afterward Mrs. R——, was twenty years old and still unmarried. Miss Haas had a brother, two years old, and the child had a favorite dog who was his constant companion and seemed to take special care of him. The circumstances connected with this child's sudden death, Mrs. D—— had often heard repeated by her mother.

It was about mid-day that this boy, running over the parlor floor, tripped his foot in the carpet and fell. His sister picked him up and soon succeeded in soothing him. At dinner, how ever, it was observed that he gave his left hand, not being able to stretch out his right. They rubbed the right arm with camphor and the child made no complaint.

While they were at dinner, the dog approached the child's chair and began whining in the most piteous way. They put him out, then he howled. They drove him off, but he returned and took his post under the window of the room in which the child was, continuing to howl from time to time; and there he remained during the night, in spite of all attempts to dislodge him. In the evening the child was taken seriously ill, and died about one o'clock in the morning. So long as it lived the dog's dismal lament was heard, at brief intervals; but as soon as the child died, the howling ceased, and was not renewed either then or afterward.

I have entire confidence in Mrs. D——'s truthfulness, and it was by her that the above story was related to me.*

This, however, is the only example of the kind that has come to me directly authenticated; and I refrain from building

* On June 27, 1859. I took notes of it at the time.

in on a single example. Animals may not have the gift of presentiment; but I think there is sufficient proof that they have spiritual perceptions. In a former work * I have, incidentally, brought up some evidence of this; and I esteem my self fortunate in being able here to present, from an accredited medical source, one of the best-attested and most circumstantially related incidents in proof, that I ever remember to have seen. It is the more valuable because medical writers as a class—like other scientific men—are ever reluctant to admit anything that savors of the supernatural.

The story appeared, three years before the advent of Spiritualism in America, in one of the best-known Medical Journals of Scotland. It occurs in a review of a work on Sleep, then just published. The reviewer touches on the subject of apparitions and, after noticing several cases which he thinks of easy solution, thus proceeds:

"The following case, however, is one of those very rare ones, whose explanation baffles the philosophic inquirer. It is, indeed, almost the only authentic one to which we could refer; and, as it occurred to a particular friend and every circumstance was minutely inquired into at the time, the narrative is as authentic as such things can be. It may add to the interest of this case to state that it was Communicated several years ago to Mr. Hibbert, after the publication of his work on apparitions, when he confessed that he could not explain it in the same philosophic way in which he had been able to account for all others, and that it appeared to him more nearly to approach the supernatural."

The story, thus strongly vouched for, is then given by the reviewer, as follows, the title only added by me

THE DOG IN THE WOLFRIDGE WOOD.

F. M. S—— was passing through the Wolfridge wood at Alverston, one night at twelve o'clock. He was accompanied

* Footfalls, pp. 217, 231, 398, 446, 448.

by his dog, of a breed between the Newfoundland and mastiff; a powerful animal, who feared neither man nor beast. He had a fowling-piece and a pair of pistols loaded, besides big sword; for he belonged to the Military School there and had been out for a day's shooting.

"The road ran centrally through the wood; and very nearly in the centre of the wood, at a part somewhat more open than the rest, there was a cross erected to point out the spot where a gamekeeper had been murdered. The place had the reputation of being haunted, and the ghost, it was said, had been repeatedly seen. S—— had frequently before passed this cross in the wood without seeing anything, and treated the story of the ghost so lightly that he had, on more occasions than one, for a bet, gone there at midnight and returned without meeting anything except an occasional gamekeeper or poacher.

"This night, when he approached the open space in the wood, he thought he perceived, at the other end of that space, the form of a man, more indistinct, however, than usual. He called his dog to his side (for previously it had been ranging about, barking furiously and giving chase to the game it started) I patted it on the head to make it keep a sharp lookout, and cocked his gun. The dog, on this, was all impatience. S—— challenged the figure, but no answer was returned. Suspecting it was a poacher and prepared for an encounter, he directed the dog's attention to the appearance, and the animal answered by growling. He then kept his eyes steadily fixed on the figure; when, instantaneously it glided within arm's length of him. Still he looked steadily in its face while it kept its eyes on his. It had approached him without noise or rustling. The face was ill-defined, but distinctly visible. He could not turn his eyes from those of this apparition; they fascinated him, as it were, to the spot; he had no power in his frame. He felt no fear of bodily injury, only a certain indescribable sense of awe. So fascinated were his eyes by those of the figure, that he did not observe its dress, nor even its form. It looked calmly and with a mild aspect, for a space of time which he does not

think exceeded half a minute; then suddenly became invisible. The form had flitted before him about five minutes altogether.

The dog which before this was furious and growling, now stood crouched at his feet as if in a trance—his jaw fallen, big limbs quivering and his whole frame agitated and covered with a cold sweat. After the form disappeared, S—— touched the animal, then spoke to it without its seeming to recognize him; and it was some time before it appeared to recover its senses. The whole way home, it never moved from his side but kept close to his feet; nor, on their way home, did it run after game, or take notice if game started near it.

"It was a fortnight before it recovered from the fright; and it was never afterward the same lively animal. No consideration could ever again induce that dog to enter the wood after nightfall, nor would it allow any of the family to enter it. When it was forced to pass by the open spot in daylight, it would only do so with its master, and it always exhibited signs of fear, trembling all the time and walking silently by his side.

"S—— has frequently since passed this spot in the wood at the midnight hour, but has never again seen the figure. Before this occurrence he had always treated with ridicule any stories about ghosts or spirits; now, he firmly believes in both."

The reviewer does not hesitate to express the opinion that the appearance witnessed by his friend was the result of supernatural agency.*

* *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* for 1845; vol. lxiv. pp. 186-7.

The reviewer's remarks are as follows:

"This is almost the only recorded case known to us where the evidence is so strong, as to leave no other impression on the mind but that it was the appearance of some supernatural agency, and, after having in vain endeavored to explain it on any other supposition, we found ourselves forced to conclude, with Hamlet, that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy.'"

This, published in a Medical Journal of old standing and established reputation, three years before the term Spiritualism in its modern acceptation had been heard of—is certainly a very remarkable admission.

The incident here related caused a complete revolution of opinion in the witness. From being an entire sceptic in apparitions and in spirits, he became, through the evidence of his senses, a believer in both. But to have faith in spirits and their appearance is to have faith in the reality of another life.

Could he, rationally, withhold belief? Is not one such incident, unmistakably evidenced, as complete proof of a future phase of existence as a hundred? And even if S—— had been willing, as some men have "been, to give the lie to his own senses, rather than believe that the denizens of the next world sometimes return to this, was there not a dumb witness remaining to bear testimony, by his changed character and unconquerable terrors, against such stiff-necked and illogical unbelief?

CHAPTER III.

UNIVERSALITY OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

"Miracles cease when men cease to believe and to expect them."

—LECKY.*

THIS is what is usually called a rationalistic, but it is not a rational, view of miracles.

A portion of the alleged events which go currently under the name of miracles undoubtedly do not happen. But a larger portion do. Unfounded belief may cause us to imagine the former. The latter are not dependent upon our thought of them—be it credulous or incredulous†—for their appearance or non-appearance.

What the world has been wont to term miracles, cease to be regarded as such when they are critically examined: that is true.

But it is not true that phenomena similar to what theologians usually call the miracles of the New Testament cease, when we no longer have faith in them, or when we cease to look for their coming. It is not true, as to certain manifestations occurring through spiritual agency, and governed by intermundane laws, that these are the shadowy offspring of credulity, and that they disappear, like mist of the morning, when the Sun of Reason shines out.

* *European Morals*, vol. i. p. 373: (Amer. Ed.)

† Hard-set unbelief may, now and then, by some law of mental science as yet imperfectly understood, arrest a certain class of spiritual phenomena, and so deprive a dogmatic sceptic of a chance to witness them: just as the contempt of Jesus' own countryman diminished his spiritual power while among them (Mark vi. 5). But this is the exception only; as many of the narratives in this volume sufficiently show.

The great lesson taught in the few narratives I have already given, in many of those which follow and in a hundred others attested beyond reasonable denial,* is that genuine spiritual appearances show themselves in spite of distrust, unbelief, repugnance even—show themselves, when the sight of an angel from Heaven was as little expected as they—and, so far as the evidence goes, have always done so, though doubtless more frequently in some ages of the world than in others.

It is a popular notion that, about twenty-five years since, a superstitious epidemic, originating in Western New York, overtook millions of weak men and women, first in these United States, then in Europe and other parts of the world; creating in them a most unphilosophical belief: namely, that there had appeared among us a modern dispensation, under which there were occurring marvellous events without example in the past, and specially vouchsafed by God to this, his favored generation. The assumed theory is that this new faith was the mania prevailing for the time; soon to pass away, like a hundred other ephemeral delusions.

These short-cuts toward a solution of momentous difficulties are very convenient and very illogical. They save men trouble in investigating; but they cannot save them from errors of the gravest character.

Nothing more easy than to allege that if we go back even a few years before the time when the report of the "Rochester Knockings" disgusted the Church and scandalized the world of Science, we come upon an age barren of all miraculous inklings, save only within the suspicious precincts where Romish ecclesiasticism reigns.

—Easy to say, but at variance with notorious facts. The earliest date of the Rochester disturbances is March, 1848. Will it do to assert that, say ten or fifteen years before that time, one cannot find, in any sober, civilized nation, where science holds free and respected sway, trustworthy evidence that occurrences

* See Footfalls, Books iii., iv., v.

as strange and as little capable of apneumatic explanation—spiritual manifestations in fact—were habitually showing themselves?

Let us see. Our own country is spoken of as young, impulsive, credulous, not given to thorough study. Let us, in this ins Lance, pass her by, for another. The English are staid, practical, thoughtful; not easily moved from their equanimity; not specially tolerant of startling novelties; sufficiently sensitive to the sting of ridicule; sufficiently inclined to follow the old ruts of habit and custom, legally, materially, spiritually. In no country is Science more free; in none are scientific men harder students, more sceptical, or more active-minded.

The more valuable, because of these national traits, is the following narrative, or cluster of narratives, to which, through the kindness of a Scottish friend whom the world, alas! has recently lost,* my attention happened to be directed. He put into my hands a remarkable book, little known, written, thirty years since, by a gentleman of standing; an English officer and a Fellow of the Royal Society.†

The author of this work testifies to a disturbance of a very singular character which occurred at his country seat, near Woodbridge, Suffolk. It continued throughout nearly two months. The details are minutely given.

FIFTY-THREE DAYS OF BELL RINGING.

This disturbance commenced on the second of February, 1834, at the house of Great Bealings, inhabited by Major Edward Moor. On the afternoon of that day, being Sunday, during the absence of Major Moor at church and while only one manservant and one maid-servant were at home, the dining-room

* Robert Chambers.

† *Bealings Bells*. An Account of the Mysterious Ringing of Bells at Great Bealings, Suffolk, in 1834, and in other parts of England: with Relations of other unaccountable Occurrences in various places. By Major EDWARD MOOR, F.R.S.; Woodbridge, 1841: pp. 142.

bell was rung, without visible cause, three times. The weather was calm; the barometer at 29°; the thermometer within its usual range. There were no remarkable atmospheric phenomena.

Next day the same bell sounded several times, equally without apparent cause. On the third day five out of the nine bells suspended in a row in the basement of the house, gave forth several loud peals, while nobody could detect any one meddling either with the pulls or the wires.

After this all the bells in the house, twelve in number, were (except one, the front-door bell) repeatedly rung in the same manner: five bells usually ringing at a time. The wires of these five *pealers* were visible in their whole course, from the pulls to the bells themselves, except where they passed through floors or walls by small openings.

This continued day after day throughout February and March. The bells usually rang after a clattering fashion, quite different from the usual ringing. "With no vigor of pull," says Major Moor, "could the violent ringing be effected." Pulling the horizontal wires with a book, downward, produced only a gentle, tinkling sound. The Major further says: "The motion of the bells, and that of their spiral flexible support, when lung by hand, was comparatively slow and perceptible: not so, at the peals; it was then too rapid to be seen distinctly." *

Major Moor was naturally much surprised by these apparent prodigies; and he, his servants, and friends made many efforts to find some natural explanation, but wholly without success. Then he inserted a minute statement of particulars in the *Ipswich Journal*, † describing the situations of the bells and the arrangement of their wires, in hopes that some one would be able to suggest an explanation; but no explanation beyond surmises of trickery ever reached him: in reply to certain

* *Bealings Bells*, p. 6.

† Of March 1, 1834. He states that during the very time he was writing his communication to this newspaper, the bells were repeatedly rung

inquirers who probably thought they were suggesting adequate cause, he replied that his house was not infested with rats, and that he kept no monkey.

The last ringing was on March 27, 1834. It is abundantly evident, from Major Moor's book, that he spared no pains, throughout the seven and a half weeks during which the strange annoyance lasted, to detect fraudulent artifice, had artifice, under such circumstances, been possible. He avers: "The bells rang scores of times when no one was in the passage or back-building or house or grounds, unseen: I have waited in the kitchen for a repetition of the ringings, with all the servants present—when no one could be in concealment. But what matters? Neither I, nor the servants, nor any one, could, or can, work the wonderment that I and more than half a score of others saw." Finally, the Major declares: "I am thoroughly convinced that the ringing is by no human agency.*"

Now, on the supposition that what have been called spiritual manifestations—doings which we can trace to no human agency—are the modern offspring of an epidemic commencing in 1848, what should we suppose might be the probable result of a newspaper article narrating the above occurrence, and published in an English paper in 1834? Simply that the foolhardy narrator would incur ridicule as a dupe, or encounter reproach as an impostor.

But what actually happens?

DISCLOSURES THROUGH BEALINGS BELLS.

From Major Moor's book we learn that his communication to the Ipswich Journal brought him letters containing *fourteen* different examples of mysterious bell-ringing, every one of them unexplained; all occurring in England, namely, in the Counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Derby, Middlesex, and in or near the towns of Chelmsford, Cheltenham, Chesterfield,

* *Bealings Bells*, p. 5.

Cambridge, Bristol, Greenwich, Windsor, and London; all of comparatively recent date, and most of them attested by the signatures of those who witnessed them, with permission to give their names to the public. He received also three other communications disclosing further mysteries, to which I shall refer by and by.

The fourteen examples, be it remarked, are all of one particular phase of manifestation; a rare phase, so far as my observation goes: I have notes of but one such in the United States, namely, in a house in Pine street, Philadelphia; lasting during five days of the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, 1857.*

But even of this rare phase of manifestation, we cannot imagine that in the fourteen examples presented in *Bealings Bells*, we have more than a very small instalment of similar cases which might be found in England. The chances are that nine men or women of the world, out of every ten, would shrink from the notoriety, or shirk the trouble, attendant on the presentation of such narratives for publication.

Even in this small book, then, what a lifting of the veil on the thousand marvels that may have occurred in all ages, unrecorded or unexplained!

Unable for lack of space to notice Major Moor's fourteen relations, I here briefly condense the evidences in three of them.

AN EIGHTEEN-MONTHS' DISTURBANCE.

In a house near Chesterfield, belonging to Mr. James Ashwell, "long and repeated bell-rings," commencing in 1830 and continuing throughout eighteen months, occurred.

* In this case, there being a sick lady in the house, the attending nurse said the disturbance *must* be stopped, and she herself muffled the bells, wrapping the clappers with cloth and then tying them with twine. Three hours later they rang themselves loose of everything, pealing more violently than before. Finally they rang themselves loose from the wall itself, drawing out the staples, five inches long—then the bells

The details are given, partly by Mr. Ashwell himself, partly by Mr. W. Felkin, of Nottingham, a friend of his.

According to Mr. Felkin's statement, "all the bells in the house rang at one time or other; but never before five in the morning nor after eleven at night. The oscillation was like that of a pendulum, not a decreasing one. A bell was put up one Saturday evening, unattached to any wire, and rang in half an hour.* Another bell which had been taken down and laid on a closet shelf, lay there quiescent for some weeks; but being then fixed by means of the flexible bent iron to which it was attached between a wooden hat-peg batten and the wall against which the batten was nailed, it ran" immediately.†

These bells were wont to ring continuously, with violent clatter and for a considerable time. Sometimes, during their greatest vibration, Mr. Ashwell would seize one of them between his hands, and compel cessation: but, as soon as he released it, it would resume its oscillation and ringing.

All the bells were hung out of reach. Bell-hangers, of course, were called to lend their aid; but nothing was found to indicate that bell or bell-wire had been tampered with. On a particular occasion, while a bell-hanger was engaged in re-attaching the wires, after a long silence, one of the bells began to ring before his face. Down, dropped the man from the ladder; and, without waiting to gather up his tools, off he ran as fast as his legs could carry him, crying out that Satan was in the bells, and that he would have nothing more to do with them.

The house where all this happened was so substantial, its walls so thick, and its foundations so large that the highest winds were unfelt within it. "Every part of this extensive mansion," says Mr. Felkin, "was examined by me with the strictest care, and I could not divine the motive natural power adequate to the effect."

rang on the floor. The inmates of the house were not Spiritualists nor in any sense favorers of spiritual belief.

* *Bealings Bells*, p. 48.

† Page 56.

Mr. Felkin says of his friend, Mr. Ashwell, that "he is the reverse of superstitious; well-educated, philosophical, and indefatigable in research." Mr. Ashwell "tried various experiments with electrometers and other tests," and spoke on the subject with many men of science; but all without result. Mr. Felkin never heard Mr. Ashwell "hazard a guess as to the cause."

Again and again, indeed, attempts were made, as well by the family as by numerous visitors, to discover the occult agency, "both when the bells were connected with lines and when the wires had been cut for months: a circumstance which made no apparent difference in their sounding disposition." But "these events quite baffled the acutest inquirer."

Ringings so persistent caused great excitement, not only in the house, but, being noised abroad, in the neighborhood. The servants were greatly alarmed, and some left their places. The children, too, were frightened, but were pacified by being told that "the bells were ill."

A public footpath passed near Mr. Ashwell's front door; and "many passengers made a circuit rather than pass close to it."

Another observation is mentioned in connection with this case which is intelligible enough to us, but was, no doubt, a puzzle to Major Moor, writing at a time when "sensitives" and "mediums" had not yet been heard of. It was this: The gossips of the vicinity remarked, as to a young lady who resided in Mr. Ashwell's family, that the occurrences were nearly coincident with her stay in the house, and ceased about the time she left it. But (it is added) it does not appear that the slightest voluntary agency on her part was suspected by the family, who had the best means of detecting it.*

The next narrative comes from a Londoner:

* This narrative extends from page 45 to page 56 of *Bealings Bells*.

A LADY'S ACCOUNT OF BELL RINGINGS.

Among the numerous letters received by Major Moor was one from a Mrs. Milnes, dated No. 19 St. Paul's Terrace, Islington, May 17, 1834.

The writer says: "In the early part of February, 1825, returning home from a walk (to our then residence, No. 9 Earl street, Westminster), about half-past four in the afternoon, I was astonished to find the family much disturbed at the ringing of bells in the house, without visible cause. The first bell rung was in the nursery, the pull of which was at the bottom of the house, quite unconnected with any others. This bell rang several times before the rest began; then that of the dining-room; next that of the drawing-room, and so on, through the house: sometimes altogether, as if they were trying to entice each other in uproar; at others one at a time, but always violently.

"By this time I was much alarmed and sent for Mr. Milnes who, thinking to find out what ailed them, had the cases taken down that concealed the wires. Finding this of no use, he next placed a person with a light in each room, while he himself held a candle under the row of bells below; but we could not then ascertain the slightest reason for this strange ringing, which lasted two hours and a half: nor have we ever since been able to discover more of it than we did then."

Here again, as in the preceding example, we have an incident probably intimating through whose unconscious mediumship these phenomena occurred. Mr. Milnes adds: "It had a surprising, effect upon one of our servant girls, a mulatto. She, from the first, had been more terrified than any one else in the house; and, at the last peal, fell into strong convulsions; so strong as to require several men to hold her down. These convulsions continued sixteen hours and were succeeded by insensibility, and a stupor that lasted nearly a week: every means being used to restore her, but without effect. It is singular

that the moment she was seized with these fits the bells ceased to ring." *

BELLS IN GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

The details in this case come, as in the preceding examples, from a witness present, namely, from Lieutenant Rivers, R. N., a comrade of Nelson, who had lost a leg in the service. They are given in a letter from that officer to Major Moor, dated April 26, 1841.

The bells began to ring September 30, 1834, in Lieutenant Rivers' apartments situated in the hospital; and they continued four days.

The ringing was at intervals of five to ten minutes; four bells sometimes sounding at once. "In the evening," says the Lieutenant, "about eight o'clock, I tied up the clappers: while so doing the bells were much agitated and shook violently. In the morning when I loosed them, they began to ring."

"The clerk of the works, his assistant and Mr. Thame, the bell-hanger, came and had another examination, without discovery of the cause. They requested that the family and servants would leave the apartments to them. We did so, dining at a neighbor's opposite; and while at dinner we heard the bells ring a peal. Mr. Thame and the assistant remained till eleven o'clock; the one watching the cranks, the other the bells below, in perfect astonishment."

He adds: "Several scientific men tried to discover the cause. The front-door bell, detached from the others, did not ring. I secured the door-pull to prevent its being used, leaving the bell to have full play. About three o'clock in the afternoon I went home and found many persons satisfying their curiosity. When explaining to them that I thought it extraordinary that the front-door did not join in the performance,

* *Bealings Bells*, pp. 60-62.

it immediately set up a good ring. * The cause of all this remains still mysterious."

Another observation made in this case is worth noting: "What appeared most extraordinary was the movement of the cranks which, the bell-hanger said, could not cause the bells to ring without being pulled downward: and this they did of themselves, in every room; working like pump-handles."

Lieutenant Rivers adds that similar phenomena occurred in another officer's apartments in the hospital, continuing for a week.†

To multiply examples from Major Moor's book would but involve tedious repetition; seeing that the narratives all resemble each other: the same violent ringings or pealings, sometimes for a few hours only, sometimes for months; the same care to detect trickery: the same anxiety to discover the cause; and, in every case, the same result: inability to trace the phenomena to any human agency.

There is another phase of manifestations, analogous to the above; sometimes, like them, of a mere material character, sometimes indicating intelligence; and which, because it has been popularly ascribed to restless spirits, revisiting their former homes, is commonly termed 'haunting.'‡

Of this, again, there are two varieties; one characterized by knockings and other unexplained noises; the other, often attaching itself to ancient family residences in England and other countries, marked by the phenomenon of apparition. A large proportion of the old, well-known English names of rank have their family legend, referring to peculiar disturbances or appearances, usually persistent through generations, and generally confined to some ancestral mansion.

Especially when the haunting assumes the form of a "family

* Yet, as this bell was so situated that the wire could readily be reached by the hand, the incident, taken by itself, is not conclusive.

† *Bealings Bells*. pp. 81-83.

‡ For numerous examples, see *Footfalls*, Book iii. chap. 2.

ghost" is the story, outside of the family itself, wont to be pooh-poohed as a nursery tale. No doubt such narratives often involve exaggeration, mystification, illusion. As little doubt, however—if we but sift the genuine from the spurious—that many of them have foundation in truth. We have testimony in proof from eye-witnesses of such standing that we have not the right to impugn their intelligence or their veracity.

Take an example, from a recent publication. Florence Marryat, daughter of the celebrated novelist, gave, less than a year ago, in an American periodical,* three stories of apparitions, which she attests as "strictly true and well authenticated." Of these the last was witnessed by her father, Captain Marryat, and is related as she heard it from his own lips. I condense portions of it, giving the main facts in the author's own language.

In one of the northern counties of England stands a country house, Burnham Green, inherited by the present occupants, Sir Harry and Lady Bell.† Their house had its ghost; but, "like most sensible people, they laughed at the report:" surrounding themselves with every luxury and not heeding the legend.

Their numerous friends, cordially invited, flocked to Burnham Green, thought the place and its host and hostess charming; yet, after a while, made paltry excuses to curtail their visits and were shy of being lured there again. It came out that they had heard of the ghost, some declared they had seen it, and the rest could not be persuaded to remain under a haunted roof.

"Sir Harry and Lady Bell were thoroughly vexed and did all they could to dissipate the superstition. They disinterred the

* *Harper's Weekly*, issue of December 24, 1870; pages 846 and 847.

† These are not the real names. The writer says: "While I preserve all details of these stories, I carefully hide the names of persons and places, lest by negligence in this respect I should wound the feelings of survivors." She says also that the stories which she has related are selected from a number of similar anecdotes which rise in her memory as she writes.

history of the ghost who went by the name of 'The Lady of Burnham Green,' and found that it was supposed to be the spirit of one of their ancestresses who had lived in toe time of Elizabeth, and had been suspected of poisoning her husband. Her picture hung in one of the unused bedrooms."

Lady Bell caused this bedroom to be renovated and cheerfully fitted up; and she had the picture of the Lady cleaned and new-framed. In vain! "No one could be found to sleep in that room. The servants gave warning, if it was simply proposed to them, and visitors invariably requested to have their room changed after the second or third night. Guest after guest took flight, to return no more."

In this dilemma Sir Harry applied to Captain Marryat, an old friend of his, for advice. The Captain, utterly disbelieving the story, offered to occupy the haunted chamber: an offer which was eagerly accepted.

With a brace of loaded pistols under his pillow, he was undisturbed for several nights, and was beginning to think of re turning home: but he was not to escape so easily.

After a week had passed, one evening when Captain Marryat was about to retire for the night, Mr. Lascelles, one of the guests, tapped at his door and asked him to cross to his room and inspect a newly-invented fowling-piece, the merits of which they had just before been discussing in the smoking room. The Captain, who had already divested himself of coat and waistcoat, picked up a pistol—"in case we meet the ghost" he said jestingly—passed along the corridor to Mr. Lascelles' room, and, after chatting for a few minutes, over the virtues of the new gun, turned to go. Mr. Lascelles returned with him "just to protect you from the ghost," he said laughingly, in imitation of the former allusion. The corridor was long and dark, the lights having been extinguished at midnight; but as they entered it they saw a dim light advancing from the farther end—a light held by a female figure. The children of several of the families were lodged on the floor above, and Lascelles suggested that this was probably some lady going to visit the

nurseries. The Captain, remembering that he was in shirt and trousers and unwilling to face a lady in that guise, drew his companion aside. The conclusion shall be told in the narrator's own words.

THE LADY OF BURNHAM GREEN.

The rooms in the corridor were placed opposite each other, and were approached by double doors, the first of which, on being opened, disclosed a small entry and the second door, which led to the bedchamber itself. Many persons, on entering their rooms, only closed this second door, leaving the other standing open; and thus, when Mr. Lascelles and my father stepped into one of these recesses, they were enabled to shelter themselves behind the half-closed portal.

"There, in the gloom, they crouched together, very much inclined to laugh, I have no doubt, at the situation in which they found themselves, but terribly afraid lest by a betrayal of their illegal presence they should alarm the occupant of the bedroom before which they stood, or the lady who was advancing to the place of their concealment.

"Very slowly she advanced, or so seemed to them; but they could watch the glimmer of her lamp through the crack of the door; and presently my father, who had pertinaciously kept his eye there, gave the half-smothered exclamation, 'Lascelles! By Jove!—the *Lady!*'

"He had studied the picture of the supposed apparition carefully, was intimate with every detail of her dress and appearance, and felt that he could not be mistaken in the red satin sacque, white stomacher and petticoat, high-standing frill, and cushioned hair of the figure now advancing toward them.

"A splendid "make-up," he said, beneath his breath; 'but whoever has done it shall find I know a trick worth two of his.'

"But Mr. Lascelles said nothing. Imposition or not, he did not like the looks of the Lady of Burnham Green.

"On she came, quiet and dignified, looking neither to the right nor to the left, while my father cocked his pistol, and stood ready for her. He expected she would pass their place of hiding and intended to pursue and make her speak to him, but instead of that, the dim light gained the door, and then stood still.

"Lascelles shuddered. He was a brave man, but sensitive. Even my father's iron nerves prompted him to be quiescent.

"In another moment the lamp moved on again, came closer, closer; and round the half-closed door, gazing inquisitively at them, as though really curious to see who was there, peered the pale face and cruel eyes of the Lady of Burnham Green.

"Simultaneously my father pushed open the door and confronted her. She stood before him in the corridor just as she stood in the picture in his bedroom, but with a smile of malicious triumph on her face; and goaded on by her expression, hardly knowing what he did, he raised his pistol and fired full at her. The ball penetrated the door of the room opposite to where they stood; and, with the same smile upon her face, she passed through the panels and disappeared."

Of course there was no explanation except what the appearance and disappearance of the apparition afforded. If spirits *cannot* appear, what was it that these two gentleman saw and one of them fired at?

No narrative resembling the above was communicated to Major Moor; but he had sent to him, and has recorded in his book, three cases of hauntings.

They have this in common that the witnesses all testify to violent knockings, sometimes accompanied by other strange, disturbing noises; but they differ in this respect: one case seems to have been of a personal character, that is, dependent on the presence of some individual—sensitive or *medium*, as the modern phrase is; the two others, it would appear, were independent of personal attributes—were local and permanent,

continuing through several generations: or, as we might express it, were endemical.

Such is the following contained in a letter written by an English clergyman in reply to an inquiry which had been made by Major Moor.

THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY.

SYDERSTERNE PARSONAGE, near FAKENHAM,
Norfolk, May 11, 1841.

SIR: You have, indeed, sent your letter, received yesterday, to the House of Mystery. In the broad lands of England you cannot, perhaps, find such another. But I regret to add that I can afford you no assistance in the "Bell" line.

"Our noises, in this parsonage, are of a graver character; smart successions of tappings, groanings, cryings, sobbings, disgusting scratchings, heavy trampings and thundering knocks, in all the rooms and passages, have distressed us here for a period of nearly nine years, during my occupancy of this Cure. They still continue, to the annoyance of my family, the alarm of my servants, and the occasional flight of some of them.

"I am enabled clearly to trace their existence in this parsonage *to a period of sixty years past*; and I have little doubt that, were not, all the residents anterior to that time now passed away, I could be able to carry my successful scrutiny on and on.

"In 1833 and 1834 we kept almost open house to enable respectable people who were personally known, or had been introduced to us, to satisfy their curiosity. But our kindness was abused, our motives misinterpreted, and even our characters maligned. Therefore we closed our doors.

"In 1834 I had prepared my diary for publication. My work was to be published by Mr. Rodd, the eminent book seller of Newport street, London; but as the end had not arrived

I postponed my intention from day to day and year to year, in hope of such consummation." *...

"(Signed) JOHN STEWART.
"To Major Edward Moor."

Here we have an example how the knowledge and the memory of such occurrences slip away. I cannot learn that the Rev, Mr. Stewart's diary has ever appeared. The dislike of notoriety as a visionary, or worse, has caused the suppression of a hundred similar expositions.

The next case, one of knockings and other unexplained noises, apparently caused by the presence of a medium, I pass by; having, in a previous work, adduced many similar examples.

The last example I shall adduce from Major Moor's book is evidently one of

ENDEMICAL DISTURBANCES.

They occurred, says Major Moor, "in a respectable old Manor-house, in the north-eastern part of ——shire, which was, in very early times, the seat of a family of distinction in the county."

For eighteen years past this house had been occupied by a clergyman, known to Major Moor, who vouches for him as "a gentleman of most unimpeachable veracity and of deservedly high estimation." The account is sent to the Major by this clergyman himself, under date June 28, 1841.

It is also confirmed, from personal observation, by a nephew of Major Moor, Captain Frazer, of the Royal Artillery, in a letter dated July 19, 1841.

About the year 1680 the chief part of the ancient mansion was pulled down and the present house erected on the spot. The remaining portion of the old house was allowed to stand,

* Given on pages 93 to 95 of *Bealings Bells*.

and, separated only by a party-wall, it became thenceforth a farm-house, occupied by the tenant of the adjoining lands.

The estate came into the possession of the present owner's father in 1818; and, at that time the house had the reputation of being haunted; many tales of strange sights and sounds circulation, through the neighborhood. The popular belief ascribed these to the unblest spirit of a former owner, dead more than a hundred years ago.

In 1823 the clergyman who is the narrator came to reside there. Noises were often heard, but the family referred them, at first, to the occupants of the back portion of the mansion, the farm-house.

In 1826, however, this old part of the building was pulled down, and still the sounds continued, the same which the family had heard for years, and which have been heard, *almost nightly*, ever since.

These disturbances are thus described in the clergyman's letter: "In the dead of night, usually between the hours of twelve and two, when every member of the family is in bed and there is no imaginable cause to be assigned, a succession of heavy and distinct blows are heard, as of some weighty instrument upon a hollow wall or floor. They are sometimes so loud as to awaken one from sleep, sometimes scarcely audible."

On one occasion they burst forth with such violence that the clergyman, accustomed as he was to hear and disregard them, sprang out of bed and rushed to the head of the stairs under a conviction that the outer door of the house had been violently burst in. Another night, when going to bed, the thumpings, as violent, were continued so long that he had time to go to the back-door of the house and sally forth, in quest.

On yet another occasion, the sounds having long continued as if coming from the brew-house or the cellar, which adjoined each other, the clergyman and two of his brothers sat up and went to watch, two in the brew-house and one in the cellar. Then it ceased there, but was heard, by those in the brew-house, as if sounding underneath the lawn, fifty yards distant.

Great pains were taken, the clergyman says, to discover some cause for these noises, but quite unavailingly. A large old drain running underneath the house might, it was thought, be connected with the sounds. It was thoroughly examined, a man being sent through it, from one end to the other; but the noise proceeded as before.

"After above twenty years," says the reverend writer, "we are entirely in the dark as ever. The length of time it has been heard; the fact of every domestic in the house having been often changed during that time; and the pains that have been taken to investigate the matter, while every member of the house except the watcher was in bed—have put *the possibility of any trick out of the question*; and have convinced all the inmates that it cannot be accounted for on any of the usual suppositions of "horses in the stable kicking," or "dogs rapping with their fails," or "rats jumping in the tanks or drains." Horses stamp and dogs rap and rats gallop; but they do not make such sounds as that one startling and peculiar noise with which our ears are so familiar." *

Another phase of the phenomenon, mentioned both by the clergyman and by Captain Frazer, was of a singular character. When the former was a young man, returning home for the holidays, he was awoke, one night, by a loud noise, as if a cart, heavily laden with iron bars, was passing slowly along the path, under his windows. He threw open the shutters and window; it was bright moonlight, but he could see nothing, though the noise continued for some time. When he mentioned this the next morning, he was laughed at, for his pains. This incident had almost faded from his memory when, eleven years afterward, it was very strangely recalled. An uncle of his, visiting the family, was put to sleep in the same room. The next morning, at breakfast, this gentleman related that he had been awakened in the night by the clatter of a cart, as if laden with iron, drawn over the gravel walk beneath the windows of his

* *Beatings Bells*, p. 115.

room. He, too, having risen, opened the window to investigate, but nothing could he see. He retired to bed, thinking it might possibly have been a dream and lay awake for half an hour. At the end of that time he heard, a second time, With unmistakable distinctness, the same sounds of a loaded cart, again as if passing before the house.

Now," thought he I'll make sure of it." And, certain that he could discover the cause, he instantly sprang to the window and opened it—again to be thoroughly mystified and disappointed. Nothing whatever to be seen!

This incident is certified to by the gentleman in question in a separate certificate.* Therein he states that it occurred during the month of September, 1840, about three o'clock in the morning.

Three young ladies, residents of the house, certify to the reality of the sounds.†

Captain Frazer, having sat up one night with his host, to Witness these nightly visitations, thus describes the noises he heard:

"It was as if some one was striking the walls with a hammer or mallet muffled in flannel. It began at first slowly, with a

* Work quoted, p. 123. This may appear too whimsical for credence. It would probably so seem to me had I not sufficient proof of analogous occurrences. A young lady, intelligent and truthful, member of one of the best-known families in New York (but I am not authorized to give the name), told me recently that while on a visit of a few weeks to her aunt's country house, an old mansion situated in the eastern portion of that State, she had, more than once, while sitting in the drawing-room in broad daylight, heard the sound of a carriage and horses on the gravel-drive, as if approaching the main entrance. On going to the front window, with one or other of her cousins and seeing nothing there, they would say: "Oh, it's only the ghost-carriage:" and so, return quietly to their seats. It was, they told her, a common sound. A similar phenomenon will be found related as occurring in an English park; the fact certified as well by the lady of the house as by her lady's maid and by her butler, in SPICER'S *Facts and Fantasies*, London, 1853: p. 90; and again pp. 93, 94, 95.

† *Bealings Bells*, pp. 123-125.

distinct interval between each blow; then became more rapid, afterward followed no rule, but was slow or rapid as if caprice dictated. The noise did not appear always to come from the same part of the house. Sometimes it was heard faintly, as at a distance; then startlingly near. It was much louder than I expected: I think if I had been outside of the house I should have heard it.

"I spent three days at —— House; and heard the same noise two nights out of the three.... It seemed as if moving about the house, and coming, sometimes, so near that I expected to see the door open and some one come in.... The noise generally continued, at intervals, for about two hours. I think there was a slight interval between every five blows. But there was not any regularity in the striking of these five blows, and it was only at first that there was any regularity in the interval between them.... This noise usually seemed to me to become loud or faint, not so much from any intensity of the blows, as from a change of distance or position. And the opinion of the other witnesses bears me out in this remark.... I tried, in vain, to form even a probable conjecture as to the cause." *

The reverend gentleman who occupied the house (designated by Captain Frazer as L——) related to him the result of inquiries made by the family in regard to the antecedents of the house, as follows:

"It appeared from some of the oldest inhabitants of the parish, that —— House had formerly been occupied by an eccentric and dubious character, Squire ——. This gentleman had, in his younger days, travelled much on the Continent, had visited Italy and brought home an Italian valet—also a character. The two lived in seclusion; and after a time many reports and suspicions got abroad respecting them and the doings at the Hall; though nothing definite was brought against the squire except that he was a great miser. At last

* *Bealings Bells*, p. 129.

he died or disappeared (I forget which L. said), and shortly afterward noises began to be heard in the house. The common legend was that he had been *bricked up* by his Italian servant, between the walls in some room or vault, and so left to perish.*

I his disturbance was known familiarly in the family as "the ghost." The inconvenience of its reputation, the clergyman said to Captain Frazer, had been great; at times they had difficulty in getting servants to stay in the house. All allusion to the subject in general conversation was dropped by common consent.†

Here let me beg, of any earnest reader of mine, a brief hearing. I ask him:

Upon what rational plea can you set aside such evidence as this of ultramundane agency? I say nothing of the legend, and aver nothing as to the identity of any restless spirit causing disturbance. But the simple facts! under what tenable theory can you explain them away?

The clergyman did not give his name: are you surprised at that? Are you sure you would have given it yourself, under similar circumstances, thirty years ago? Another clergyman,‡ who gave his name, opened, about that time, the "House of Mystery," in which he lived, to respectable investigators. His reward was to find his motives misinterpreted and his character maligned: that was not encouraging.

Major Moor vouches for the unnamed clergyman as a gentleman highly and deservedly esteemed and of unimpeachable veracity; and the Major's nephew, Captain Frazer, during a visit of three days to the haunted mansion, finds all the statements made to be fully borne out by what he witnessed.

If you reject as monstrous—and I think you will—the supposition that these three gentlemen, all of professional standing

* Work cited, p. 129.

† The story is given in detail in *Bealings Bells*, pp. 112-133.

‡ The Rev. John Stewart. See preceding page 325.

and one of them Fellow of an eminent Society, should have combined to palm on the public, without conceivable motive, a tissue of lies, then what theory of mundane agency, as cause, have you left?

That it was a trick?—that they were imposed upon? That is the explanation usually set up to explain such phenomena; and, on the material hypothesis, there seems to be no other.

—A trick? You will find, if you look closely at the matter, that this supposition is more monstrous than the first. "Almost nightly," were the clergyman's words, and for twenty years. "Two nights out of three Captain Frazer witnessed them; and their duration was about two hours at a time. Two nights out of three for twenty years is nearly five thousand nights. So some one, prompted by mischief—or by malignity if you will—is to prowl about the house, hours at a time, for the purpose of disturbing the family, four or five days a week throughout half a life time. And so ponderous are the blows he strikes that they may be heard outside the house! And he is to move about the house, thus pounding, without being discovered for twenty years together. A servant to do this? No, they had all been often changed during the time. A member of the family? What! annoy themselves and frighten away their domestics, and raise every kind of unpleasant rumor throughout the neighborhood! An outsider? But why multiply absurdities?

Yet here is but one instalment of the difficulties. Twenty years is the clergyman's time of residence only. Go twenty years farther back; and, according to the united testimony of aged residents, the same disturbances still! And the dwellers of that day had it from their ancestors that the haunting began a hundred years ago. Are there centenarian nightly-disturbers of the peace of private families?

I pray you, earnest reader, to reflect on these things, and to ask yourself whether the theory of intermundane agency is so incredible that one ought to resort to unheard-of vagaries in order to escape it.

At this stage of our book-voyage together, some reader may think that an observation should be taken, so as to determine what progress, up to this point, we have made. He may grant, perhaps, that we have sufficient proof of the occasional occurrence, through the medium of bells and otherwise, of noises which we cannot rationally ascribe except to an extramundane or spiritual cause; and yet he may ask what is gained by such proof? He may suggest further that evidence of a Hereafter—spiritual revealings—should be intrinsically solemn and reverent; not, like tinklings of bells and rappings on walls, of trifling or whimsical character.

I might reply, in a general way, that nothing in all the works of Nature around us, how little soever appreciated by man, is trifling in the sight of Him who "Sees, with equal eye, as God of all, A hero perish or a sparrow fall: Atoms, or systems, into rain hurled, And now a bubble burst, and now a world."

But, aside from this great truth, is there anything very solemn or reverent, to the common mind, in the fall, from its parent tree, of an apple? An infant sees it and claps its tiny hands; an uncultured peasant notes it as evidence that his orchard-crop is ripening; but to a Newton it suggests the law which holds planets to their course and governs half the natural phenomena that occur throughout the world.

As to what may be gained by proving such incidents as this chapter records, Southey, speaking in his *Life of Wesley*, of analogous disturbances in Samuel Wesley's parsonage,* and of the good end such things may be supposed to answer, wisely suggests that it would be end sufficient if sometimes one of those unhappy sceptics—who see nothing beyond the narrow sphere of mortal existence should, "from the well-established truth of one such story, trifling and objectless as it might otherwise appear," be led to believe in immortality.

* Footfalls, pp. 224-239.

Let us go a step farther. There is not habitual intercourse between the world which now is and that which is to come: it is only now and then that the denizens of the one perceive those of the other. We seem, probably, something like apparitions to the immortals, as they, when they revisit earth, to us. But no one who ever truly loved and who believes in another life, can doubt that, for a time, the better class of those who have left friends and kindred here still cling to and sympathize with them. We have abundant evidence, even in these pages, that they often earnestly desire to convince us, past possible denial, of their continued existence, of their well-being and of their undying love. That evidence goes to show that they often diligently seek communion, sometimes from affection, sometimes from other motives, and that they have difficulties in reaching us: difficulties wisely interposed, no doubt; for if spiritual intercourse were as common as worldly communion, who would be willing to labor and to wait in this dim and checkered world of ours?

They seek, from time to time, to visit us. But, coming from their world of spirits, invisible to ordinary sight, inaudible by ordinary speech, how are they to make their presence known? How are they to attract our attention?

In what manner does a traveller, arriving under cloud of night, before a fast-closed mansion, seek to reach the indwellers—seek to announce his presence? Is it not BY KNOCKING OR RINGING?

Are we sure that Scripture texts are not read in the next world, and do not find their application there? Are we sure that, to the earth-longings of love immortal, the words of Jesus never suggest themselves: "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

The inhabitants of a mansion at which admission is sought, seeing no one in the darkness, may at first not heed the knock or the ring; and the pilgrim, for the time, may turn away, disappointed. So it has been, probably, in thousands of cases, before any one ventured to interrogate the sounds. Men

either doubted whether these came from a living intelligence; or they feared to question that intelligence; or they despaired of any answer, having been taught that though there had been spirit-communion in ages past, it was impossible, or forbidden, to-day.

So it may have been in the cases related in this chapter. In many, possibly in all the cases cited, some spirit may have desired to communicate with earth, as did that of the "Repentant Housekeeper," whose story I have told on a preceding page.* But if so, they were doomed to disappointment. In early days the witnesses of spiritual appeals were as that multitude on the Galilean shore to whom Jesus spoke, from the ship, in parables; and of whom he said, "Hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." The field was not yet white to harvest. The time had not come.

I have a few more words to say, in the next chapter, touching the apparent triviality of some spiritual manifestation&

* See preceding page 297.

CHAPTER IV.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA SOMETIMES RESULT IN SEEMING TRIFLES.

"Nee dens intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus Inciderit."—HORACE.

HORACE, in his advice to writers of plays, assumes that it is not fitting a god should intervene, unless the case is worthy of divine interference. If God ever *did* directly intervene—in other words, if there *were* miracles—the poet would be in the right. But what have been interpreted as miracles do frequently manifest themselves, as the rainbow does, with little or no apparent use or benefit, except it be, like the bow in the clouds, to inspire hope into the heart of man: a sufficient proof that they are not, any more than the rainbow, interferences of God.

This is true even of the highest class of spiritual phenomena; for example, of apparitions. Witness the story of

THE EARL OF BUCHAN'S BUTLER.

Thomas, Lord Erskine, though he entered the legal profession comparatively late in life, was, at the commencement of the present century, one of its brightest ornaments. Elevated to the peerage for his abilities, and Lord Chancellor under the Grenville administration, his character, both as regards uprightness and sagacity, has every element of trustworthiness. He died in 1823.

In the year 1811 and on the Saturday first succeeding the appointment of the Prince of Wales (afterward George IV.) as Regent, Lord Erskine and the Duchess of Gordon called on Lady Morgan, the well-known literary celebrity.

"The Duchess," says Lady Morgan, "related a very curious

and romantic tale of second-sight in her own family, which amused, if it did not convert me; while the affecting manner in which it was told left no doubt of the sincerity of the narrator." Lady Morgan then continues thus:

"I also," said Lord Erskine, "believe in second-sight, be cause I have been its subject. When I was a very young man I hall been, for some time, absent from Scotland. On the morning of my arrival in Edinburgh, as I was descending the steps of a close on coming out from a bookseller's shop, I met our old family butler. He looked greatly changed, pale, wan, and shadowy as a ghost. 'Eh! old boy,' said I, 'what brings you here?' He replied: 'To meet your honor, and solicit your interference with my Lord,* to recover a sum due to me, which the steward, at the last settlement, did not pay.'

"Struck by his looks and manner, I bade him follow me to the bookseller's, into whose shop I stepped back; but when I turned round to speak to him, he had vanished.

"I remembered that his wife carried on some little trade in the Old Town. I remembered even the house and flat she occupied, which I had often visited in my boyhood. Having made it out, I found the old woman in widow's mourning. Her husband had been dead for some months, and had told her, on his death-bed, that my father's steward had wronged him of some money, and that when Master Tom returned, he would see her righted.

"This I promised to do, and shortly after I fulfilled my promise. The impression was indelible; and I am extremely cautious how I deny the possibility of such supernatural visitings as your Grace has just instanced in your own family."†

The manner in which the talented lady who relates to us this story sees fit to receive and to interpret it, should be, to candid inquirers, a warning lesson

Lady Morgan, following the dictates of that persistent scepticism

* Lord Erskine was a younger son of the tenth Earl of Buchan.

† *The Book of the Boudoir*, by Lady MORGAN, London, 1829: vol i. pp. 123-125.

which men and women having a reputation in society are wont to adopt, or to assume; and having settled it, probably, in her own mind, that it behooves all who would be deemed enlightened to think, or at least to speak, of a belief in apparitions as a superstition—is content to set down Lord Erskine's narrative as due—these are the exact words she uses—as due only to the "dog-ears and folds of early impression, which the strongest minds retain." To the narrator, however, she ascribes sincerity. She says, "Either Lord Erskine did, or did not, believe this strange story: if he did, what a strange aberration of intellect!—if he did not, what a stranger aberration from truth! My opinion is that he *did* believe it."

What sort of mode to deal with alleged facts is this? A gentleman distinguished in a profession of which the eminent members are the best judges of evidence in the world—a gentleman whom the hearer believes to be truthful—relates what, on a certain day, and in a certain place, both specified, he saw and heard. What he saw was the appearance of one, in life well-known to him, who had been some months dead. What he heard from the same source was a statement in regard to matters of which previously he had known nothing whatever, which statement, on after inquiry, he learns to be strictly true; a statement, too, which had occupied and interested the mind of the deceased just before his decease. The natural inference from these facts, if they are admitted, is that, under certain circumstances which as yet we may be unable to define, those over whom the death-change has passed, still interested in the concerns of earth, may, for a time at least, retain the power of occasional interference in these concerns; for example in an effort to right an injustice done.

But rather than admit such an inference—rather than accept disinterested evidence coming from a witness acknowledged to be sincere, and known to the world as eminently capable—a lady of the world assumes to explain it away by summarily referring the whole to the "dog-ears and folds of early impression"!

What human testimony cannot be set aside on the same vague and idle assumption?

It is time we should learn that the hypothesis of spiritual intervention is entitled to a fair trial; and that, in conducting that trial, we have no right to disregard the ordinary rules of evidence.

Either Lord Erskine, one morning in Edinburgh, issuing, from a bookseller's shop, met what wore the appearance of an old family servant who had been some months dead—or else Lord Erskine lied. Either Lord Erskine heard words spoken as if that appearance had spoken them, which words contained a certain allegation touching business which that servant, dying, had left unsettled—or else Lord Erskine lied. Either Lord Erskine ascertained, by immediate personal interrogation of the widow, that her husband, on his death-bed, had made the self same allegation to her which the apparition made to Lord Erskine—or else Lord Erskine lied. Finally either, as the result of this appearance and its speech, a debt found due to the person whose counterpart it was, was actually paid to his widow—or else Lord Erskine lied.

But Lady Morgan expresses her conviction that Lord Erskine did not lie.

In itself that was a trifle. Thousands on thousands of such cases of petty injustice occur and pass away unnoticed and unredressed. To the widow it was, undoubtedly, of serious moment; but I think no sensible man will imagine it a matter to justify the direct interference of God. If so, and if Lord Erskine Spoke truth, an apparition is a natural phenomenon.

There are cases, however, where the triviality of result from phenomena that are clearly of a spiritual character is even more apparent than in the preceding example. Here is one:

PREDICTION IN REGARD TO A MERE TRIFLE.

In the spring of the year 1853, a young gentleman, well-known to rue, whom I shall designate as Mr. X——, who is not

a Spiritualist, and has never given any attention to spiritual phenomena, had a remarkable dream. He was then engaged in a retail store in Second street, Philadelphia; and his dream was to the effect that, the next day at twelve o'clock, he would sell a hundred and fifty dollars' worth of a particular kind of goods, namely, drap d'ete (summer cloth), to a customer; the particular person, however, not being designated.

Going down to the store next morning, he related his dream, between eight and nine o'clock, to a young clerk employed in The establishment. "Nonsense! was the reply; "the thing is impossible. You know very well that we don't sell so large a lot of drap d'ete to one customer in ten years."

Mr. X—— assented to the truth of this; and, in addition, he called to mind that, according to his dream, it was he himself who was to sell it. But it so happened that it was not he who attended at the counter where the article was sold, but another: in whose absence, however, should he be accidentally called off, Mr. X—— was wont to take that place.

So deep was the impression produced by the dream that, as the time approached, Mr. X—— became very nervous; and his agitation increased when, some little time before mid-day, the salesman referred to was called off, and Mr. X—— had to supply his place.

Almost exactly at twelve a customer entered, approached the counter and asked for drap d'ete. Mr. X—— felt himself turn pale, and had hardly presence of mind enough left to reach down the package. It turned out that the article was required for clothing in a public institution; and the amount purchased amounted either to a hundred and forty-eight dollars or a hundred and fifty-two dollars; Mr. X—— does not now recollect which.

The above was related to me* by Mr. X——, now in business for himself in Philadelphia; and I know sufficient of that gentleman's character to warrant me in saying that the particulars

* In Philadelphia, July 13, 1859.

here given may be confidently relied on; and that Mr. X——'s word may be unhesitatingly taken when he assured me, as he did after completing the story, that there had occurred no antecedent circumstance whatever which could give him the slightest reason to imagine that any one would apply for drap d'ete; or that there was the most remote chance of his effecting the sale in question.

In this case the minute particulars of time, place, and attendant circumstances—the unforeseen absence of the usual salesman, the specific article demanded, the unusual quantity so closely approaching the amount actually sold—are such that we are compelled to reject the idea of chance coincidence.

In the Erskine case one can comprehend the motive that recalled the departed spirit; the same which operates in the majority of such cases—attraction through the affections: here displayed in humble fashion, indeed—in anxiety that the "auld gude-wife," as a Scotch domestic of those days would be likely to phrase it, should, in her poverty and widowhood, have her own—yet none the less a phase of the longings of true love.

But in the Philadelphia case one can imagine no attracting motive whatever: seeing that the predicted sale, to a particular amount and at a particular hour and day, was of no consequence to any human being, except only as proof that, when Paul enumerated among the gifts common in the early Christian Church, the gift of prophecy, he was speaking of a phenomenon which actually exists and which is not miraculous.

BOOK III.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPIRIT-RAP.

It is not a difficult thing, if one has time and patience and an honest love of truth, to satisfy one's self, past all possible peradventure, that what is called the spirit-rap is, like the electric spark, a genuine phenomenon, with momentous sequences. And these strange echoes may be as surely referred to agencies from another sphere as the spark from the Leyden jar may be identified with the lightning from the thunder-cloud. They occur, like that mysterious spark, under certain conditions; but they cannot, as it can, be called forth with certainty at any moment; for, being spiritual in their origin, they are not at the beck and call of man.

The conditions under which they present themselves are sometimes of a personal, sometimes of an endemical character. They occur more frequently and more persistently in certain localities than in others, and they are heard much more frequently in the presence of some persons, called mediums or sensitives, than of others. They are usually most loud and powerful where the two conditions, personal and local, are found combined.

I have heard them as delicate, tiny tickings, and as thundering poundings. I have heard them not only throughout

our own land, but in foreign countries; as in England, France, Italy. I have heard them in broad daylight and in darkened rooms; usually most violent in the latter. I have heard them in my own house and in a hundred others; out of doors; at sea and on land; in steamer and in sail-boat; in the forest and on the rocks of the sea-shore.

But in no circumstances have I witnessed this wonderful phenomenon under such varied conditions, and with such satisfactory results, as in the presence of two members of that family, in whose dwelling in Western New York, it originally showed itself—namely, the eldest and the youngest daughters of Mrs. Fox.* The faculty of mediumship, or as it might otherwise be expressed, the gift of spiritual sensitiveness, was hereditary in the family.† In Leah Fox (Mrs. Underhill) and in Kate Fox I have found the manifestations of this power, or gift, in connection with the spirit-rap, more marked and more readily to be obtained, than in any other persons with whom I am acquainted, either here or in Europe.

And it is due to these ladies and to Mr. Underhill to say that they have kindly afforded me at all times every facility I could desire to test these and other spiritual phenomena under the strictest precautions against deception: well knowing that I took these for the sake of others rather than to remove doubts of my own. Nor, in all my intercourse with them, have I ever seen the slightest cause for believing that they were actuated by other motive than a frank wish that the truth should be ascertained and acknowledged.

In the autumn of the same year in which I published "Footfalls," I accepted from Mr. Underhill‡ an invitation to spend a week or two at his house: thus obtaining ample opportunity to investigate this and cognate manifestations.

* For particulars of the disturbances in the Fox family, especially on March 31, 1848, and succeeding days, see *Footfalls*, pp. 287-298.

† *Footfalls*, pp. 284, 285.

‡ Daniel Underhill, President of an old-established Insurance Company in Wall street, New York.

One of my first experiments was to pray Mrs. Underhill to accompany me over the house, in quest of rappings. Beginning in the lower parlors, I asked if we could have raps on the floor, then from the walls, then from the ceiling, then on various articles of furniture. In each Case the response was prompt, and the raps loud enough to be heard in the next room. Then I asked for them on the steel grate and on the marble mantle-piece. Thence they sounded quite distinctly, but less sharply—with a duller sound—than before. Then, setting open one of the doors into the passage, placing myself so that I could see both sides of it and putting my hand on one of its panels, I begged Mrs. Underhill to stand a few feet from it and, reaching out one of her arms, to touch it with the tips of her fingers. Within two or three seconds after she had done so, there were raps on the door as loud as if some one had knocked on it sharply with his knuckles; and the wood vibrated quite sensibly under my touch, as if struck by a pretty strong blow.*

When we passed out into the corridor and up the stairway, it was no longer necessary to request rappings. They sounded under our feet as we went; on the steps and then from the hand-rail, as we ascended; from various parts of a sitting-room and of other apartments on the second floor: then, again, on the stairs leading to the third story and in every chamber there. It was evident that, in Mrs. Underhill's presence, they could be had from any spot in the house. I found, too, that if I requested to have any particular number of raps, they were given with unfailing precision.

The sounds were peculiar. I could not imitate them with the hammer, nor with the knuckle on wood, nor in any other way. They seemed more or less muffled.

I have repeated similar experiments several times with Mrs.

* Some time afterward I repeated the same experiment at the house of Mrs. C——, sister of one of the best known among the New York editors, where I accidentally met Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, and where conversation happened to turn on the raps.

Underhill and with her sister Kate, in various places, and always with the same result. With other mediums the responses were more or less prompt; and sometimes they were confined we were sitting.

Passing by, for the moment, the hundreds of proofs which teach that an occult intelligence governs the spirit-rap and speaks through it, I keep to the physical aspect of the phenomenon.

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; 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 light-house. 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. *

The next experiment was one which I imagine that no one but myself ever thought of trying.

MOVING A LEDGE OF ROCK ON THE SEA-SHORE.

On the twenty-fourth of August, 1861, I accepted an invitation from Mr. S——U——, of New Rochelle, a sea-side village on the western shore of Long Island Sound, to spend the next day with him, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Underhill.

On the afternoon of August 25, Mr. U—— drove us out in his carriage, through the picturesque country adjoining the village; the party consisting of Mr. U—— and his wife, Mrs. Underhill, and myself.

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 under

* Notes of these experiments were taken, immediately on my return to New York.

lying 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—— U—— 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, surge for a moment drowned the sound.

Without making any remark as to what I had felt, I asked Mr. U—— to put his hand on the ledge. "Why!" he suddenly exclaimed, "the whole rock vibrate!"

During all this time Mrs. Underhill sat, as far as I could judge, in complete repose.

It will be observed that it was at my suggestion this experiment on a plateau of rock was tried. From that day forth I did not consider it necessary further to test the spirit-rap.*

It is true, however, that there were, to dispel my scepticism, other proofs (one obtained more than a year before this), and to which I have not yet alluded. In the above there was appeal to two senses—of hearing and of touch. The previous proofs to which I allude were evidenced by a third sense, usually considered the most trustworthy of all.

*Written out from notes taken the same day.

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 Quaker, 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 to Kate.

While the hands of the circle remained joined, I looked under the table 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 that what I saw was not by human agency, I asked *mentally*:* "Will the spirit strike

* I have found it necessary, in making a mental request, or asking a mental question, to concentrate my thoughts, by an effort, on what I wish to obtain or to inquire.

with that light three times?" which was done forth with: 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 ground, at intervals, with a soft and muffled sound, just distinguishable. *

On another occasion, during the summer of the next year, I obtained still more remarkable manifestations.

TOUCHED BY THE AGENCY THAT CAUSES THE SPIRIT-RAP.

On the evening of the twelfth of June, 1861, having two days before arrived in New York as Commissioner to purchase arms for the State of Indiana, I called, unexpectedly to the family, on Mr. Underhill and proposed that we should have a spiritual session. Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, who knew that I had already begun to collect materials for this volume, readily assented. †

For greater quiet we ascended to a parlor on the second floor; the party consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Mr. Gilbert, an aged gentleman and old friend of the family who happened to call in the course of the evening, and myself.

Soon after we sat clown there was spelled out, by raps on the floor: "Go in back room." This back room was Mr. and Mrs. Underhill's bed-chamber. Adjourning to it we sat down to a small rectangular table (one of a *nest* of tables), Mr. and Mrs. Underhill on my left and Mr. Gilbert on my right. The small size of the table brought us close together.

* From notes taken next morning, February 23.

† To those who know Mr. Underhill's family, I need hardly say that they never accept any remuneration, directly or indirectly, on such occasions. Nor has Kate Fox, knowing the work I was engaged in, ever been willing to take payment from me for any sitting With her. "You have a better chance to get the highest manifestations 'without money and without price,'" she said to me one day.

To this bedroom there were three doors; one opening into a bath-room, a second on the second-floor corridor, and a third on a passage leading into the parlor which we had first selected to sit in. In this passage were several closets and presses.

At Mr. Underhill's suggestion, before sitting down I thoroughly examined these closets and presses, as well as the bedroom itself and the parlor to which the passage led. I also locked the outer door of that parlor and the doors of the bedroom leading into the bath-room and the corridor. The door between the parlor and bedroom did not lock; but by the preceding precautions no one from without, even if provided with a key, could enter either of the rooms.

Soon after we sat down there was spelled out, Darken." We extinguished the gas. Then was spelled, "Sing." While Mrs. Underhill sang, the raps, from different parts of the floor, kept time. After a brief interval they shifted from the floor to a lower bar of the chair on which I sat, still keeping time to the measure. The chair was sensibly jarred—a vibration to each rap.

After sitting about six or seven minutes, there appeared, floating, above our heads, a light which seemed phosphorescent. It was rectangular in shape, and about three or four inches long. After a time it rose to the ceiling, floating backward and forward from one part of the room to another. At times it descended till only a foot or two above our heads; moving slowly from side to side, over our circle.

As I was looking intently, at it, there was spelled out, by delicate raps on the floor: "I was near you in early life, dear Robert, and am still nearer to You now."

Mrs. Underhill. "Is it Mr. Owen's mother?"

Answer (by the raps). "No."

Myself. "Does the first name begin with C?"

Answer. "Yes."

Mrs. Underhill. "How many letters in the name?"

Answer. "Seven."

Mrs. Underhill. "Caroline, is it?"

Myself. "Caroline has eight letters. Is it another name under which I have had many communications?" *By the raps.* "Yes, yes." Then the light floated toward me and remained stationary back of my left shoulder. I turned and looked fixedly at it. It appeared to be about the size of a small human hand, and as if covered with a shining veil. I could not, however, distinguish a defined outline.

Presently it approached ray left shoulder, then receded from it, five or six times. Each time I felt a light touch, as of fingers on my shoulder; each touch exactly contemporaneous with the motion of the light.

Then it floated away, rising just above the table at which we were sitting, nearly to the ceiling. I asked that it would pass to the door leading into the corridor and rap there, if it could. Thereupon we saw it pass to the upper part of the door in question, and perceived its motion, and heard the corresponding rap, as it struck it, eight or ten times in succession. It was evident, too, that it was not we alone who heard the sounds; for a lap-dog, outside in the corridor, barked, as if alarmed. Again, as on the former occasion, the idea that suggested itself to me was that of a luminous hammer.

Then the light floated down to Mr. Underhill, increasing in brightness, and seeming to touch him. He said it did touch him, as if with some fine, soft, woven stuff.

I asked that it would touch my hand. It moved slowly across the table, rested for a brief space above my hand, then dropped and touched my wrist. The feeling was like that from the gentle touch of a finger.

Mr. Gilbert (to me). Are you not tempted to grasp it, so as to feel what it is like?

Myself. I have reason to believe that one is not justified in doing so; and for that reason I refrain.

By the raps. Thank you,*

* Two highly-intelligent friends of mine, now deceased, Dr. A. A. Wilson and Professor James Mapes, both formerly of New York, each

Then the light passed to Mrs. Underhill, touching, as she stated, her head and neck.

I asked that it would touch my head also. It floated from her to me, passing behind me; and I felt as if a soft and fine piece of gauze, gathered up loosely in the hand, were pressed gently against the back of my head and neck. Also, now and then, it seemed as if some more solid substance—part of a hand holding the gauze, was the impression I got—touched me lightly. The action was as if by a person standing directly behind me; yet, had I not seen it, a few minutes before, cross the table and touch my wrist, before my very eyes? Besides, as the touchings on my head and neck continued for some time, I several times spoke of them during their continuance and all present joined in the conversation. Thus I am *certain* that they were still seated at their places.

Then the light rose again into the air. Looking closely at it, as it floated near the ceiling, I observed that there moved across the luminous body, back and forth, dark lines, or rods, as thick as a finger. I could not, however, make out the form of fingers. Mr. Underhill said he saw fingers distinctly.

While the light was floating above us there proceeded from it occasionally a slight crepitation.

There was not, throughout this sitting, the slightest indication, by footfall, rustle of dress, or otherwise, of any one rising or moving about the room. When the luminous body I have been describing came near either of the assistants I could on one occasion, firmly grasped what seemed a luminous hand, appearing as above. In both cases the result was the same. What was laid hold of melted entirely away—so each told me—in his grasp. I have had communications to the effect that the spirit thus manifesting its presence suffers when this is done, and that a spirit would have great reluctance in appearing, in bodily form, to any one whom it could not trust to refrain from interference with the phenomena, except by its express permission. In my experiments I have always governed my self accordingly; and I ascribe my success in part to this continence.

dimly perceive, by its light, the outline of the person it approached.*

Sometimes when spirits that have exhibited, while on earth, a violent character, seek to communicate, the raps are of corresponding violence.

HEAVY POUNDINGS BY A HOMICIDE.

At an evening session, August 17, 1861, at Mr. Underhill's† (by bright gas-light), we heard, after a time, not the usual moderate raps, but instead loud thumpings or poundings, such as might be produced by blows dealt on the floor by a ten-pound mallet. By these we had spelling, on calling the alphabet. Inquiring the pounder's name, there was spelled out, "Jackson."

I inquired if the spirit had formerly lived in Indiana, where I had known a man of that name. Answer, by a single thump, "No!"

Then we asked if it was a person known to any of us. Answer: "The man you do not admire."

Thereupon it occurred to me that it might possibly be Jackson, the innkeeper of Alexandria, at whose hands, some two months before, Colonel Ellsworth, having taken down the Confederate flag from the roof of Jackson's inn, had met his death. As soon as I suggested this, there was an affirmative reply, by three sonorous poundings.

We spoke of Ellsworth and, by the poundings, was spelled out: "His manner tantalized me."

Mrs. Underhill said: "I pitied that man; no doubt he did what he thought right." Reply, by the poundings: "I defended the flag."

* I took notes of the phenomena as they presented themselves; writing with pencil in the dark.

† Mr. and Mrs. Underhill and myself were the only sitters; and I took notes of this sitting at the time.

He then said, further, that he had once visited one of Mrs. Underhill's circles; and that there were in the Southern States many believers in spiritual phenomena.

I found, by experiment, that when these poundings occurred on the second floor, I could hear them, as distinctly as if a mechanic were at work, both on the first floor, below, and on the third floor, above. They caused the floor to vibrate; and it was scarcely possible to resist the conviction that there actually was a ponderous mallet at work under the table; yet, though I looked several times to satisfy myself, there was nothing there.

Occasionally, it would seem, the character of the raps may depend, in a measure, on the medium: yet, of this I have not sufficient evidence to speak with certainty.

BLOWS OF STARTLING VIOLENCE.

During an evening sitting, on October 25, 1860, in the front parlor of Mrs. Fox's residence, in the city of New York, there were present Kate Fox, her sister Margaret,* and myself.

From this parlor were two doors, one opening on the passage, the other on a back parlor. Both were locked before, we sat down.

Raps spelled out, "Darken." We did so; then, after the appearance of a few luminous phenomena, there came suddenly a tremendous blow on the centre of the table; a blow so violent that we all instinctively started back. By the sound it was such a stroke, apparently dealt by a strong man with a heavy bludgeon, as would have killed an one, and such a blow as would have broken in pieces a table, if not very stout, and would have left severe marks upon any table, no matter how

* The only time, I believe, at which she joined our circle. Having become a Catholic, she had scruples about sitting.

hard the wood. The same blow, apparently with the same force, was repeated five or six times. It was impossible to witness such violent demonstrations without a certain feeling of alarm; for it was evident that there was power sufficient to produce fatal results; yet I myself felt no serious apprehensions of injury, knowing of no case on record in which any one had thus been seriously hurt.

When, after a time, we relit the gas, the most careful examination of the table, above and below, convinced me that there was not a scratch, nor the slightest indentation, either on the polished top or on the under surface.

I consider it a physical impossibility that, by any human agency, blows indicating such formidable power should have been dealt without leaving severe marks on the table which received them.

Mrs. Underhill afterward informed me that she had several times, in presence of her sister Margaret, been greatly alarmed by blows as tremendously violent as those I have described. I never heard any so apt to terrify weak nerves, either before or since. But, several years afterward, I witnessed a demonstration of occult power, more quiet indeed—not calculated to alarm—but, to judge by the sound, of nearly equal force.

KNOCKINGS THAT SHOOK THE HOUSE.

On this occasion, March 10, 1864, Mr. and Mrs. Underhill and myself only were present, in the second-story front parlor of their house; and the session was in the evening, by bright gas-light.

In a few minutes after we sat down there came sounds of a very peculiar character. Each stroke—if that term be applicable—sounded exactly like the dropping on the floor, from the height perhaps of two feet, of a medium-sized cannonball. At each sound the entire floor of the room shook quite distinctly. We felt the concussion beneath our feet; and it was communicated through the shaken table to our hands.

Occasionally it sounded exactly as if the cannon ball rebounded, dropping a second time with diminished force.

By these cannon-ball-droppings there was a call for the alphabet (five strokes), and sentences were spelled out to the effect that the operating spirit was no stranger to me; that the book for which I was then collecting materials would be acceptable, as supplying a great public need; and that I should "witness some startling things from time to time." Then was added:

"I am little changed. My knowledge of the spirit-world is not so great as you would suppose. I am sure of the things I once hoped for. I have found my beloved friends in Heaven, and I know I live in immortality.—A. D. WILSON."

Not much, if one will; not much, as a superficial mind may receive it: only a brief, homely message. Yet, if it be true, how immeasurable its importance! How infinitely consoling the simple truths it unveils!

Dr. Wilson, well-known to me and an intimate friend of the Underhills, was an earliest spiritualist and an excellent man. He was a New York physician of large practice and had died less than a year before.

The sounds by which the sentence (coming, as alleged, from this deceased friend) had been spelled out, letter by letter, seemed to be so unmistakably those of a ponderous metallic globe dropped on the floor, that Mrs. Underhill said: "I can scarcely persuade myself that there is not a heavy ball there." Upon which there was spelled out by these same mysterious poundings:

"Well, then, look!"

We removed the table and carefully examined the floor. Nothing whatever to be seen.

As on a previous occasion, I went downstairs; and, on the floor below, I heard the poundings just as distinctly as when in the upper room. It was the same when I ascended to the floor above. Mrs. Underhill expressed a fear that the sounds

would disturb the neighbors in the adjoining houses; and I think they must have heard them.

With a single additional example I close this branch of the subject.

EFFECTS WHEN LOCAL AND PERSONAL INFLUENCES COMBINE.

A HAUNTED HOUSE.

On the twenty-second of October, 1860, I paid a visit, along with Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Kate Fox, and another lady and gentleman, to Quaker friends of theirs, Mr. and Mrs. Archer, then living within five-minutes drive of Dobbs' Ferry on the Hudson, in a large, old house, surrounded with magnificent trees, and in which, at one time, Washington had his headquarters.

This house has been, for a long term of years, reputed haunted. The person still supposed to haunt it is a former owner, Peter Livingston, who, on account of lameness, was wont to use a small, invalid's carriage; and the report was that, at the dead of night, the sound of that carriage was heard in the corridors and especially in one of the rooms of the house.

We sat, late in the evening, first in this room; a lower bedchamber, having two doors of exit. Both were locked before the session began, the keys being left in the doors. Besides our own party, there were present only Mr. and Mrs. Archer. By direction of the raps we extinguished the lights and joined hands.

Within a single minute afterward, such a clatter began, apparently within three or four feet of where I sat that (as we afterward learned) it was heard and commented on, by some visitors in a room separated from that in which we sat by two doors and a long passage. It seemed as if heavy substances of iron, such as ponderous dumb-bells or weights, were rolled over the floor. Then there were poundings, as if with some heavy mallet; then sharp, loud knockings, as if with the end of

a thick staff. Then was heard a sound precisely resembling the rolling of a small carriage on a plank floor. At first this sound seemed close to us, then it gradually lessened, as if the carriage were wheeled to a great distance, until it became, at last, inaudible. Then we asked to have it again, as if coming near; and forthwith it commenced with the faintest sound, approaching by degrees till the carriage might be supposed almost to touch the backs of our chairs. Occasionally there was a pounding on the floor, so heavy as to cause a sensible vibration.

When we relit the lamp and searched the room, the doors were found still locked, with the keys in them; and there was not an article to be found with which such noises could, by human agency, have been made.

Then, at my suggestion, we transferred the experiment to a large parlor opposite, that had been used, I believe, by Livingstone as a dining-room. Again we locked the doors, and, obeying a communication from the raps, put out the lights and joined hands. And again, in less than two minutes, the disturbance began as before. At times the racket was so over-powering that we could scarcely hear one another speak. The sound, as of heavy metallic bodies rolled over the floor was very distinct. Also some weighty substance seemed to be dragged, as by a rope, backward and forward, as much as fifteen or twenty feet each way.

All this time we kept a candle on the table, with a box of matches beside it; and, several times, when the clatter was at its height, we struck a light, to see what the effect would be. In every instance the sounds almost immediately died away, and the search we made in the room for some explanation of the strange disturbance was quite unavailing. The sudden transition, without apparent cause, from such a babel of noises to a dead silence, was an experience such as few have had, in this world. Till the experiment was repeated, again and again, always with the same result, there was temptation to imagine that our senses had been playing us false.

The impression on myself and the other assistants with whom I conversed was such, as to produce a feeling that it was a physical impossibility such sounds could be produced, except by employing ponderous bodies.*

After a time the centre-table at which we sat was pounded on the top, and then from beneath, as with the end of a heavy bludgeon; and that (to judge by the sound) with such violence that we felt serious apprehensions that it would be broken to pieces.

When the noises ceased and we relit the lamps, I and others examined the table minutely; but no indentations or other marks of injury were to be found; nor was there an article to be seen in the room with which any one could have dealt such blows; nor anything there except the usual furniture of a parlor.

Both these rooms were in a portion of the house known to have been built and occupied by Peter Livingstone.

I feel confident that the sounds could have been heard a hundred yards off.†

It is seldom that any one, going in search of phenomena of this class, comes upon anything so, remarkable as the foregoing. The conditions are rare: a locality where, for several generations, ultramundane, interventions have spontaneously appeared; and the presence, in that locality, of two among the most powerful mediums for physical manifestations to be found in this, or it may be in any other country.

I cannot reasonably doubt that, before the present decade closes, the intelligent portion of society will be as thoroughly convinced of the reality of the spirit-rap as enlightened inquirers already are that the size and form of the brain have

* See, for similar phenomena, Footfalls, p. 231.

† See Footfalls, pp. 217, 252, 275, for similar noises. I wrote out this account on the morning after the incidents occurred. We sat till midnight.

something to do with intellect, and that magnetic influences may produce hypnotic effects.

When we have admitted the intermundane character of these, wonderful echoes, the first short step in experimental Spiritualism is taken: but only the first. The rap may be ultramundane; and yet that single fact is insufficient to prove that deceased friends can communicate with us. We must Seek, in the rap-spelled communications themselves, for conclusive evidence that intercourse from beyond the bourne is not forbidden to man.

If I have devoted more space than seems needed to the proof, in a physical sense, of so simple a phenomenon, I beg to remind the reader of the persistent nonsense that has been spoken and written about spirit-rapping, and of the prejudices that have grown up under the ridicule which has thus attached itself to the term.

CHAPTER II.

MOVING CONSIDERABLE BODIES BY OCCULT AGENCY.

"When they come to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axehead 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 shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in 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.* 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 ponderable 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 Mr. 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

* Footfalls, pp. 110, 112, 113 (note), 252, 236, 276, 279 to 282 and many others.

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 enabled to obtain

'A CRUCIAL TEST.'

The table remaining suspended, with the constant weight at the figure 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 throb 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 steelyard was borrowed for the occasion from a wholesale grocer, living in the neighborhood.

How much a Jewish axehead commonly weighed, in the days of Elisha, I know not; it could be but a few pounds. Our miracle (*dunamis*) 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 medium&

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.* It was held in the same room and at the same table mentioned above, and by gas-light. Present Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Kate Fox, Mr. Harrison Gray Dyar, 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 ground 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 farther, 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

* 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.

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 ground 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—*les apports*, as the French spiritualists term it—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.

It makes not, under the circumstances, at all against it, that Mrs. Underhill and her sister were, at one period of their lives,

* The accounts of this and of the sitting of October 13, were both written out the next morning. To prevent repetition I here remark that notes of all the sittings recorded in this volume were taken either at the time, or next day or (in a few cases) a day or two, later.

in the habit of sitting as professional mediums. But even if it did, still, in the seclusion of a private family and in the absence of every one who had ever, till a few months before, been suspected of possessing spiritual powers—I have witnessed occurrences even more marvellous than those above related, Thus it happened:

A TABLE, FLUNG INTO THE AIR, ROTATES.

In the spring of 1870 I was visiting a friend of mine, Mr. B——, whose charming residence on Staten Island commands a magnificent view over the Bay of New York, with the distant city on one hand and the Narrows, opening into the ocean, on the other.

The family had no knowledge of Spiritualism and scant faith in any of its phenomena, until a month or two before my visit, when one of the sons, a young man whom I shall call Charles, suddenly found himself, as much to his surprise as—to that of his relatives, gifted with rare spiritual powers.

Passing by, for the present, the most remarkable of these, I here reproduce, from minutes taken next day and submitted for correction to the assistants, part of a record of what I witnessed at two sessions, both held on the second of April, 1870.

The first was in the afternoon. We had been sitting previously in a back parlor; but, on my proposal, we adjourned to the drawing-room, on the front of the house, where, until then, we had not sat. There were present, besides Charles and myself, two other relatives of the family, Mr. N—— and Mr. L——. The room was darkened with heavy curtains which we drew close; but sufficient light came through to enable us to see the outlines of objects.

We sat at a heavy deal-table, made, expressly for the purpose, very thick and strong; the legs more than two inches square; size two feet seven inches by one foot eight inches, and weighing twenty-five pounds.

At first there was a trembling motion, then a tilting from

side to side, gradually becoming more powerful, and at last so violent that it was snatched from our hands. Then, at our request, the table was made so heavy that I found it scarcely possible, with all my strength, to move it even half an inch from the floor; the apparent weight some two hundred pounds. Then, again at our request, it was made so light that we could lift one end of it with a single finger; its weight seeming ten or twelve pounds only. Then it was laid down on its side; and, no one touching it, I was unable to raise it. Then it was tilted on two legs and all my strength was insufficient to press it down.

Finally, after being jerked with such sudden violence that we all drew back, fearing injury, and merely reached our fingers on the edge of its top, it was projected into the air so high that when we rose from our chairs we could barely place our fingers on it; and there it swung about, during six or seven seconds. Besides touching it, we could see its motion by the dim light.

We sat again in the evening at ten o'clock, in the same room, darkened: only three at the table, N——, Charles, and myself.

Then—probably intensified by the darkness—commenced a demonstration exhibiting more physical force than I had ever before witnessed. I do not believe that the strongest man living could, without a handle fixed to pull by, have jerked the table with anything like the violence with which it was now, as it seemed, *driven* from side to side. We all felt it to be a power, a single stroke from which would have killed any one of us on the spot. Then the table was, as it were, flung upward into the air, again so high that, when we stood up, we could just touch it, and shaken backward and forward for some time ere it was set down. Again it was raised, even more violently than before and swung backward and forward, as far as by the touch we could judge, in an arc of seven or eight feet, some five or six times. A third time it was hurled into the air, sometimes out of our reach, but we felt it *turn over and over, like a revolving wheel, eight or ten times*. As nearly as we could judge without reference to our watches, it was some

twelve or fourteen seconds in the air, before it descended. Sometimes we were able to touch it, sometimes not.

Then I asked whether, some time hereafter, we might not be able to obtain objective apparitions. The answer was given by raising the table three times from the floor, each time slamming it down with such force that the noise was distinctly heard in the story above; and, when a candle was lighted, we found the top (of inch board), split entirely across and wrenched from the legs; the lone, nails with which it had been secured to prevent such accident being drawn out.

While these manifestations were in progress, it occurred to me, as very strong evidence of the humane care of the operating spirits, that when such tremendous power was exerted close to us, no serious accident happened; and that I had never heard of any Such, on similar occasion. Once N——'s wrist was sprained, and twice his knees and also Charles' were struck; but though this pained them a good deal at the moment, the pain ceased in a few minutes—through spiritual influence, as they supposed. I certainly would not trust myself within reach of any similar demonstrations, if produced by human hands.

I expressed my thankfulness and gratification at having been allowed to witness such manifestations. The answer, by impression through Charles' hand, was: "Don't you know that we are as much gratified to give them as you to receive them?"

Then they informed us that "their powers were a little shattered for to-night;" and, at midnight, we adjourned.

I beg that my readers will here note the attendant circumstances. The locality, selected by myself, the drawing-room in a gentleman's house; no professional medium present; the assistants, the son of the gentleman in whose house we were sitting and two other gentlemen his near relations; the motion out of our reach, so that it was a sheer impossibility that those present could have produced it. The shattered table remained, a tangible proof of the strong force employed.

How thoroughly out of place here the suspicion of deception or imposture! How utterly untenable the hypothesis of illusion or hallucination! Thomas, touching, would have believed. It would need a disciple of Berkeley to witness these phenomena, and still remain a sceptic in the reality of such manifestations.

CHAPTER III.

DIRECT SPIRIT-WRITING.

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."—DANIEL v. 5.

A TRAVELLER, bound on some mission of passing importance, may now and then, amid the prosaic details he encounters from stage to stage in his journey, lose sight of the great object to which it leads: yet, in proportion as he nears the goal, his thoughts concentrate, more and more, on the ultimate issue. So, in the journey through these pages, may it happen to the reader. He is travelling in search of proofs, cognizable by human senses, of another life. As he proceeds, the phenomena, homely at first, gain in living interest; for they go to establish, ever more and more conclusively, the existence of an agency not occult, not ultramundane only, but intelligent, but spiritual: the agency of beings like ourselves, though they be no longer denizens of earth.

There was published, in Paris in the year 1857, by a young Russian nobleman, a book* which did not attract the attention it deserved. Its author, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making in Paris, a year after his book appeared, had devoted his life, almost exclusively, to the study of what he deemed the Supernatural and of the relations between the

* *La Realite des Esprit et le Phenomene merveilleux de leur Eciture directe demontrees*, par le Baron DE GULDENSTUBBE, Paris, 1857.

For particulars regarding the Guldenstubbe family and their residence, see Footfalls, pp. 262 and 260 (note).

visible world, and that which we have yet to see: the object of his studies being, to obtain positive demonstration of the soul's immortal existence. His work is that of a classical scholar, and contains curious and interesting researches touching the Spiritualism of antiquity. It exhibits much sagacity, with the drawback that the Baron believes not only in influences from the next world but also in direct, miraculous intervention of God; as the arresting, by Him, of the earth and the moon in their orbits for the space of a day.* The book is chiefly occupied, as its title implies, with proofs of direct writing by spirits.

In the ten months from August, 1856, when M. de Guldenstubbe first observed this phenomenon, to June, 1857, he obtained more than *five hundred* specimens; out of which he gives us lithographs of sixty-seven. These experiences were witnessed by more than fifty persons; of whom he names thirteen.† These witnesses furnished the paper that was used in the experiments.

These experiments were chiefly made, and were most successful, in old cathedrals or in other ancient places of worship, or in historic residences. But before I reached Paris, in the autumn of 1858, there had been an order issued, either by the government or the clergy, prohibiting such experiments in churches and other public buildings. It was vigorously enforced, as we found when Baron de Guldenstubbe, his sister and myself visited the Abbey of St. Denis, on the twenty-ninth of September, and placed a paper in one of the side chapels. I had determined, however, to persevere in my endeavor to

* Work cited, p. 44. Joshua x. 12-14.

† Namely: Prince Leonide Galitzin, of Moscow; Prince S. Mettschersky; General the Baron de Brewern; Baron de Voigts-Rhetz; Baron Borys d'Uexkull; Count de Szapary; Count d'Ourches; Colonel Toutcheff; Colonel de Kollmann; Doctor Georgii, now of London; Doctor Bowron, of Paris; M. Kiorboe, a distinguished artist, and Al. Ravene, proprietor of a gallery of paintings at Berlin.—*Introduction*, p. xv.

verify this important phenomenon then and there; but was prevented from doing so by a telegram from England, informing me of the dangerous illness of my father, Robert Owen, with whom I remained till his death, six weeks afterward.*

Baron de Guldenstubbe impressed me very favorably as a man of great earnestness and perfect good faith; one who pursued his researches in a most reverent spirit. Enthusiastic he certainly was; and, for that reason, a less dispassionate observer; yet the multitude of his experiences, obtained under every variety of circumstance, and the number of respectable witnesses who permit their names to appear in attestation of the results, leave little room to doubt their genuine character.

I reproduce three out of the many specimens this author has given.

The first, in French, was obtained August 16, 1856, in the presence of Count d'Ourches, under these circumstances: The Count, a believer in spiritual phenomena but leaning a little toward demonology, prepared two papers; the one was blank, on the other he had written the well-known text, "Hereby know ye the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."† These he placed side by side, on a table, within view. After ten minutes he found written on the blank leaf: "*I confess Jesus in, the flesh.*"—A. V. G. The signature was known to the Baron as the initials of a deceased friend.‡ Here is a fac-simile of the writing:

* I find the following entry in my journal, written just after his death: "During the last seven or eight years of my father's life he was an unwavering believer in Spiritualism; though I doubt whether the same amount of evidence which convinced him would have satisfied me. To the last he spoke of a future We with the same undoubting certainty as of any earthly event, which he expected soon to occur. His death was the most peaceful I ever witnessed.

† 1 John iv. 2.

‡ *Realite des Esprits*, p. 69.

[missing illustration]

The second, in English, Was Written, also in the presence of the Count d'Ourches, September 9, 1856, near the column of Francis II. Under two crosses, as the fac-simile here given shows, is written: "*I am the life*;" and the initials, in mono gram, are those of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots.*

[missing illustration]

A reminder may here be acceptable to the reader: In the north transept of the church of St. Denis, on one side of the door, is a composite column of white marble, erected by Mary Stuart to the memory of her husband, Francis II., who died in 1561."†

* Count d'Ourches personally confirmed to me the authenticity of these two examples of spirit-writing, when I called on him October 1, 1858. See Footfalls, p. 112 (note).

† *Paris and its Environs*, London, 1839; p. 323.

The last of the examples selected, is also of historic interest It is the conventual signature of the frail and repentant Duchesse de la Valliere (*Soeur Louise de la Misericorde*), obtained by Mr. de Guldenstubbe, December 29, 1856, in the church of Val-de-Grace: Colonel de Kollmann being the witness present, Here it is:

[missing illustration]

If the reader ask why especially in the chapel of Val-de-Grace, and why not the family name, the following may be worth recalling:

"A small confessional, with a strong iron railing, opens into the church of Val-de-Grace, from one of the passages behind. This was the confessional used by Mademoiselle de la Valliere, previous to her taking the vows; and from the windows of the above-named passage is seen the building she occupied at that period."*

“The Carmelite convent in which the celebrated Mademoiselle

* *Paris and its Environs*, p. 174.

de la Valliere took the veil in 1675, as 'Soeur Louise de la Misericorde,' is in the Rue d'Enfer, behind St. Jacques du Haut Pas." *

How strangely suggestive all this! We search pyramid and cathedral and vaulted catacomb in quest of hieroglyphics and sepulchral sculpture and lapidary epitaphs: little thinking what relics of the departed, far more precious than all inanimate memorials, might there be obtained, attesting the continued existence and memory of those, more alive than we, whom we are wont to think of only as dead celebrities of the Past.

Though I was prevented, by business, from revisiting Paris after my father's death and there verifying M. de Guldenstubbe's observations, I have since been fortunate enough to procure, in the United States, personal evidence, in corroboration. And, in some cases, this evidence was obtained under conditions so strict that I think any candid and intelligent person, witnessing what I have witnessed, must cease to doubt that which millions will deem incredible; namely, that, here upon earth, we may receive communications dictated by other intelligence, written by other hand, than the hand and the intelligence of any among earth's inhabitants. It avails nothing to allege that this is impossible, if it shall appear that it is true.

I obtained examples of spirit-writing, during a sitting with Kate Fox, as early as February 27, 1860, and on one or two subsequent occasions. But it was during sittings in darkened rooms; and, on carefully looking over the minutes of these experiments, I perceive that, until the autumn of the next year, I had not taken all the precautions which might, in the dark, be taken; nor ever seen any hand while it was writing. Therefore, and because space is precious, I pass over these

* Same work, p. 191.

earlier examples and shall here record the results of two sittings only, both of remarkable character. One carefully authenticated case is better than twenty, loosely attested.

During the first of these sittings, held August 8, 1861, in Mrs. Fox's house, in West Forty-sixth street, New York, I had an experience, such, probably, as few persons have ever enjoyed.

SEEING A LUMINOUS HAND WRITE.

I sought an evening session with Kate Fox, hoping to obtain an apparition, which had been promised me by rappings—but without setting the time—a few evenings before. Kate proposed that we should sit in the lower parlor; but, as I knew there was a front parlor on the second floor and wished to avoid interruption, I proposed that we should hold our sitting there, to which she readily assented.

It was a small room, very simply furnished with sofa, chairs, and a table, about two and a half feet by three. There were no closets nor presses in this room, and but two doors; one on the upper passage, the other communicating with an adjoining apartment. The table stood in the corner; we moved it to the centre of the room.

I locked both the doors, and took the additional precaution of *sealing* them. This I did with short strips of paper connecting the door with the door-sill, attaching the upper part of each strip with wax to the door, and the lower part to the sill; and impressing both seals with my engraved signet-ring. I told Kate (and I know she believed me) that I did so for the sake of those who might hereafter read the record of this sitting, not to quiet any suspicions of my own.

As we were sitting down, she said laughingly: "You ought to look under the sofa, Mr. Owen." I thanked her for the reminder, rolled the sofa out from the wall, turned it over and examined it thoroughly, before replacing it. Then I minutely inspected every part of the room.

On the table was an ink-stand and a steel-pen with wooden

holder; nothing else. In case of a dark sitting, I had brought with me a small package consisting of eight or ten slips of writing paper, cut from foolscap sheets and about four inches in width to be used, successively, in case I took notes in the dark. They were blank, except that. I had put, on one corner of each, a private mark.

This package, with a pencil, I laid on the table on my left hand, within reach; Kate sitting beside me, on my right: and then we awaited instructions.

These soon came, by raps; spelling out "Darken." We effectually excluded light through two front windows on the street by outside shutters and window-blinds: after which we extinguished the gas and resumed our seats.

Then came the additional instructions. "Rest your hands on the table. Join hands." I caused Kate to rest her hands on the table, clasped; and I placed my right hand on both hers, reserving my left hand free.

Then was spelled: "Put your hand under table." I placed my left hand under the table, on my knee.

Then, by the raps: "Cover left hand and hold writing-paper and pencil in it." I had to remove my right hand from Kate's for a few moments, so as to cover my left hand with a handkerchief and place the package of paper-slips and the pencil in it. But I had hardly done this, when it spelled: "Join hands." I replaced my right hand on both of Kate's.

Then I felt the paper drawn from my hand, but the pencil was left. About a minute afterward the pencil was taken and my hand was tapped with it, quite distinctly, three times; after which it was carried off. There was no sound of its falling, but, after an interval, there was a distinct rustling of paper on the floor. This alternated with the sound of a pen scratching on paper; and continued, at intervals, for a considerable space, during all which I kept my hand on both of Kate's.

After a time, attracted by a rustling on her right, Kate looked on the floor and, with an expression of surprise, called my attention to what she saw. Rising and leaning over the

table, but without releasing Kate's hands, I could distinctly perceive, on the carpet close by Kate on the right, a luminous appearance, of rectangular form, very clearly, defined, and, as nearly as I could judge, the size and shape of one of the slips of writing-paper that had been taken from my hand.

Then, by the raps: "Do not look at present." Whereupon I reseated myself.

Kate then asked: "Cannot the spirit raise that illuminated paper and put it on the table before us?"

Reply, by the raps: "First let me show you the pencil."

After a little, Kate informed me that she again saw the luminous appearance, even more brightly, than at first. Then, leaning over as before and watching it for some time, I distinctly, saw, above what seemed to be the illuminated slip of paper, the outline, in shadow, of a small hand holding a pencil and moving slowly over the paper. I could not, however, distinguish the writing.

Kate exclaimed, in tones of delight: "Do you see the hand?—and the pencil, too?—do you see it write?" So that she evidently, saw it, just as I did.

All this time both Kate's hands were on the table; for I bethought me of this, even at that moment.

Then was spelled: "Don't look!" and I withdrew a second time.

Shortly after, by the raps: "Put hand under table." I placed my left hand on my knee. Thereupon a slip of paper was gently placed in my hand, and the tips of my fingers were distinctly touched, as by human fingers. I brought up the paper, laid it on, the table before me, and replaced my hand. Very soon something was put into it, which, by the touch, I knew to be a wooden pen-holder; and that also I laid on the table.

Some time after this, as we could distinguish nothing but the rustling of paper, Kate again asked if an illuminated sheet could not be laid on the table. In a short time what seemed such was raised a little above the height of the table; then it gradually sank down again, out of sight.

After a considerable interval my left hand was again touched by a piece of paper; but it dropped before I could lay hold of it.

Another interval, and we had, by the raps: "Light the gas." Only then I released Kate's hands. We lit the gas, and I immediately examined the doors of the room. The seals were intact and the strips, connecting them with the door-sills, unbroken. I looked around. Everything remained just as when we sat down; except that several slips of paper lay scattered on the floor, with my pencil among them; while, on the table, there lay the single slip and the pen-holder which had been handed to me.

My first thought was that I was now qualified to swear in a court of justice, had that been necessary, that, during this sitting, Kate and I had been the sole occupants of the room.

Then I examined the papers. One, that on the table, was written in ink; three others, on the floor, in pencil; two or three short lines on each. The first had these words:

"The night is not favorable for appearing. I will soon overcome difficulties. You shall see me, believe me."

This, though legible, was evidently written by a very bad pen, which *sputtered*, as we sometimes say. Witness these two words:

[illustration missing]

Here is a fac-simile of the writing on one of the other slips; originally in pencil, but the pencilling carefully inked over by me to preserve it:

[illustration missing]

On one of the other slips an allusion was made to the state of the atmosphere, as being unfavorable to an appearance in bodily form. It was, in effect, a murky evening with drizzling rain. Such weather, as I had repeatedly verified, is unfavorable for spiritual experiments.

On a fourth slip there was expressed, in strong terms, the earnest anxiety of the writer to gratify my desire for an appearance, so that I could recognize her features. *

My feelings, when I had carefully examined these results, are such as seldom fall to the lot of a human being.

I took up the slip that was written in ink. Some one—an intelligent agent, a denizen of this world or of another—had taken up the pen-holder that lay on the table before me, had dipped the pen in ink, and had written these lines. The same pen-holder had been handed to me under the table by some invisible agency. And all this had happened during the time when the only two hands in the room except my own were under my grasp. Then, too, I had *heard* the writing.

I took up the steel-pen and tried to write out a few notes of our session. It was nearly worn out. It sputtered in my hands, as it had done in those of the mysterious writer. After managing to write a few lines, I relinquished the wretched pen, as she had done, for my pencil.

It was a gold one. I remarked to Kate what a heavy pencil and what a miserable pen they had been obliged to employ: thus writing under great disadvantage.

Were these spiritual autographs? What else? Had I not *seen* one of them written? Had I not seen one of these slips, illuminated, rise higher than the table and then sink back again? Had I not felt Kate's two hands under mine at the very time when that hand wrote and that paper rose and fell? Did Kate

* Of the writer whose name was appended to each of these communications I shall speak at large, in the chapter entitled: *A beautiful Spirit manifesting herself*; Book iv., chap. 3.

write eight or ten lines with both her hands clasped? Did I write them with my left hand, without knowing it? Or had Kate brought the slips, ready written? I picked them up and examined them critically, one by one. My private mark, on one corner of each—namely, letters of the German alphabet, written in German character—still there

What way out?

Are the senses of seeing and hearing and touch, in sane, healthy persons, unworthy to be trusted? Then of what value the evidence taken in a criminal court, or the experiments made in a chemist's laboratory?

For me, common sense bars that way out. I believe in a phase of life, succeeding the death change. I see nothing unlikely—not to say incredible—in the theory that God may vouchsafe to man sensible proof of his immortality. And thus I accept the evidence of my senses when they inform me that human beings who have passed to another phase of existence, are sometimes permitted to communicate, from beyond the earthly bourn, with those they have left behind.

For others, to whom spiritual intercourse seems an absurdity—for those, more especially, to whom the hypothesis of another life wears the aspect of a baseless dream—let them select their own path out of the difficulty. I think that, on any path they may take, they will have to accept theories infinitely less tenable than those they decide to reject.

I remark, in regard to the foregoing experiment, that the room in which it was made had been selected by me, after another had been proposed; also that I expected one sort of manifestation and obtained something quite different. The chief objection, by sceptics, will be that the phenomena occurred in a darkened room. But, in a preceding example,* it has been shown that when a light was sprung upon spiritual phenomena of the most startling character, the only effect was

*See chapter 1 of Book iii., preceding page.

to arrest them, without disclosing any earthly cause for their occurrence.

Yet I need not rest the case here. It is but rarely, and under very favorable circumstances, that direct writing can be had in the light. Yet it can sometimes be obtained. Witness the following:

DIRECT SPIRIT-WRITING BY GAS-LIGHT.

At Mr. Underhill's on the evening of September 3, 1861, in the back room, second story. Present, Dr. A. D. Wilson,* Mr. and Mrs. Underhill and myself. Precautions in regard to locking doors and the like, as usual. The room was brightly lighted during the entire sitting. We sat at a rectangular table, thirty-three inches by fifty-three, which had no drawers, and from which we had removed the table-cover. The gas lit the space under the table, so that we could inspect it at any time. I sat on one side of this table, Mrs. Underhill opposite; Mr. Underhill at one end, on my right, and Dr. Wilson at the other, on my left.

A few minutes after sitting down we heard, very distinctly, the jingling of an iron chain; then a sudden stroke, as if by the point of a blunt dagger, against the under side of the tabletop, so strongly dealt as to shake the whole table; then a metallic sound, as if two steel rods clashed against each other; then a jingling, as of steel rings.

During all this time, as I particularly remarked, the hands of all the assistants were on the table; and below the table there was nothing to be seen, for I looked more than once.

Then, after witnessing several other phenomena, we asked if we could have direct writing in the light; to which the reply, by raps, was in the affirmative. Then came a call for paper

* He then lived in East Eleventh street, near Broadway.

He was one of the most careful and dispassionate observers I have met with, and he expressed, in the strongest terms, his conviction of the conclusive character of this experiment.

and pencil. I myself selected a sheet from the middle of a quire of foolscap and examined it carefully under the gas burner: it was entirely blank. I held it and a pencil on my knee, looking under the table as I did so. Scarcely had I looked up again, to be assured that all the hands of the assist, ants still remained on the table, when paper and pencil were taken from me, a finger distinctly touching mine, as they were taken. Then, for *six or eight seconds* we heard a sound resembling that of a pencil writing rapidly on paper; and instantly, before I had time to look again, the raps spelled: "Take it up." I did so, and found written upon it in pencil, in a bold, rude, dashing hand, the words: "*The North will conquer.*"*

The *t* in the word "North" is crossed with a sweeping dash. "Conquer" is written *conq*, then the *u* is written partly over the *q*, and the final *e* and *r* run into one another; but the word is still legible enough.†

I do not think that more than twenty, or at most twenty-five, seconds elapsed from the moment I put the paper under the table till I took it up, written as above.

The foregoing may suffice as far as regards my own experience in this matter. I add here, in corroboration, the results obtained by two friends of mine, both of whom have been, in some respects, even more highly favored than myself, in the character of evidence establishing the reality of spirit-writing,

The first, obtained by artificial light, is an experience of Mr. Livermore, of New York,‡ during an evening session with Kate Fox, on the eighteenth of August, 1861. No one present but the medium and himself. The doors locked and bolted;

* The reader need hardly be reminded that this was but six weeks after the disaster at Bull Run; at one of the darkest epochs of the Great Contest, when the hopes of the South were triumphant, and the North was just beginning to take heart, after so severe a check.

† See fac-simile on plate 1.

‡ Of this gentleman and of the wonderful experiences he has had, touching the phenomenon of objective apparitions, I have spoken at length, in Book v., chap. 4; which see.

[illustration missing]

the windows secured, and the room thoroughly examined. Then the lights extinguished. Soon an oblong light, about the size and shape of a melon, rested on the table, remaining there a considerable time without moving. Mr. Livermore asked if it could rise; whereupon it rose into the air, flashing out occasionally, and floating about the room. Finally it returned to the table, shining with increased brilliancy.

Mr. Livermore had brought with him two very large, blank cards, each with a private mark, hoping to obtain direct writing. These he now deposited, together with a small silver pencil, on the table, near the light; at the same time securing both hands of the medium. They were soon taken from the table and carried near to the floor, remaining apparently suspended, however, some three or four inches above it; and the light was so moved that its rays fell directly upon the cards. What Mr. Livermore then saw I give in his own words, copied from the record he himself made at the time: "The cards became the centre of a circle of light a foot in diameter. Carefully watching this phenomenon, I saw a hand holding my pencil over one of the cards. This hand moved quietly across from left to right, and when one line was finished, moved back to commence another. At first it was a perfectly-shaped hand, afterward it became a dark substance, smaller than the human hand, but still apparently holding the pencil, the writing going on at intervals, and the whole remaining *visible for nearly an hour*. I can conceive of no better evidence for the reality of spirit-writing. Every possible precaution against deception had been taken. I held both hands of the medium throughout the whole time. I have the cards still, minutely written on both sides; the sentiments there expressed being of the most elevated character, pure and spiritual."

The italics are from the original record. Nearly an hour, it will be observed, the phenomenon continued to present itself, and under a bright light, even if one not kindled by human hand.

But the next example occurred in broad daylight. It was

communicated to me by one of the witnesses present, at first orally, afterward by letter, in which the writer kindly permits me to use her name; a name which cannot fail to secure, for the narration, respect and consideration. The lady is the sister of Bancroft, the historian, and the widow of John Davis, formerly governor of Massachusetts, and best remembered in New England under the honorable cognomen of "honest John Davis."

The circumstance occurred in Mrs. Davis's dining-room, in Worcester, Massachusetts, the medium present being Mr. Willis, formerly a student of Harvard University, and who had some difficulty there, because of an honest avowal of his belief in the epiphanies of Spiritualism. "The room," says Mrs. Davis in her note to me, "had four windows facing east, south, and west; the hour between eleven and twelve, A.M.; so that we had the full light of a summer sun, shut off only by green blinds. We were at a table on which I had put paper and pencil; but we had no intention of forming what is called a circle: we merely sat chatting of some wonderful manifestations we had witnessed the evening before."

While they were so engaged, the pencil rose from the table, stood at the usual angle, as if guided by a human hand, though no hand was to be seen, and began to write. The amazement of Mrs. Davis may be imagined. The motion of the pencil was regular, and a slight scratching sound was heard as it moved. Both Mrs. Davis and Mr. Willis saw and heard this alike. It wrote a brief message of affection from a dear friend of Mrs. Davis, deceased some years before: then dropped on the paper.

The evidence in this case, it will be observed, is more direct than in any of the Baron de Guldenstubbe's experiments, for he did not see the writing done; and it has a certain advantage also over Mr. Livermore's experience and mine; seeing that, in both our cases, the light was artificial and might by some be thought less trustworthy than that of day. What element of authenticity is lacking here? The writing was done in the seeing and hearing, of both, and in broad day

light. For anything which we have not witnessed ourselves, how seldom is more conclusive testimony to be had!

Commending these various experiments to the critical consideration of the candid reader, I proceed to give a few examples of another species of writing, often discredited, yet of which I have had proofs which I find it impossible to set aside.

WRITING ON THE HUMAN HAND AND ARM.

Mr. Robert Chambers and myself were well acquainted with a gentleman whom I shall call Mr. M——, not being at liberty to give the real name. He is one among the most successful and best-known business men of our country; not a resident of New York.

At the time I am speaking of, however, he was on a visit to that city; and Mr. Chambers and I induced him to call, with us, on Mr. Charles Foster, one of the very best test-mediums I have ever known. Mr. M—— was an unbeliever in spiritual phenomena, unacquainted with Mr. Foster, and agreed to visit him merely to gratify Mr. Chambers' wish and mine. We had given Mr. Foster no notice of our visit, and we did not make Mr. M——'s name known to him. We sat down to an ordinary-sized centre-table.

After several remarkable phenomena which I omit, Mr. M—— expressed a wish for a test of the reality of spirit-intercourse. Thereupon Mr. Foster requested him to think of a deceased friend. Then he bade him write, on one slip of paper, a number of first names, among them the first name of his friend; and on another slip a number of family names, among them the family name of his friend, keeping the writing concealed. Mr. M—— wrote out both lists accordingly; the total number of names being twenty-three. At Mr. Foster's request he then tore the names asunder, made up each separately in a pellet, and held these pellets under the table, in his hand, the palm open. Then Mr. Foster, who was sitting opposite to

Mr. M——, taking up my hat, held it by one hand under the table and said: "Spirit, will you please select the two pellets that have your name and surname, from that gentleman's hand, and put them in Mr. Owen's hat?" In somewhat less than a minute raps came, Mr. Foster brought up the hat, and handed two pellets which it contained, unopened, to Mr. M——. The latter undid them without showing them to any of us, and merely said: "These are the two pellets with the name and family name of my friend." Then Mr. Foster, suddenly exclaiming "Here is his first name on my arm," bared his arm and we saw, written on it, in large pink letters, the word Seth. After a minute or two, as we were looking at the writing, it faded out and Mr. Foster asked: "Will the spirit write the first letter of his family name on the back of my hand?" holding it out. We watched it closely: there was not the least mark on it. But, after the lapse of a short time, pink marks began to appear, gradually growing more plain, until we all saw, and read, very distinctly written near the centre of the back of Mr. Foster's hand, the capital letter C. Then, for the first time, Mr. M—— showed us the two pellets. The name was Seth C....

Mr. Foster then inquired of Mr. M—— if the spirit was a relative of his; and when the other replied that it was, Mr. Foster sat, as if musing, for a minute or two; then turned to Mr. M——, saying: "Ah! it comes to me: it is your father-in-law."

Mr. C...was Mr. M——'s father-in-law, as that gentleman then informed us; but until that moment the fact was not known either to Mr. Chambers or to myself.*

Several times during this session, Mr. M—— became extremely pale, and more than once, exclaimed in surprise. I did not share his astonishment, because, the day before (September

* A record of this sitting was made the same day and submitted by me, for revision, to Mr. Chambers. That gentleman was then on a visit to this country. He took the deepest interest in such experiments.

28), I had had a private sitting with Foster where I obtained a test, perhaps even more satisfactory than the above, seeing that it came at my own request. I begged Foster to bare his arm and I said: "Can I have the first letter of the family name of a deceased friend of whom I am thinking written there?" I kept my eyes steadily fixed on the arm, after a time the letter W gradually appeared, then, as gradually, faded out again. That was the first letter of the name I had thought of.

Two marvels here: an answer to a mental question, and writing upon a human arm before my eyes and in reply to an unexpected request.

More than a year after this I had, also through Mr. Foster, a similar test; and as my notes, taken on that occasion, describe the appearance minutely, I add the record here, at the risk of being tedious.

THE LETTER F.

A circle of eight persons had assembled, on the evening of November 15, 1861, to meet Mr. Foster. It was at a well-known house in East Twentieth Street, New York; the dwelling of two ladies, both earnest spiritualists, and of whom our country has recently had to mourn the loss, Alice and Phoebe Cary.

We had all been invited, early in the evening, to write one or more names, of deceased friends, each on a small bit of paper; and to fold these up tightly and mix them in the centre of the table. There were some twenty or thirty of these in all, thus promiscuously placed together.

From time to time Mr. Foster addressed some message to one or other of our party, and, at the close of each message, he selected one of the bits of paper and handed it unopened, to the party addressed. In every case, the message was appropriate and the name was given to the right person. In six different cases the name of the deceased friend was written in full, on Mr. Foster's arm; but the arm was not bared beforehand, the writing appeared when he drew up his sleeve,

When some eight or ten bits of paper only remained, I said to Mr. Foster: "There is a name written by me among those you have not yet distributed. Do you think you could get the first letter of it on your arm?" I was going to add "and I should like you to bare your arm before it is written;" but I refrained, lest Mr. Foster should think that I entertained a suspicion which I did not feel.

Mr. Foster sat silent for a minute or two, both his hands resting passively on the table the while; then he said to me: "You are to look at my wrist:" at the same time extending toward me the left arm with the hand downward and the fist clenched, and drawing back his sleeve so as to expose three or four inches of the wrist. I observed that it was free from all mark whatever, and it remained so for about one minute. Then a faint pink stroke appeared across it which, in about half a minute more, having gradually increased in distinctness, became a capital F. It extended almost across the wrist, Dear to where it joins the hand; and the top of the F, being the last part of the letter which appeared, crossed into the back of the hand. The letter was formed by pink lines, about as thick as the down-strokes in ordinary text-hand. It was the written, not the printed character; and though it appeared as if written hastily or carelessly, it was unmistakably distinct and legible; so that each member of the circle, when it was shown to them, recognized it at once. It remained visible for as much as two or three minutes; and then faded away, while we were looking at it, as gradually as it had appeared.

Then Mr. Foster picked up the folded bits of paper, one after another, until, as he touched one, there were three raps. That one he handed to me. It was the one on which I had written "Florence," the name of a daughter of mine whom I had lost in infancy twenty years before. Neither Mr. Foster, nor any member of the circle, knew that I had lost a daughter, nor had the name ever before come up, at any of our sittings.

Was the particular character of this test—stricter than that of any other obtained during the evening—determined by my

unexpressed wish to see the writing while in progress of formation? The important thing is correctly to state the circumstances: let the reader make his own deductions.

The feeling, as the letter grew under my gaze, was somewhat like that I remember to have had when, for the first time, under the microscope, I witnessed the sudden coming into existence of crystals.

Space fails me to say more touching spirit-writing. In the way of recital can stronger proof be given? Let those who still doubt test the matter for themselves.

CHAPTER IV.

SPIRIT TOUCHES.

IN the spring of the year 1858, then living at Naples, I had four sittings with a medium of world-wide reputation, D. Dunglas Home; and, in his presence, I witnessed a phenomenon which no earnest thinker can witness, believing it to be genuine, without a strange feeling that he is brought near to the next world.

The sessions were held in the parlor of my apartments on the Chiaja: present, besides my family and the medium, the Count d'Aquila; or, as we usually called him, Prince Luigi, third brother of the King of Naples. They were evening sessions, the room brightly, lighted. We sat at a centre-table, three feet nine inches in diameter, and weighing, with the lamp on it, ninety pounds.

During the second session we were all touched in succession; and this was preceded by a singular manifestation. At various points all round the table, the table-cover was pushed outward, and occasionally upward at the edge of the table-top, as by a hand underneath. Mrs. Owen touched it and felt, through the cover, what seemed a small human hand, doubled up. By the raps it, was alleged that it was our eldest daughter, Florence, whom we had lost when an infant.

Then Mrs. Owen's dress was pulled, on the side farthest from Mr. Home, as often as eight or ten times, and so strongly that Mrs. Owen says had she been asleep it would certainly have awoke her: and, as it was, it instantly arrested her attention. She saw her dress move each time it was pulled.

Then she asked that it might touch me three times, which it did instantly and quite distinctly. Then I put on my knee my hand covered with a handkerchief; and, at my request, it immediately

touched my hand through the handkerchief. Then Mrs. Owen invited it to touch her hand which she placed, uncovered, under the table: upon which it went under one of the flounces of her dress and touched her hand through the silk, but did not touch the bare hand.

When under the table-cover, on the opposite side from Mr. Home, it tapped three times on Mrs. Owen's hand, when she put it against the cover.

All this time Mr. Home's hands were resting on the table, and immediately afterward the table rose entirely off the floor some four or five inches, and was carried about twelve inches toward where Mrs. Owen sat, and there set down again, Mrs. Owen rising: then raised a second time and carried about six inches farther in the same direction. This time the foot of the table rested on Mrs. Owen's dress; and had to be removed to extricate it.

Then a large arm-chair, weighing forty-eight pounds,* and standing empty behind Mr. Home and about four feet and a half from the arm-chair in which he sat, moved suddenly and very swiftly close up to the table between Mr. Rome and Mrs. Owen. Sitting opposite to them, I happened to be looking in that direction at the moment, and saw it start. It moved so suddenly and rapidly, that I expected it to strike with force against the table; but it stopped, as suddenly, within an inch or two of it, and without touching. It is proper to add that it moved on castors. Mr. Home was, at that moment, sitting close to the table, with both hands lightly resting on it, and without the slightest appearance of any muscular effort.

During the next session, April 6, the touchings were repeated† and still more distinctly, during the fourth sitting on

* I had chair, table, and lamp carefully weighed, and recorded the weight at the time.

† A phenomenon which occurred during this sitting is well worth recording. All our chairs were shaken, as distinctly as during an earthquake (we had a violent one, while I was in Naples, so that I speak here by the book); yet the table, the while, remained motionless. Then the

April 12; on which occasion the hand touched was uncovered. Here is the record: "Mrs. Owen's hand, placed on her knee under the cloth, was touched with what exactly resembled to the touch a human hand, soft, moderately warm, and a little moist. The touch was on Mrs. Owen's bare hand, and was so distinct that there was no possibility of mistaking it. Mrs. Owen, having on two previous evenings, witnessed the same phenomenon, was quite self-possessed, and she stated to me that she felt not the least nervousness or alarm.

Prince Luigi was touched repeatedly, as we were; and he afterward expressed to me, in unqualified terms, his conviction that the phenomena we had witnessed were genuine. He had had previous experience of his own." *

Soon after my return to this country, I had evidence confirmatory of this phenomenon.

chairs ceased their motion, and the table was similarly agitated. Then, at request, the table ceased its motion, and that of the chairs recommenced: and so on, several times; the change from one motion to the other being instantaneous. I know of no human force that could imitate this. Machinery there was none, for it was in my own parlor. It was evidently not the floor that was shaken, or that communicated motion either to the table or to the chairs.

* Here is an item from his experience. He told me that he had sometimes (as on after reflection he concluded) pressed with unwarrantable eagerness for answers; and, for a time, could obtain nothing more. On one occasion, when he had done so, there was spelled out:

"Tu es un vrai diable."

The Prince—"De qui parle tu?"

Answer—"De toi, Louis de Bourbon."

French and English magnetizers agree in stating that somnamabules are wont to use the familiar *tu* and *du* to persons whom in their waking state they always addressed either by their titles, or else using the formal *vous* and *Sie*. See, for an example: *Histoire de la Guérison d'une jeune personne par le Magnétisme Animal, produit par la Nature elle-meme*; by the Baron F. C. De Strombeck: Paris, 1814, p. 38. "Jamais elle me m'avoit tutoyé."

In the spiritual realm, it would seem, there is no respect of persons,—Acts x. 34.

SPIRIT TOUCHES BY BRIGHT GAS-LIGHT.

Session of October 23, 1860, held in Mr. Underhill's dining room in the evening. Present Mr. and Mrs. Underhill, Mr. Underhill's father (Levi Underhill), Mrs. Price, of Westchester, and myself. The usual precautions taken as to locking doors, etc.

Spelled out by raps: "Look under the table." I did so very carefully. There was nothing there.

After a time it spelled, "Put handkerchief over hand." I asked: "Is that addressed to me?" Answer: "Yes." I put my right hand, covered, under the table.

Then it spelled: "Lower." I reached down as far as I could.

At this moment all the assistants had their hands on the table, in sight. Mrs. Underhill suggested that we join hands. We did so: but as my right hand was underneath the table, Mrs. Price, who sat next to me, put her hand on my shoulder, to complete the circle.

In about two minutes after this circle was thus formed, my hand was laid hold of and pressed by the fingers of a hand, as I felt with unmistakable certainty. Then I asked to have the hand touch me once more. It did so; and, this time, it was the points of the fingers that were pressed against my hand: I felt the sharp impression of the nails.

During the whole of this time the gas was burning brightly, and the circle of joined hands was maintained. During the whole time the hands of all the assistants were in sight, and I kept my eye on them.

But for the reminder, by the raps, to look under the table before the experiment began, I might have omitted to take that precaution.

A year later I had a similar experience, also in the light.

It was during the session, already noticed, of September 3 1861, when we obtained direct writing by gas-light:* Dr. Wilson

* See preceding page.

and Mr. and Mrs. Underhill present. The table thirty-three inches by fifty-three; without drawers and without cloth.

It spelled: "Put down hand." I put my left hand under the table. My foot was touched and pressed and my leg was seized, as by the firm grasp of a strong hand; but my hand was not touched.

Then it spelled: "Handkerchief." As soon as I covered my hand it was touched, through the handkerchief, as by a large finger. Then my fingers were grasped firmly, as by two fingers and a thumb. Then, a third time, my fingers were grasped and tightly pressed as by three fingers and a thumb of a large, strong hand.

After a time, fingers apparently of a small hand were laid lightly on mine: and, by delicate raps, it was spelled: "Violet touched you last."

This experiment was made in a room brightly lighted, without, any cloth on the table, and with the hands of every assistant full in sight.

Some readers, theorizing only, may persuade themselves that a single sense, especially that of touch, is insufficient evidence in cases like the foregoing. Let them try the experiment. Let them try, when they find themselves laid hold of by a hand, vigorous and real, as firmly as by the grasp of a cordial friend, to set it down as pure imagination and to rest in the conviction that they have not been touched at all. Short of Pyrrhonism, they will not succeed. When through the avenues of actual sensation the testimony comes, they will find out, like Thomas, what are the difficulties of disbelief.

I here close my record of manifestations such as are usually called physical; and proceed to consider a problem of more intricate character: that which relates to the identity of spirits.

BOOK IV.

IDENTITY OF SPIRITS.

CHAPTER I.

STUBBORN FACTS CONNECTING TWO WORLDS.

THERE is, among spiritual phenomena, a class, rare of occurrence, but wonderfully convincing when we happen to meet with them. They teach us much more than the reality of the next world, invaluable as that truth is. They give us glimpses into that world, dissipating many preconceptions touching its character and its inhabitants. We learn from them that our friends there may still have earthly thoughts and human sympathies; may still recognize us; may still, for a time, interest themselves even in petty matters that are going on in the world they have left. They do not, by any means, prove to us that every ultramundane communication is truly from the spirit who professes to communicate; but they do prove to us that this is sometimes the case. In doing so, they establish, in certain cases, the identity of spirits. They give us satisfactory assurance that we shall recognize our friends in the next world, and that we shall find them there much less changed than theological fancy has painted them.

Such proofs are the more valuable when they come unsought, unexpected, at first unwelcome even, in the privacy of home: where we cannot imagine motive for deception, nor chance of juggler's trick.

I am fortunate in being able to supply such an example,

furnished to me by friends in whose good faith and sagacity I have entire confidence. I know the names of all the parties whose initials are given in the following narrative; and if I am not permitted to publish them, in attestation, the world has itself to blame. When society, learning to treat uprightness with respect, ceases to denounce or to ridicule such testimony as this, it will be time enough for it to condemn the reticence of those who meanwhile seek refuge from such injustice under an anonymous veil.

A SPIRIT ARRANGING ITS WORLDLY AFFAIRS.

Mrs. G——, wife of a captain in the regular army of the United States, was residing, in 1861, with her husband, in Cincinnati. Before that time she had, of course, often heard of spiritual experiences; but she had avoided all opportunities to examine the reality of these, regarding the seeking of communications from another world as a sin. She had never seen what is called a professional medium.

It so happened that, in the above year, a lady of her acquaintance, Mrs. C——, found that she (Mrs. C——) had the power to obtain messages through raps; and she occasionally sat, for that purpose, with some of her intimate friends; among the rest with Mrs. G——. These sessions, continued throughout the years 1861 and 1862, in a measure overcame Mrs. G——'s aversion to the subject; awakening her curiosity but failing to bring full conviction.

In December, 1863, her husband's brother Jack (as he was familiarly called) died suddenly.

In March, 1864, Mrs. G——, then in the quiet of a country residence near Cincinnati, received a visit from a friend, Miss I—— B——. This lady having power as a medium, Mrs. G—— and She had a session one day. After a time the young lady rose and Mrs. G—— remained alone. Thereupon, with her hands only lightly touching the table, it moved across the room in which they had been sitting, and, through an open

into a room adjoining. Later it moved, in Mrs. G——'s presence without being touched. Thus, for the first time, she her own powers.

Sitting down again with Miss B——, the name of "Jack" was unexpectedly spelled out.

Mrs. G—— asked: "Is there anything you wish done, brother?" The reply was give Anna that ring."

Now Anna M—— was the name of a young lady to whom, at the time of his death, the brother was betrothed. Mrs G—— did not know what ring was meant; but she remembered that when Jack died, a plain gold ring—the only one he wore—had been presented by her husband to a friend of his brother, a Mr. G——. She asked if that was the ring, and the reply was in the affirmative.

Some days after this Jack's mother paid them a visit Nothing was said to her of the above communication. In the course of conversation she told them that Miss Anna M—— had called upon her; had stated that she had given to Jack, at the time of their betrothal, a plain gold ring and that she wished to have it again. Mrs. G—— and her husband were both ignorant that the ring in question had been Miss B——'s; Jack never having said anything to them on the subject. Measures were taken to have the ring returned.

Some time after Jack's death three persons, G——, C——, and S——, came, severally, to Captain G—— and told him that his brother had died indebted to them. He requested them to send in their bills in writing.

Meanwhile, not knowing anything of debts due by his brother to these individuals, Captain G—— asked Mrs. G—— to have a session, hoping to obtain some information on the subject. The following was the result.

Jack announced himself and his brother asked:

"Did you owe G—— at the time of your death? Yes." How much? Thirty-five dollars."

"Were you indebted to C——?"

"Yes."

"How much?"

"Fifty dollars."

"And how much to S——?"

"Nothing."

"But S—— says he has a bill against you?"

"It is not just. I did borrow of him forty dollars, but I gave him fifty dollars. He repaid me seven only, and still owes me three."

G——'s bill, when afterward presented, was for thirty-five dollars, and C——'s for fifty. S—— handed in a bill for forty dollars. When Captain G—— said, on its presentation, that Jack had repaid him fifty, S—— became confused and said he *thought* that was intended for a gift to his (S——'s) sister."

Captain G—— afterward asked, through the table:

"Jack, do you owe any one else?"

"Yes; John Gr——, for a pair of boots, ten dollars."

[Neither Captain nor Mrs. G—— knew anything of this debt.]

"Does any one owe you?"

"Yes; C—— G—— owes me fifty dollars."

Captain G—— applied to C—— G——, asking him whether he had been indebted to his brother Jack.

"Yes," he replied; "fifteen dollars."

"But he lent you fifty dollars."

"That is true; but I repaid him all but fifteen dollars."

"You have receipts, I suppose?"

C—— G—— promised to look for them; but afterward came and paid the fifty dollars.

Finally Captain G—— called on Mr. Gr——, the shoemaker, who had sent in no bill. Wishing to make the test as complete as possible, he said:

"Do I owe you a bill, Mr. Gr——?"

"No, sir. You have paid for all you had of me."

Captain G—— turned, as if to go; whereupon the shoemaker added:
"But your brother, Mr. Jack, who died, left a small account unpaid."
"What was it for?"
"A pair of boots."
"And your charge for them? Ten dollars." Mr. Gr——, there is your money."

The above was related to me by Captain and Mrs. G——, during a visit I made to them at their country residence.*

If, by way of explaining the above, we imagine deliberate, circumstantial, motiveless falsehood in persons of the utmost respectability, of earnest character and of unblemished reputation, we violate all received rules of evidence. But if we admit the facts, what theory which does not admit the reality of spirit-communication will suffice to account for the above? How explain away these stubborn links, actual, tangible, thus unmistakably connecting the spiritual with the material—the world yet concealed from our view with that other world, not more real, which lies around us, palpable to the senses?

And what stronger proof could well be given of the identity of a communicating spirit than these simple, homely details supply 9

If it seem to us inconsistent with the dignity of our spiritual abode that its denizens should still be able to recall trifling details of their earthly life, let us bear in mind that, without such memory of past incidents, the natural consequences of well-doing and evil-doing would not follow us to the next world. We cannot repent of sin if we cannot call to mind its commission: and even Heaven would be a curse if there we

* April 9, 1865. I took notes, the same day, from which I wrote out the above narrative. I afterward submitted it to Captain G——, for correction and approval. He had kept a record of these various communications and of the attendant circumstances, at the time; and so was able to give me every particular with exactitude.

remembered our evil deeds only. On the other hand we may reasonably conclude that, as children when they advance in years put away childish things, so will it be with spirits, as they go up higher. Petty interests will fade from our thoughts, to be replaced by the momentous concerns of a better life. And this will doubtless happen at an earlier or at a later period, in proportion as the actor in these new scenes had been spiritually-minded, or the reverse, during his sojourn upon earth.

I add here another incident which has its peculiar interest aside from the proof of identity which it supplies. It furnishes an example of the gift called by St. Paul the "discerning of spirits;" or of what, in modern parlance, is called a subjective apparition, visible to the seer but invisible to other spectators: together with evidence that such appearances are not, because of such subjective character, to be classed among hallucinations.

SISTER ELIZABETH.

One Sunday evening, during the summer of 1855, a New York physician, Dr. H——, attended morning service in the Rev. Dr. Bellows' church.

During the sermon and while his attention was engrossed by the argument of the preacher, it was suddenly diverted, in a most unexpected manner; namely, by the apparition of three female figures. They first became visible on the left of the church and they glided slowly across the vacant space in front of the pulpit. As they passed, Dr. H—— recognized two of them, both deceased relatives; one his wife, the other his mother. The third figure, appearing between the other two and with an arm round the mother, was that of a beautiful young girl. The attitude and gesture suggested the relationship of daughter; but the features were unknown to Dr. H——; not at all resembling (he thought) those of the only sister he had lost by death: Anne, who had died, in childhood, thirty-nine years before.

This group of figures paused as they reached the extreme right of the church; two of them, the wife and the young girl, gradually fading away. The mother, remaining still, turned toward her son and gazed at him, with a look of affection, for several minutes; then vanished like the others. Dr. H—— had full time to note every well-remembered item of dress: the plain Quaker cap, the snow-white muslin kerchief pinned across the breast, the gray silk gown: all just as the good old lady, a strict member of the Society of Friends, had worn them up to the day of her death.

It was the first time in his life that Dr. H—— had seen an apparition. Nor, up to that time, had anything seemed to indicate that he had any spiritual powers, except that, on one occasion, a table from which he had just taken a book had moved, without apparent cause, a few inches toward him. The effect produced on him by a phenomenon so new and unlooked-for as the appearance of these figures was proportionately great.

Deeply pondering the matter and inclining to believe that the third figure must have been his deceased sister Anne, he called, on the evening of the next day, on a medium (one of the Fox sisters), hoping to have his doubts resolved.

At her suggestion he wrote out a number of female names, in secret; and as he pointed to these in succession, the name Anne was passed by, and the raps indicated *Elizabeth*. Dr. H—— taxed his memory in vain in search of any relative of that name whom he had lost by death. But when, on another sheet, he had written out as many various relationships as he could think of, all were passed by till he came to the word Sister, at which the raps came very distinctly.

"That's a mistake," said Dr. H——. "I never had a sister called Elizabeth. I did lose a sister by death, but her name was Anne." Then, as appealing to the occult intelligence; he asked: "Do you mean to say that the figure I saw with its arm round my mother was my sister?"

Answer by raps.—"Yes."

"And that her name was Elizabeth?"

By louder raps.—"Yes."

"Well, it isn't so: that's all I can say."

Three still louder raps reaffirmed the assertion.

Very much mystified, and somewhat staggered by this persistence, it occurred to Dr. H—— that the family Bible which he had not inspected since he was a child, was in the possession of his step-mother, living seventy miles off, in the country. Happening sometime afterward to be in the neighborhood, he paid her a visit and had an opportunity of examining the family record of births and deaths. There, to his amazement, he found registered, in the year 1826, the birth of a daughter, Elizabeth, together with the record of her death a few weeks afterward.

This event occurred during a five-years absence from his father's house: and though letters were interchanged far more rarely in those days than now, Dr. H—— thinks it likely that the circumstance may have been incidentally mentioned in one of his father's infrequent bulletins from home. He has not the slightest recollection, however, that he ever received any such intelligence, or that he ever heard the birth or death of this infant alluded to in the family. A life so very brief usually passes away without leaving a trace, except in the secret depths of a mother's memory.

Dr. H—— has been well known to me for years, as an intelligent man and a dispassionate observer. I confide in his truth and accuracy. I had the narration from himself, wrote it out next morning, submitted the manuscript the same day * to the narrator who, after making a single correction, assented to its accuracy.

In this case, it will be observed, the fact indicated by the apparition and confirmed by the medium was not only not known to the observer but was contrary to his convictions; and he remained incredulous until enlightened by incontrovertible evidence.

With a single additional narrative connecting, like the foregoing,

* January 2, 1870.

a spiritual appearance with the realities of earthly life, I close this chapter.

THE GRANDMOTHER'S PROMISE.

In the month of March and in the year 1846, three ladies, a mother and two daughters, were sitting in the dining-room of a dwelling in C—— street, West Philadelphia. It was between one and two o'clock in the day. The house was a double one, with a central entrance-hall: a parlor on the left as one entered, and the dining-room on the right; the windows of both rooms looking on the street.

The mother, Mrs. R——, wife of Dr. R——, was sitting close to a front window and to the wall dividing the room from the entrance-hall. Between her and the door opening into the hall was a sofa, set against the dividing wall; and thereon sat her eldest daughter, then unmarried and about nineteen years of age, now the wife of the Rev. Mr. T——, an Episcopal clergyman. Both these ladies were sitting with their faces turned from the window, so that they could see the door entering from the hall, and could observe what happened in the room. Facing the mother and seated on a low stool between her and the elder daughter, was a younger daughter, A——, then aged seventeen. All three ladies were engaged in needlework and were quietly conversing on ordinary topics.

The door leading into the entrance-hall was ten or twelve feet from the front wall. At the time I am speaking of it happened to be ajar, open some three or four inches only.

Of a sudden, and at the same moment, the mother and eldest daughter perceived, advancing silently from this door, a female figure. It appeared in a black Turk-satin dress and over it a white book-muslin handkerchief crossed on the breast; and it wore a white bonnet. In its hand the ladies distinguished a white silk bag, such as is often carried by Quaker ladies, the string of the bag wrapped several times round the wrist, and the bag gathered up in the hand. The younger

sister, observing after a time the looks of the other two ladies, turned round and saw the appearance also; but not as long nor as distinctly as they did.

The figure advanced slowly into the room, till it came within two or three feet of the front wall. There it stopped opposite a portrait of Dr. R——, which hung between the two front windows, and gazed at it, for the space perhaps of half a minute; then it turned and moved slowly to the door where it had first been seen. The door did not open; but the figure, coming close up to it, there suddenly disappeared. The ladies were looking at it, at the moment of its disappearance. In moving through the parlor and returning, it passed so close to the elder daughter that its dress seemed almost to touch hers. Yet there was no echo of a footstep, nor the least rustle of the dress, nor any other sound whatever, while the figure moved. This circumstance and the disappearance of the apparition without opening of the door to permit natural exit, alone caused the appearance to seem other than an ordinary and material one. To the Sight it was as distinct and palpable as any, human visitor; and though the ladies afterward recollected that its motion seemed more like gliding than walking, yet this was an after thought only. Not a word was spoken, during the scene here described.

"Who was it?" was Mrs. R——'s exclamation, addressed to the elder daughter, as soon as their first mute astonishment had a little subsided.

"It was grandmamma!" she replied.

Thereupon the mother, without another word, left the room. The house was searched, from garret to cellar, but not a trace was found of any one except its usual inmates.

In addition to this negative evidence there was the positive proof furnished by a slight, recent fall of snow. The path to the door-steps (the house standing back from the street line), and the steps themselves, showed no trace of human foot. Add to this that two children who were playing, at the time, on the front veranda, saw no one enter or depart.

Or subsequently comparing notes, the ladies ascertained that the impressions left on each of them by this extraordinary appearance were the self-same. I had the particulars, first from the elder daughter, Mrs. Y—, and afterward confirmed by the mother. To both the figure seemed a real person. Both recollected the precise dress, and their recollections exactly corresponded. To the eyes of both the figure had crossed the room approached the front wall, lingered there to look at the portrait, recrossed to the door and there vanished. Neither heard any sound. It should be added that they had not been talking or thinking of the lady whose image thus suddenly appeared before them.

Mrs. R——, as well as her daughter, had instantly recognized the figure as that of Mrs. R——'s mother, who had died about ten years before. Not only the face and form, but every minute particular of the dress, as above described, were the counterpart of that lady and of her usual walking attire, when in life. Originally she had belonged to the Society of Friends, and she had, in a measure, retained the style and peculiarities of their apparel.

The ladies related this incident, on the evening of the same day, to the Rev. Mr. Y——, from whom I first obtained it: his recollection of what they told him, only a few hours after the event, tallying exactly with their account to me of what they had seen. He informed me that he had never seen old Mrs. R——; but, the next morning, meeting three elderly ladies, sisters, who had been intimately acquainted with her, he asked them (without mentioning what had been related to himself) to give him a description of her personal appearance and ordinary walking-dress. It agreed, point for point, with that of the apparition, as it had been described to him.

Some other particulars which add greatly to the value of this narrative remain to be stated. Shortly before her death Dr. R——'s mother had strongly advised her son to buy a house in the neighborhood in which he ultimately purchased. She had also, about the same time, stated to a friend of

hers, Mrs. C——, that if her son (he was an only son) did well, she would, if permitted, return from the other world, to witness his prosperity. This was afterward mentioned by Mrs. C—— to the Rev. Mr. Y——, and by that gentleman to me.

But it so happened that, on the very day, and as nearly as could be ascertained at the very hour, when his wife and daughters witnessed the apparition of his mother, the deeds by which Dr. R—— became the legal proprietor of the house in which she appeared were delivered to him by its former possessor. Though he had spoken to his wife and family of his intention to purchase, they had no reason to suppose that the bargain would be closed on that day. When, on his return in the evening, he threw the deeds on the table, it was an unexpected surprise. Is it to be wondered at that, after the first feeling of gratification, the next thought, both of mother and daughter, should be of her who had so earnestly wished for this acquisition, and who had appeared to them, in her son's house, at or near the very time at which that house passed, by legal conveyance, into his hands? Is it surprising that Mrs. C—— should call to mind her old friend's promise, thus, to all outward seeming, strangely and punctually fulfilled?

It may, perhaps, occur to the reader as singular that the spirit of the mother should not, at the time of the purchase, have appeared to her son, rather than to her daughter-in-law. But it is not certain that this was possible. It would seem that, as a general rule, apparitions, like other spiritual phenomena, can present themselves only under favorable circumstances, and that these circumstances are often connected with the personal attributes, or peculiarities of organization, of the spectators, or some one of them.

But Mrs. R——, the daughter-in-law, evidently possessed some such peculiarities. For, at various periods of her life, she had had dreams of a prophetic character. To these I shall advert when I come to speak of the gift of prophecy.

In connection with the above incident it behooves us to bear in mind:

That it occurred two years before modern Spiritualism had made its appearance in the United States, when the suggestion of "epidemic excitement," even if that plea be ever good, was out of the question.

That the apparition, as far as one can judge, was objectively seen by three persons at once, who coincide in their report of it; in broad daylight and at a moment when the thoughts of the witnesses were occupied by every-day matters.

That these witnesses were disinterested and their social position such as to forbid the supposition of wilful deception.

That the coincidence between the conditional promise and its fulfilment at the moment the condition was accomplished, is too striking to be rationally referred to chance.

Whether, under these circumstances, the identity of the grandmother is made out with reasonable certainty, it is for the reader to determine.

CHAPTER II.

A CASE OF IDENTITY THREE HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

THAT branch of Pneumatology which relates to intermundane phenomena has come into notice so recently, and has been, till now, the subject of so little careful study, that one ought to speak very cautiously of its laws, especially those which govern the conditions under which Spirits may, or may not, communicate with earth. It is hazardous to generalize in view of a comparatively small array of facts.

Nevertheless I think we may assume it to be probable that a very large proportion of all the spirits who manifest themselves here, do so for a limited time only after they reach their new homes. Their destiny is upward and onward; and we may suppose the better class among them to be more occupied by the scenes of beauty and excellence that are opening before them, than by any recallings of the dim and checkered sojourn they have left.

With one drawback, however: drawn down sometimes to that lower sphere by a power that is greater in Heaven than on earth—by an attraction that rules most surely in natures that are noblest and best.

The most powerful of all the heart's agencies—human love which so often bridges over a thousand difficulties here—that same emotion it is, triumphing over the death-change, which would seem the most commonly to overcome the gulf fixed between earthly life and spiritual existence. And thus, sometimes, for a few years—ten, thirty, fifty, perhaps—so long as the loved ones still linger behind—that deathless emotion appears to rule a divided heart.

—Divided between Heaven and earth; unable, yet, while its mourners are on the other side, fully to realize that peace

which passeth all understanding; unable cordially to rejoice with them who do rejoice, till these mourners—now removed, as if *they* were the dead—become alive again, at its side; eager, meanwhile, to make known its undying affection, to evince its constant care; anxious to aid, to comfort, to encourage.

But these earth-bound labors of love are transient only in that higher sphere. Death is an Angel of Mercy there. He is Heaven's Herald of joy, for whose messages yearning souls wait. Through him, the Comforter, comes re-union in the many mansions that had been lonely, even amid celestial surroundings, till he brought the earthly wanderers home. Then satisfied hearts stray no longer from heavenly abodes.

It is true that what on earth we call philanthropy, and what in the next world seems chiefly to take the form of earnest desire to bring immortality to light in this darkling world, may cause benevolent spirits to seek us here even when their own circle of love is complete. And this doubtless happens: Franklin (Book v., chap. 4) seems an example. Yet I think it is the exception rather than the rule. In a general way it would seem that it is not the higher class of spirits which continue, generation after generation, more especially century after century, to revisit earth: not such men as Confucius or Socrates or Solon; nor yet such as Milton or Shakspeare or Newton.

Yet I give this as my individual opinion only. I have found no proof of identity in the case of any spirit, once celebrated either for goodness or talent, returning, after centuries, to enlighten or reform mankind. My idea is that they have completed their earthly task, and that their duties, now, are of another sphere. I think that we are left to work out, in the main, our worldly progress. The help we receive from above is not to supersede our exertions here below. Only so far we are to be directly helped—to an ardent, living conviction, in stead of a cold, barren belief, of that truth of truths—immortality. That once secured to our race, we are to trust, it seems, to our own industry and courage for the rest; with

this consoling reflection, however, that though spirits, long since departed, descend not to do our work, yet other spirit-friend is—though it be unconsciously to us—often secretly aid the faithful worker to do his own.

But other motives than our benefit appear sometimes to urge mundane return. Guilty spirits seem the most frequently to be earth-bound, as in the case of the lady of Burnham Green,* and hundreds of other house-haunters. But a purely worldly spirit, unstained by crime, yet to whom trifles were wont to take the place of momentous things—who never, while here, bestowed a thought on regions beyond—may, long after it passes away, be recalled hither by the levities that made up its empty earth-life.† Of this I have succeeded in finding a noteworthy example.

HOW A FRENCH KING'S FAVORITE MUSICIAN MANIFESTED HIMSELF.

In those days, not long past, when Paris still thought herself the centre of civilization, and while she had many claims to be called the gayest and the most brilliant among the capitals of the world—in the year 1865—there lived in that city a worthy old gentleman, inheriting, from musical ancestors, the family gift. I believe he is still alive.

Monsieur N. G. Bach, then sixty-seven years of age, was the great-grandson of the celebrated Sebastian Bach,‡ who flourished during the first half of the eighteenth century. Though in somewhat delicate health, this gentleman was, at the time, in full enjoyment of his mental faculties, a busy composer, and

* See preceding page 322.

† See Foot falls, P. 427.

‡ John Sebastian Bach, one of the most eminent of German composers, was born at Eisenach in 1685, and died at Leipsic in 1754. He held several high musical offices, was an inimitable performer on the organ, and left many compositions of great merit. The family is said to have produced, in the space of two hundred years, fifty celebrated musicians.—BOUILLET: *Dictionnaire de Biographie*.

highly esteemed by his brother artists, alike because of his professional talents and as a thoroughly upright and amiable Man.*

On the fourth of May, 1865, Al. Bach's son, Leon Bach, a gentleman of antiquarian tastes, found, among the curiosities of a bric-a-brac shop in Paris, a spinet, evidently very old, but of remarkable beauty and finish, and unusually well-preserved. It was of oak, ornamented with delicate carving in tasteful gilded Arabesque, encrusted with turquoises and intermingled with gilt fleur-de-lis. It had evidently belonged to some person of wealth or distinction; but all the dealer knew about it was that it had quite recently been brought from Italy by the person from whom he bought it.

Thinking that it would please his father, the young man purchased it. Nor was he disappointed. M. Bach, who shares his son's taste for stray waifs of the past, was delighted with his new acquisition, and spent most of the day in admiring it, in trying its tones and inspecting its mechanism. It was about five feet long by two wide; it had no legs; but was packed away, like a violin, in a wooden case for protection. When about to be used, it was set on a table or stand. Though richly decorated, it was but a small, weak beginning of what has culminated in the elaborate Steinways and Chickering's of our day, with their wonderful power and superb tones. In general arrangement, however, as may be seen from the plate here given, † it resembles them; its small keys being arranged in the same order: but these keys, when touched, move a set of

* The Paris "Grand Journal" (No. 62) speaks of him as "eleve de Zimmerman, premier prix de Piano du Conservatoire au concours de 1819, un de nos professeurs de piano les plus estimes et les plus honores."

The Paris correspondent of the New York "Nation" (June 12, 1866) speaks in the highest terms of his acknowledged reputation for uprightness and honesty

† See Plate II. M. Bach kindly entrusted the spinet to a Parisian friend of mine, who had it photographed for me.

[illustration missing]

wooden sticks as thick as a lady's finger, each furnished with a point which strikes the corresponding wire. The quality of the tone may be readily imagined.

Before the day closed, however, Al. Each had made a discovery which atoned for all imperfections. On a narrow bar of wood which supported the sounding-board he thought he could distinguish writing. Fitted in above this bar were two small blocks, interposed between it and the sounding-board. They entirely concealed part of the writing: but by turning up the instrument and letting in a powerful light, he could read the rest of it. Of this he has sent me a copy. It contains the words, "*In Roma Antonius Nobilis;*" then a blank caused by the intervention of one of the blocks; then the words "*Brena Medislani Patrice;*" then, after another blank similarly caused, the date "*Die xiy Aprillis 1564.*" * Of course these words were written before the instrument was framed.

Thus M. Bach learned that his spinet was more than three hundred years old; having been made in Rome, in the year 1564, by a certain Antonius Nobilis, apparently from the neighborhood of Milan; and probably finished on the fourteenth of April of that year. M. Bach's specimen was located and labelled. And, as in all cases in the eyes of the paleontologist, so in this case in those of the antiquarian, this greatly added to the value of a curious relic of the past.

Much pleased, the old gentleman retired to rest; and naturally enough, he dreamed of his son's gift. His dream, however, was peculiar. There appeared to him a handsome young stranger wearing a carefully-trimmed beard, and elegantly dressed in the ancient costume of the French court—rich doublet with ample lace collar and close-fitting sleeves that were slashed in the upper part; large, slashed trunk-hose, long stockings and low shoes with rosettes. Doffing a high-pointed, broad-brimmed, and white-plumed hat, this young man advanced,

* There are also several imperfect words cut off by the blanks; an O; the letters *sone* and *A per*, and, after the last blank, the word *reducit*.

bowing and smiling, toward M. Bach's bed, and thus addressed the wondering sleeper:

"The spinet you have belonged to me. I often played on it to amuse my master, King Henry. In his youth he composed an air with words which he was fond of singing while I accompanied him. Both words and air were written in memory of a lady whom he greatly loved. He was separated from her, which caused him much grief. She died, and in his sad moments he used to hum this air."

After a time this strange visitor added: "I will play it to you, and I shall take means to recall it to your recollection, for I know you have a poor memory." Thereupon he sat down to the spinet, accompanying himself as he sang the words. The old man awoke in tears, touched by the pathos of the song.

Lighting a taper he found it was two o'clock. So, after musing on his dream, and with the plaintive melody he had heard still sounding in his ears, he speedily composed himself to sleep.

Nothing remarkable in all this.

If anything happened to M. Bach before he awoke next morning, it was while he remained in a completely-unconscious state. He had not the faintest remembrance of anything until, as he opened his eyes in broad daylight, he saw, to his unbounded amazement, a sheet of paper lying on his bed and headed, in these formal old characters:

[missing illustration]

His astonishment increased when he examined the sheet more closely. It was a rare archaeological specimen: * the notes minute; the clefs those used in former times; the writing careful and old-fashioned, with here and there the Gothic tails to be found attached to certain letters in the manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the orthography, too, that of two or three hundred years ago.

* See Plate III. for fac-simile of the first two lines of the song, reproduced from the original.

[missing illustration]

His eye glanced over the first notes. Was it the song of his dream? And the words—yes, he remembered them! He hastened to his piano, and soon convinced himself, beyond possible doubt, that here were, in truth, reproduced the very air, and the very verses, which his dream-brought visitor had sung and played

The first feeling was one of perplexity and trouble—even alarm. What could it all mean? To the dream itself, though very vivid and remarkable, he had, when he awoke in the night, attached no importance. But what was this? Absently turning over the mysterious missive, he observed that it was a four-page sheet of music-paper, two pages of which contained a composition of his own which he had sketched the day before, leaving the sheet in his *escritoire*. It must have been taken thence during the night. Who had taken it, and filled the two blank pages with this mysterious music from a bygone age? Somebody must have been there!

Or had it been himself? But he was no somnambulist—had never, that he knew, walked or written in his sleep. Nor had he any knowledge or faith in modern Spiritualism: so that the possibility of an actual spirit-message did not suggest itself. He was mystified, bewildered: the more so, when he remarked the coincidence of names and dates. The man of the vision had spoken of "his master, King Henry;" the song itself purported to have been written by Henry III.: but the spinet was made in 1564, when Henry (then Duke d'Anjou) was fourteen years old. What more likely than that so handsome an instrument should have found its way, after a few years, from Rome to the court of France, and been bought there by a young prince, himself (as history tells us) a musical composer of some little merit?

At. Bach spoke of these marvels to his friends, who repeated the story, to others; and soon a host of the curious—literary men, artists, antiquarians and others—thronged the apartments of the well-known musician, to hear, from his own lips, the strange narrative, and to see, with their own eyes, the wonderful

spinet. Among these visitors came some earliest spiritualists; and then, for the first time, Al. Bach heard of writing mediums, and listened to the suggestion that his hand might have been guided to write while he slept.

All this, though too new and strange to enlist his belief, set him to thinking; and, one day, three or four weeks after his dream, feeling a headache and nervous trembling of the arm, the idea struck him that perhaps some spirit wished to write through him and thus to furnish an explanation of the mystery, he had been unable to penetrate. No sooner had he put pencil to paper than he lost consciousness, and, while in that state, his hand wrote—in French, of course—"King Henry, my master, who gave me the spinet you now possess, had written a four-line stanza on a piece of parchment, which he caused to be nailed on the case (etui), when, one morning, he sent me the instrument. Some years afterward, having to travel and take the spinet with me, fearing that the parchment might be torn off and lost, I took it off, and for safe-keeping put it in a small niche, on the left of the key-board, where it still is."

This communication was signed Baldazzarini, and then followed the stanza alluded to above, which, literally translated, is as follows:

*The King Henry gives this large spinet
To Baldazzarini, an excellent musician;
If it is not good, or not stylish enough,
At least, for my sake, let him preserve it carefully.*

Here, at last, was a chance to obtain tangible evidence in connection with these mysteries. Here was a test furnished, whereby to determine whether this Baldazzarini, as He called

*Here is the original, as written by M. Bach's hand:

Le roy Henry donne cette grande espinette
A Baldazzarini, tres-bon musicien.
Si elle n'est bonne on pas assez coquette,
Pour souvenir, du moins, qu'il la conserve bien.

himself was a myth or a real person, capable of disclosing unknown facts.

To gratify public curiosity the spinet had been deposited, for a few days, in the Retrospective Museum of the Palace of Industry; and it was still there when the above communication was written. Of course it was sent for, at once.

One can imagine with what nervous eagerness father and son awaited its arrival, and then set themselves to ascertain whether this story about a parchment, said to contain a stanza written by the hand of a French king, and still to be found within the spinet, was pure romance or sober fact.

During an hour or two, M. Bach says, they explored every nook and corner of the old instrument in vain! At last, when hope had almost deserted them, Leon Bach, looking over what his father's hand had written, proposed to take the instrument to pieces, so far as they could do so without injuring it. When they had raised the key-board and removed some of the hammers, they detected, underneath, on the left, a narrow slit in the wood containing what proved to be a bit of parchment eleven and a half inches long and two and three-quarter inches wide, on which was written, in a bold, dashing hand, four lines, similar to those which M. Bach's hand had traced. And there was a signature—yes, Henry's sign manual!

They cleansed it as well as they could, and here is what they read:

“Moy le Roy Henry trois octroys cette espinette
 A Baltasarini mon gay musicien
 Mais s'il dit mal sone, on bien [ma] moult simplette
 Lors pour mon souvenir dans l'estuy garde bien.

HENRY.*

The stanza, literally translated, reads as follows:

"I, the King Henry III., present this spinet To Baltasarini, my gay musician: But if he finds it poor-toned, or else very simple, Still, for my sake, in its case let him preserve it."

* See, on next page, fac-simile taken from a photograph of the original parchment, which I obtained through the kindness of M. Bach.

It is difficult, in this prosaic world, to realize the feelings of these excited searchers when at last, from its secret hiding place, they drew forth—stained by time and covered with the dust and cobwebs of centuries—this mute witness—of what? The father, as he looked at it, was conscious that the announcement which led to this discovery was written by no agency of his unless a pen is to be called an agent. When he awoke from the trance during which his hand had written, he had read the lines as he would have read anything else penned by a stranger and then first presented to him for perusal. And yet it was substantially true; and here, under his eyes, lay evidence, not to be gainsayed, of its truth.

—Substantially, not literally true. "*The King Henry*" in the announcement, "*I, the King Henry III.*" in the original; the word large, applied to the spinet, omitted in the original; a variation in the spelling of the recipient's name, and "*excellent*" written gay* in the original; also "*not good*" replaced by "*poor-toned*," and "*not stylish enough*" by "*very simple*" finally, in the last line, the original refers to the

[illustration missing]

* See, as to this word gay and as to the spelling of the musician's name, a remark made a few pages further on.

case (*l'estuy*, as *l'etui* was then written), while in the stanza, announced, there is no such reference.

Amazed they must have been! Yet I doubt whether it occurred either to father or son, as it occurs to me, that the evidence thus brought to light is vastly stronger on account of its peculiar character—is much more convincing because, while absolutely substantial in its coincidence with the promised stanza, it bears no stamp of literalism.

The interpolated *ma* in the discovered stanza greatly puzzled them at first, but was subsequently explained. When exhibiting the original parchment to the friend through whom I obtained this narrative, M. Bach said: "No one could imagine the meaning of the word *ma*, surrounded by lines, as you see. But one day my hand was again moved involuntarily, and there was written: '*Amico mio*: the King joked about my Italian accent in the verse he sent with the spinet. I always said *ma* instead of *mais*.'"

Ma, Italian for *but*, corresponds to the French *mais*; and I have observed that Italians, in speaking French, frequently make this mistake. Thus "*ma moult simplette*," in Baltazari ni's patois, would mean "but very simple."

The original parchment (blackened by age, as the plate shows) was taken by M. Bach to the "Bibliothèque Impériale" (if that be still the title of France's great national library) and there compared with original manuscripts. In these last Henry's hand was found to vary, as in that age hand-writings often did: but with some of the acknowledged originals the writing on M. Bach's parchment-verse as well as signature was found most strictly to correspond. "*L'identité était absolue*," M. Bach said. It was also submitted, for verification, to experienced antiquarians, and by them, after critical comparison, pronounced to be a genuine autograph of Henry, whencesoever obtained.

The minute holes visible along the upper edge of the parchment (see facsimile), indicating that it had originally been tacked to some wooden surface, sustain the allegation that Henry had caused it "to be nailed to the case." On the lower

edge it seems to have been cut off inside of the nail-holes; but the marks of four larger holes, one at each corner of the parchment are distinctly visible. The rough cross above the quatrain is an additional voucher of authenticity; for a similar token of easy piety heads almost every specimen of Henry the Third's writing that has come down to us.

These marvellous incidents, more or less correctly related, could not fail to find their way into the newspapers. They appeared in several Parisian journals, and were thence copied far and wide. For a week or two M. Bach's spinet, with its supernatural accessories, was the great sensation of the novelty-seeking French metropolis. The whole was usually set down as incomprehensible; they stated the facts, with some such comment as—"Mystere que nous n'osons pas approfondir:" and though there were general suggestions that some natural explanation must exist, yet—so firmly established was M. Bach's reputation for integrity—these never took the shape of doubts that he had acted in entire good faith. After a time, of course, the excitement was replaced by that of some other engrossing rumor, but without leading to any solution or explanation whatever.

The song was published. As no treble accompaniment, but only the air with bass, was given in the original (see fac-simile) of music on preceding page), M. Bach had to supply the accompaniment for the right hand, which he did with taste and judgment. The words are pretty and suit well with the sentiment of the romance.* They contain two special allusions; one to the royal author having met the object of his passion at a distant hunt ("chasse lointaine"); and the other to the lady having sadly passed her last days in a cloister. ("Triste et cloistree," now written cloitree—are the words).

* Here they are, with the original orthography:

REFRAIN.

J'ay perdu celle pour quy j'avois tant d'amour.
 Eile, si belle, avoit pour moy, chaque jour,
 Faveur nouvelle et nouveau desir:
 Oh ouy! suns elle, il me faut mourir.

It need hardly be said that the publication of the incidents, above related and of the mysterious song caused various researches into the annals of the sixteenth century, to determine how far the historical record of the times bore out M. Bach's story. It was soon discovered that, according to the best biographies, the "grande passion" of Henry's life was for the Princess Marie de Cleves; and that, according to a diary kept of those times, that princess appears to have died in an abbey.

Also a passage was brought to light, occurring in one of the works of that laborious chronicler, the Abbe Lenglet-Dufresnoy, and reading thus In 1579, Balthazzarini, a celebrated Italian musician, came into France, to the court of Henry III.*

1r. VERS.

Un jour, pendant une chasse lointaine,
Je l'aperçus pour la première fois;
Je croyais voir un ange dans la plaine,
Lors, je devins le plus heureux des Roys!...mais!

2nd. VERS.

Je donnerois certes tout mon royaume
Pour la, revoir encor un
Pres d'elle assis dessus un humble chaume,
Pour sentir mon coeur battre en l'admirant...mais!

3me. VERS.

Triste et cloistree, oh!
ma pauvre belle
Fut loin de moi pendant ses derniers jours.
Elle ne sent plus sa peine cruelle,
Ici bas, hélas!...je souffre toujours!...ah!...

In singing, the refrain is repeated after each verse.

The word *si*, in the second line of the refrain, seems at first to be written *sy*; and it was so printed in the song: whereupon a critic wrote to M. Bach, calling his attention to the fact that the French have *never* written the word *si* with a *y*. On examining the supposed *y*, however, with a magnifier, M. Bach and his friends came to the opinion that it was but the long Italian *i*, often used when *i* was a final letter, in those days. It is evidently unlike any other *y* in the original, as maybe seen by examining the two lines in fac-simile (page 416).

* *Tablettes de l'Histoire Universelle*, vol. ii. p. 704. (Ed. of 1778.)

But I determined to obtain, if possible, further testimony, and have succeeded in procuring some other important particulars.

HENRY, THE LAST OF THE VALOIS.

This favorite son of Catherine de Medicis is best known by the one great crime of his life; his assent to that massacre of St. Bartholomew, which took place, at the instigation of his Mother and by the authority of his elder brother, Charles IX., in August, 1572.

But Henry was not without redeeming qualities. When but nineteen years old, he won, for his brother, the battles of Jarnae and Montcontour; thus achieving a military reputation which, three years later, procured his election as King of Poland.

One among the most discriminating of modern historians says of him: "Henry wished to lead a, palace life, divided between pious exercises, the pleasures of the city, retirement and the reverence due to the sovereign magistrate. He was little inclined to cultivate the society of old generals, politicians, and men of learning, who might have informed and instructed him: preferring young and gay people of handsome exterior, who emulated him in the faultlessness of their costumes and the brilliancy of their ornaments."*

But this was one side only of his character. "His nature," says Ranke, "was like that of Sardanapalus which, in seasons of prosperity,* abandoned itself to enervating luxury, but in adversity became courageous and manful.... His failings were obvious to every one. His deficient morality, his eagerness for enjoyment, and his dependence upon a few favorites gave general and well-founded offence. Occasionally, however, he rose to the full height of his vocation; showing an intellectual capacity corresponding with his exalted position, and,

* RANKE: *Civil Wars and Monarchy in France*; p. 307. (New York Ed. 1854.)

though subject to many vacillations, great susceptibility of mind and goodness of disposition." *

Such was the monarch who, according to the allegation made in M. Bach's dream, composed the elegiac song. The name of the lady whom it mourns was not mentioned; but—the genuineness of the song being conceded—there cannot be a doubt as to the person intended. The name of Beatrice is not more inseparably connected with the memory of Dante, nor Laura with Petrarch, than is the name of Marie de Cleves with that of Henry III. Not a detailed history of the time, not a biography of Henry, but alludes to it.

He met her, while still Duke d'Anjou, and sought her in marriage; but she was a Protestant and he a Catholic of Medicean blood. The difference of religion, insuperable of course in the eyes of the Queen Mother, seems to have been the sole cause that prevented their marriage.† She was married, in July, 1572, to the Prince of Conde, one of the chief Protestant leaders; and, the next year, 1573, Henry left France to assume the throne of Poland, carrying with him, according to Chateaubriand, remorse for the massacres of St. Bartholomew, but—in still stronger measure—regret for his disappointment in love. "He wrote with his blood," says that historian, "to Marie de Cleves, first wife of Henry, Prince of Conde."‡

* RANKE: work cited, pp. 314, 394.

† "La difference de religion, suivant quelques memoires, fut la seule cause qui l'empecha de l'epouser."—*Biographie Generale*, tome x. p. 854. The same assertion is made, in more positive terms, in the *Biographie Universelle*, vol. ix. p. 95.

‡ "Le Due d'Anjou (depuis Henry III.) alla prendre la couronne de Pologne, et raconter, dans les forets de la Lithuanie, a son medecin Miron, les meurtres dont la pensee l'empechait de dormir: 'Je vous ai fait venir ici, pour vous faire part de mes inquietudes et agitations de cette nuit, qui ont trouble mon repos, en repensant a l'execution de la Saint-Barthelemy. En quittant la France, le duc d'Anjou avait ete moins poursuivi du souvenir de ses crimes que de celui de ses amours; il ecrivait avec son sang A, Maxie de Cleves, premiere femme de Henri, Prince de Conde.'"—*Analyse raisonnee de Histoire de France*, par CHATEAUBRIAND,

Charles IX. died in 1574, and Henry speedily returned from Poland to Paris, as heir to the throne of France. A month after his return Marie died: and so deeply, according to his biographers, did Henry take her death to heart, that he remained several days shut up without food, in an apartment hung with black; and when he reappeared in public, it was in garments of deep mourning with deaths'-heads worked all over them.*

The poets of that day allude to Henry's bitter grief. In the works of Pasquier, a contemporary of Henry, is to be found a

Paris, 1853, p.315. I think Henry's remorse for the St. Bartholomew massacres may have been more sincere than Chateaubriand regards it. There is a curious incident, related by Ranke, in this connection:

"Charles IX., about eight days after the massacre, caused his brother-in-law, Henry, to be summoned to him in the night. He found him as he had sprang from his bed, filled with dread at a wild tumult of confused voices, which prevented him from sleeping. Henry himself imagined he heard these sounds; they appeared like distinct shrieks and howlings, mingled with the indistinguishable raging of a furious multitude, and with groans and curses as on the day of the massacre. Messengers were sent into the city to ascertain whether any new tumult had broken out, but the answer returned was that all was quiet in the city, and that the commotion was in the air. Henry could never recall this incident without a horror that made his hair stand on end."—RANKE, work cited, p. 278.

Henry III. probably witnessed this startling phenomenon; at all events, he must assuredly have known of it, at the time: and it was an occurrence likely to leave a life-long impression on a mind like his.

A historian, to avoid the charge of superstition, has to say, as Ranke does, that Henry *imagined* he heard the same sounds. But how about the messengers who brought answer back that "*the commotion was in the air*"?

* Marie mourut en couches en 1574. Henri III. qui venait de succeder a Charles IX., et etoit depuis un mois de retour de Pologne, en fut saisi d'une—i vive douleur, qu'il resta enferme plusieurs jours sans manger, et ne reparut ensuite en public que convert de vetements de deuil, parsemes de tetes de molt."—*Biographie Generale*, tome x. pp. 854, 855.

monody on the death of Marie de Cleves, which the poet puts in the mouth of the king.*

With all this tallies closely what, history tells us regarding the lady herself.

MARIE DE CLEVES.

This princess seems to have been almost as noted for grace and beauty as her more celebrated namesake, Mary of Scotland.

She had been the admiration of the court of Charles IX., by her loveliness and her virtues.† The poets of that day celebrate her as the "Beautiful Mary"‡ and so great was the fascination her charms exerted over Henry that the credulity of the times was fain to ascribe it to the influence of sorcery. §

We have additional testimony both as to the character of this lady, and as to the profound sorrow felt by Henry for her loss, in the following extract from a manuscript Diary kept, throughout the reigns of Henry III. and Henry IV., by Pierre de l'Estoile, Sieur de Gland, a gentleman of an honorable and well-known family, occupying important posts in the magistracy and Parliament of Paris: ||

* "On trouve dans les Œuvres de Pasquier une complainte sur la mort de Marie de Cleves, où le poète fait parler le roi lui-même. *Biographie Universelle*, tome ix. p. 96.

† "Cette princesse, qui avait fait l'admiration de la cour de Charles IX., par sa beauté et ses vertus, mourut en couches, etc."—*Biographie Universelle* (Paris, 1813), tome ix. p. 96.

‡ "Les poètes du temps la célèbrent sous le nom de la Belle Marie."—*Biographie Générale*, tome x. p. 854.

§ "Selon l'usage de ces temps de crédulité, on crut que la princesse avait employé quelque charme pour enflammer Henri."—*Biographie Universelle*, tome ix. P. 96.

|| Pierre de l'Estoile, conseiller du Roi, et grand audencier en la chancellerie de France, étoit issu d'une famille parlementaire. Sa position sociale lui permettait de bien connaître les hommes et les choses de son temps. Il parait qu'il se donna, pour principale occupation de sa vie, le soin de recueillir très attentivement, et de consigner dans des registres

"On Saturday, October 30, 1574, died at Paris, in the flower of her age, leaving a daughter as heir, Dame Marie de Cloves, Marchioness d'Isle, wife of Messire Henry de Bourbon, Prince of Conde. She was endowed with singular goodness and beauty, by reason of which the King loved her devotedly (eperdu mont); so dearly, indeed, that the Cardinal do Bourbon, her uncle,* when about to entertain the King, caused her to be removed from his Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Pres: declaring to ill's Majesty that he (the King) could not enter so long as the body of the princess remained there. She said, on her deathbed, that she had wedded the most generous, but also the most jealous, prince in France; to whom, however, she felt conscious that she had never given the slightest cause for jealousy."†

I have found no positive evidence that Marie passed her last days in the Abbey in which she was buried; but it is, in the highest degree probable. We know that she died in Paris, and that her husband, the Prince of Conde, fearing that the Queen

ou des tablettes, les evenements marquants qui se passait autour de lui."—*Notice of the Life and Manuscripts of Pierre de l'Estoile*, prefixed to the Paris reprint of his "Memoires," Didier, 1854.

Speaking of D'Estoile's diary, Bouillon says, in his *Dictionnaire de Biographic Universelle*:

"This collection comprised in five folio volumes, and which was never intended for publication, is a most valuable source of information as to events occurring in the reigns of Henry III. and Henry IV."—Art. "Estoile."

* He was her uncle by marriage only.

† PIERRE DE L'ESTOILE: *Memoires pour servir a l'Histoire do France*. Edition by Didier, 1854.

The wording, in the original, is somewhat obscure: le roy l'aimoit si fort qu'il falust que le Cardinal de Bourbon, son oncle, pour festoier le Roy, la fist ester de son Abbaye de Saint-Germain-des-Pres, disant Sa Majeste qu'il n'estoit possible qu'elle y entrast tant que son corps y seroit." But the meaning evidently is that the Cardinal, knowing the violence of the King's grief, thinking that he might insist on seeing the body of the princess, and fearing the effect on his mind, took the precaution to have the corpse removed from the Abbey, previous to the King's visit.

Mother designed his death, had, some months before, taken refuge in Germany, where he remained till late in the year 1575;* that is, until a year after Marie's death. Marie's father had died several years before.† The prince, in leaving his wife behind, doubtless entrusted her to the care of his uncle, the Cardinal de Bourbon. But the cardinal evidently resided in his Abbey, since it was there, according to Etoile, that he proposed to entertain the King. Under these circumstances, we can scarcely doubt that the forsaken and fatherless niece lived with her uncle in his Abbey. Sad must her life there have been, uncertain as she was of her husband's fate! All this strikingly coincides with the "triste et cloistree" of the song.

I pass on to say a few words of the musician, to whom, as alleged, the spinet belonged.

BALTAZARINI.

His name does not occur either in the *Biographie Generale*, or the *Biographie Universelle*; and, after long search, I had begun to despair of finding any biographical notice of such a personage, when I was fortunate enough to discover in the Athenaeum Library of Boston, a French Dictionary of Musicians, in some eight or nine volumes. There Henry's favorite has a place.

" BALTAZARINI: an Italian musician, known in France under the name of *Beaujoyeux*, was the first violinist of his day. The Marechal do Brissac brought him from Piedmont, in 1577, to the court of Queen Catherine do Medicis, who appointed him her Director of Music, and first *valet de chambre*. Henry III. entrusted to him the management of the court fetes; am!

* Ranke: "Civil Wars and Monarchies in France," p. 292.

† Marie was the daughter of Francis I., Duke of Nevers. I do not know the exact year in which he died, but it was before 1565: for Louis do Gonzague, having in that year married the heiress of Francis, then succeeded to the Dukedom of Nevers.—BOUILLON: *Dictionnaire de Biographie Universelle*, art. "Nevers"

he long discharged the duties of that post with credit. It was he who first conceived the idea of a dramatic spectacle, combined with music and dancing."*

Baltazarini was, then, at Henry's court, surnamed *Beaujoyeux*—"the handsome and the joyous." Compare, with this, the second line of the stanza, as it appears on the discovered parchment:

"A Baltazarini, mon gay musicien"—gai being the synonyme of *joyeux*.

But in the stanza, as M. Bach's hand predicted it would be found, the same line reads:

"A Baldazzarini, *tres bon* musicien"

A trifling coincidence, this; yet a most significant one, because inconsistent with any arranged scheme of deception. There can be no stronger proof of authenticity, than just such incidental trifles as these.

What shall we say of M. Bach's story? The documents from which I have compiled it were procured for me by an English friend in Paris, to whom I cannot sufficiently express my obligations for disinterested and untiring kindness, and whom I wish that I were at liberty here to thank by name. That friend, having made M. Bach's acquaintance, obtained personally from him all the particulars, with corrections of the newspaper statements and answers to various queries of mine, suggested by the documents as I first obtained them: also, through M. Bach's courtesy, the various photographs I possess, together with the following certificate, in M. Bach's hand

* *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, vol. i. p. 232.

From the last sentence in the above it would appear that to Baltazzarini—or Balthazzarini, as Lenglet-Dufresnoy spelled it, or *Baldazzarini*, as it was written by M. Bach's hand—the modern world owes its favorite amusement, the opera.

The uncertainty, in these old times, as to the spelling of proper names, especially in the case of persons of little note, is notorious.

writing, appended to that fac-simile of the original music, of which I have given two lines on page 416:

"This is a correct fac-simile from the sheet of music paper which I found on my bed, the morning of the fifth of May, 1865. The air and the words are truly those which I heard in my dream.

"N. G. BACH."

In addition, M. Bach (in reply to a suggestion of mine—which some men would have deemed importunate) did me the favor to send me a letter, dated March 23, 1867, in which he says: "I attest the existence of the parchment, still in my possession, containing the verses composed by the king and addressed to the celebrated musician, Baldazarini; and that it was found in a secret compartment of the spinet which the kin, had given him; and also that the communication announcing the existence of the parchment, and Stating that it had been placed there, is, in every point, the exact truth. I add that the photographs of the spinet and of the parchment, and the reproduction of the autograph of the music and words, are well executed and perfectly exact."

Such is the case in all important details. It is for the reader to decide whether, under the circumstances, the supposition of imposture is tenable.

What motive? Nothing whatever to gain, in a worldly sense. Much to risk and something to lose. To risk misconception, suspicion, perhaps the allegation of monomania; perhaps the charge of conspiracy to palm off on the world a series of deliberate, elaborate forgeries; forgeries involving a sacrilegious deception, seeing that there is question of sacred things connected not with this world only, but with that which is to come. Thus, to risk the loss of a character earned by the consistent integrity of a long and honored life. More certainly still, to attract importunate visitors, perhaps impertinent questioners, and thus to break up that domestic quiet so dear to a cultivated and studious sexagenarian.

But if character and all imaginable motive did not give the lie to any such suspicion, the circumstances are such that the theory of fraud is beset with extreme difficulties. The friend to whom I owe my documents showed the original of the son, to Monsieur D——, one of the greatest harmonists of the day and quite a thesaurus of musical lore. This gentleman examined it critically, and declared to my friend that it was so exactly in the style of the epoch that it would require not only a great musical genius, but the special studies of a lifetime, to produce such an imitation. Monsieur D——, lacking faith in spirit intercourse, did not pretend to explain the mystery, but simply said that, though Al. Bach was a meritorious musician, he regarded it as *absolutely impossible* that he should have composed the song.

Again, if composed by him, it must have been suddenly, in a single night, without chance of reference to old authorities. Whence, then, the coincidences between the words of the song* and the incidents in the life of Henry III. and of Marie de Cleves?

Every allusion has been verified, except that to the distant hunt (*chasse lointaine*): and—let Sadducism smile at my easy faith in the unseen—I confess my belief that if I had opportunity to consult the library of the British Museum, or, better yet, the *Bibliothèque Imperiale*, I could verify that also.

Add to all this the minor peculiarities to which I have already adverted. Would any one, concerting a plan of forgery and simulated prediction, be likely to contrive the variations between the predicted stanza and the original? or the inclosed [ma], with its explanation? or the si, apparently a blunder, yet proving, correct? or even the variations in spelling the musician's name?—most natural, if we consider the uncertain orthography of that day, but how unlikely to be planned?

Again, it is only by inference and after long search that I conclude

* My Paris informant tells me that M. Bach never wrote a verse of poetry in his life

the words "triste et cloistres" to be in exact accordance with the facts: how remote the chance, then, that M. Bach, during that mysterious night, should have acted upon a similar conclusion?

Yet again: if the communication indicating the hiding-place of the parchment be a forgery, then M. Bach must have found the parchment, without any directions as to its whereabouts, before the spinet was sent to the Retrospective Museum. Is it within the bounds of probability that the surprising discovery of such an interesting document should have been studiously kept concealed from every one, the spinet sent off under false pretences to the Museum, and then the communication concocted as an excuse to send for the instrument again and institute a pretended search?

I do not think that dispassionate readers will accept such violent improbabilities. But if not, what interesting suggestions touching spirit-intercourse and spirit-identity connect themselves with this simple narrative of M. Bach's spinet!

CHAPTER III.

A BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT MANIFESTING HERSELF.

MORE than forty years ago there died a young English lady, whom I knew intimately. She had enjoyed all the advantages of the most finished education that her country affords; spoke French and Italian fluently, had travelled over Europe, there meeting many distinguished persons of the day. And she had been favored by nature as much as by fortune. She was as amiable as accomplished, gifted with strong affections, great simplicity, and a temperament eminently spiritual and refined. I shall call her Violet.*

When, twenty-five years after her death, I first instituted researches in Spiritualism, the thought crossed my mind that if those who once took an interest in us during earth-life, were permitted still to commune with us when they had passed to another phase of being, Violet's spirit, of all others, might announce itself to me. But I have never, on any occasion, evoked spirits; deeming it wisest and best to await their good pleasure. And when month after month passed away and no sign came, I had quite ceased to expect it, or to dwell upon such a possibility.

I can scarcely express to the reader my surprise and emotion when, during a sitting held October 13, 1856, at Naples (Mrs. Owen and one other lady, not a professional medium, being present), the following incidents occurred.

THE PROMISE KEPT.

The name of Violet was suddenly spelled out. After my

* Her true baptismal name (a somewhat uncommon one), which I do not feel justified in giving, is, like that with which I have replaced it, typical of a favorite flower.

astonishment had somewhat subsided, I asked *mentally*, with what intent a name so well-remembered had been announced.

Answer—"Gave pro—"

There the spelling stopped. Repeated invitations to proceed were unavailing: not another letter could we obtain. At last it occurred to me to ask Are the letters *p, r, o*, correct?

Answer.—"No."

Question.—"Is the word 'gave' correct?"

Answer.—"Yes."

Then I said "Please begin the word after 'gave' over again:" whereupon it spelled out, now and then correcting a letter, the sentence:

"Gave a written promise to remember you, even after death."

I think that no human being except such as have been unexpectedly brought, as I was then, almost within speech of the next world and its denizens, can realize the feeling which came over me, as these words slowly connected themselves. If there was one recollection of my youth that stood out, beyond all others, it was the reception, from Violet, of a letter written in prospect of death and containing, to the very words, the promise which now, after half a lifetime, came back to me from beyond the bourn. Such evidence as it was to me it can be to no one else. I have the letter still; but its existence was unknown except to me: it has never been seen by any one. How little could I foresee, when I first read it, that, after a quarter of a century, in a far, foreign land, the writer would be enabled to tell me that she had kept her word!

A few days afterward, namely during a session held on October 18, the same spirit having announced herself, I obtained, to various mental questions, replies characterized by the same pertinency and exactitude as are above evinced; the subjects of my questions being of a private character and the true replies being known to me alone. There was not a single failure; and, in the course of these replies, allusions were made to

circumstances with which, so far as I know or believe, no one living in this world is acquainted except myself.

It is within my knowledge that many results similar to the above have been obtained by others. Yet very few of these reach the public at all; and when they do, they are usually couched in the most general and unsatisfactory terms. It needs, in such cases, as prompting motive to overcome a natural reluctance, the earnest wish, by such disclosure, to serve truth, and supply important testimony on a subject of vital importance to humankind. Let us examine that which is here supplied.

The results obtained were not due, in any sense, to what has sometimes been assumed as a cause of similar phenomena, under the name of "expectant attention." We were, at the time, in search of various physical tests which we had heard that others alleged they had witnessed; as motion without contact, writing by occult means, the exhibition of hands and the like. What came was utterly unforeseen, by me the person chiefly concerned as certainly as by the other assistants. When long-slumbering associations were called up by the sudden appearance of a name, it was assuredly in response to no thought or will or hope of mine, if consciousness be a guide to the existence of thought or feeling. And if not traceable to me, far less can it be imagined to have originated in either of the other assistants. They knew nothing of the letter, not even that it existed. They knew nothing of my question, for it had been mentally propounded. This narrows down the question of mundane influence to myself alone.

But there is additional proof that my expectations had no agency in this case. When, at the first attempt to reply to my question, the unlooked-for sentence had been partly spelled out—"Gave pro"—it did occur to me that the unfinished word might be "promise:" and it did suggest itself that the reference might be to the solemn pledge made to me, so many years before, by Violet. But what happened? The letters

p, r, o, were declared to be incorrect; and I still remember my surprise, and disappointment, as I erased them. But how much was, that surprise increased when I found that the correction had been insisted on, only to make room for a fuller more definite wording!—so definite, indeed, that if the document in question had been set forth in full, it could not have been more certainly designated. Under the circumstances, it is not even conceivable that my mind, or any intent of mine, had anything whatever to

do in working out results. If a spirit-hand had visibly appeared, had erased the three letters, had inserted the omitted word "written" and then finished the sentence, it would have been more wonderful, certainly; but would the evidence have been more perfect that some occult will—some intention other than mine—was at work to bring about all this? And if to no earthly origin, to what other source than to the world of spirits can this occult agency rationally be traced?

Yet this was but the commencement of the numerous proofs, recurring throughout many years, that have assured me of the continued existence, and the identity, of a dear spirit-friend. These came to me chiefly after my return in 1859, from Naples to the United States.

PROOF FROM A STRANGER, FIVE
HUNDRED MILES DISTANT.

Five or six weeks after the publication of a work already referred to, * in February, 1860, my publisher introduced to me a gentleman who had just returned from Ohio, and who informed me that my book had attracted much attention in that State; adding that I might add to its circulation by sending a copy to Mrs. B——, then residing in Cleveland, proprietor of it book-store and one of the editors of a paper there. "She takes a, deep interest in such subjects," he said, "and is, I believe, herself a medium."

* *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*; published January 1, 1860.

I had never heard of the lady before, but I sent a copy of the book, with a brief note asking her acceptance of it, and soon had a reply, dated February 14.

In this letter, after some business details, the writer expressed to me the great satisfaction with which she had read the chapter in "Footfalls" entitled "The Change at Death" and added: "I am what is called a 'seeing medium.' While reading Oat chapter a female spirit that I had never seen before stood by, me, as if listening, and said: 'I guided him in writing that; I helped to convince him of an immortal life.'" Then she subjoined a personal description of the appearance—including color of hair and eyes, complexion, etc.—which exactly corresponded to that of Violet. She added that a Cleveland merchant, who came in at the time and who is an impressional medium (though not known, nor desiring to be known, as such), said: "You have a new spirit to visit you to-day—a lady. She says she knew a Mrs. D——, naming an English lady not then living; known to Mrs. B—— (*not* to the merchant), by literary reputation, but never having been known to either of them personally.

Now Mrs. D—— was Violet's sister. But in my reply, which was partly on business, I neither alluded to the personal description that had been sent to me, nor to what had been said of Mrs. D——. In order to make the test as complete as possible I refrained from any expression which might lead Mrs. B—— to suppose that I recognized the person who had appeared to her. I merely added, to the business part of my letter, a few words to the effect that if she could obtain the spirit's name, or any further particulars tending to identify her, she would confer an obligation on me by informing me of it.

In reply I received two letters; one dated February 27, the other April 5. In these were stated: first, the baptismal name; second, that the spirit said that Mrs. D—— was her sister; third, one or two further particulars as to Violet: all this, accurately according to the facts. Mrs. B—— went on to

say that some other details were added; but these seemed to refer to matters of so private and confidential a character that he thought it might be best to state them personally if, in returning to the West, I could pass through Cleveland. Being, however obliged to start for Europe on business in two weeks, I asked, in reply, that she would put these on paper, which she did in a fourth letter, dated April 20. The particulars which she gave me had been obtained partly by herself, partly through the mediumship of the merchant to whom I have above referred.

When I said that the evidence in this case could never be to others what it was to me, I but faintly shadowed forth the truth. A portion of the wonders that opened upon me the reader can, indeed, appreciate. I had written a brief and purely business letter to a complete stranger, five hundred miles away, in a town which Violet had never seen, where I myself (so far as I can remember) had never been. Anything like suggestion or thought-reading or magnetic rapport—was, under the circumstances, out of the question. Equally so was any knowledge, by a Cleveland editor or a Cleveland merchant, of a lady unknown to fame, who had died thousands of miles away, in another hemisphere. Yet from these distant strangers comes to me, unasked and as unexpected as a visit from Heaven, first a personal description agreeing with that of Violet and the mention of a name which strongly indicated that she was the person who had been communicating with them; then her own name; then her relationship with Mrs. D——: all, without the slightest clue afforded by myself.

These things my readers may appreciate, and they supply wonderful proofs of identity; but when, as in Mrs. B——'s last letter, various minute particulars connected with Violet's early life and mine—particulars unknown to any living creature on this side the Great Boundary—particulars indicated only, so that the writer herself could but very partially understand their import—particulars buried away not in the past alone but in hearts of which they were the most sacred remembrances—

when these things came forth to light under the eyes of the survivor, they were, to him, internal evidence of the continued existence, beyond the death-change, of human memories, thoughts, affections—evidence such as cannot be transferred to any second person: such evidence as, from its very nature, can be received directly alone.

Here it may occur to the reader that, as all things, spiritual as well as material, are subject to law, there must have been *Some* attraction or cause of election, determining Mrs. B—— its the medium, or Cleveland as the place, whence such a communication should come to me.

No doubt. And one can see how this may have been. Mr. B—— has the olden gift,* by St. Paul called the "discerning of spirits;" and, at the time the spirit appeared, she was reading—with approval, it seems—a chapter on the "Change at Death," into which I had thrown some of the strongest and deepest of my religious convictions.† This seems to have been the attraction; for it was during the perusal of that portion of my book that Violet, for the first time, showed herself to Mrs. B——.

Is this explanation far-fetched? Is it irrational to ascribe, to so slight a cause, the spirit's unexpected visit? Yet there had come to my knowledge, a year before, a similar case, perfectly authenticated.

THE APPARITION OF THE BETROTHED.

In October of the year 1854, my father called on Miss A——, a young lady of his acquaintance, residing near London. Her powers as a medium, though known only to a private circle of friends, are of the highest order. She has habitually discerned spirits from her earliest age, years before the modern phase of Spiritualism had come up. Various other

* 1 Corinthians xii. 10.

† *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, Book vi. chap. 1 pp. 476-503.

manifestations, also, of a striking kind, occur in her presence.

My father found her somewhat indisposed, reclining on a sofa, engaged in reading. She laid aside her book, as he entered and was about to rise; but he begged her to remain, adding that, as he had come hoping for opportunity of examining spiritual phenomena, he would sit down alone at a table not far from the sofa, to ascertain if he could obtain rappings. He did so; and after a time raps were heard, though Miss A—— did not touch the table.

"Can you perceive," my father asked, "the presence of any spirits?"

"Yes," she replied "I see one, that of a young lady."

"Can you tell her name?"

"No; she has never given it to me, though I have several times seen her, as I sat reading this book"—and she pointed to the volume beside her—"but perhaps we can get the name by rapping."

And, in effect, there was immediately spelled out, "Grace Fletcher."

"What!" said my father; "my old friend, Grace Fletcher?"

"Who is Grace Fletcher?" the young lady asked: "I never heard the name before."

"You could not have known her, for she died thirty or forty years ago. I knew her intimately; and a more beautiful character, moral and intellectual, I never met."

"It is singular," said the young lady, "that I almost always see her spirit when I sit down to study this book; and only then."

"Pray what work is it you have been studying?" my father asked.

"Dr. Thomas Brown's Mental Philosophy;" and she handed my father the volume.

He took it, exclaiming: "How strange! What a wonderful coincidence!"

"What is there wonderful in it?"

My father then explained that, as he had always understood, Dr. Brown and Miss Fletcher were deeply attached to each other, and that their intimacy was expected to ripen into marriage. "But she died at nineteen," he added, "and I do not think poor Brown ever got over it; for he survived her three or four years only."

Grace Fletcher who, from all I have heard of her, well deserved my father's encomium, was the daughter of a talented mother, long noted in the literary circles of Edinburgh and who died some thirteen or fourteen years since, at a very advanced age. I have ascertained through a lady who was well acquainted with the family that between Dr. Brown and Miss Fletcher there was well known to exist, probably not a positive engagement but certainly so strong a mutual attachment, that their friends felt confident it would be a match. She died about the year 1816; and he, in 1820.*

I had the above from the young lady herself;† and I know that its accuracy may be strictly depended on. One of the recollections of my childhood is my father's sorrow when the unexpected news of Grace Fletcher's death reached him.

The point in this case which gives it value is, that the young Peeress had never heard Miss Fletcher's name, nor had she the least idea, till my father informed her, of the connection there had existed in life between the lady whose spirit the raps announced, and the author of the book during the perusal of which that spirit was wont to appear. As a chance coincidence

* In the prime of life, aged forty-two. He was Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. His well-known *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, above referred to, reached the Eighth edition in 1834.

† In 1859, I met her in London at Lady B——'s, where she was always a welcome guest. All her friends speak of her in the highest terms, and my own acquaintance with her, through several months, confirmed my opinion of her intelligence and integrity.

we cannot reasonably regard it. Standing alone it is insufficient foundation for a theory. But the appearance of Violet to Mrs. B——, an utter stranger alike to her and to me, during the perusal of a book of mine, is an incident of the same class; and if such should be found to accumulate, they will furnish proof that a spirit may occasionally—though it be rarely—look back from its next phase of life to this, drawn down by the desire to note the effect which efforts, made on earth, by a dear friend, to enlighten mankind, may, from time to time, be producing. It is a reasonable belief that benevolent spirits, in their world, continue to take interest in the improvement of ours.

I know not that, in this case, I can adduce stronger proof of identity than the above, but I have had additional tests, some of which may tend to fortify the faith of my readers.

TYPICAL AND LITERAL TESTS.

Some two weeks after the receipt of Mrs. B——'s second letter, namely, on the thirteenth of March, 1860, in the forenoon, I called on Mr. Charles Foster, to whose mediumship I have already referred. A lady well and favorably known to the literary world, and whom I shall call Miss P——, accompanied me, The visit was at her request, as she had never witnessed any spiritual phenomena whatever; but had heard much about them, and desired to judge for herself. She had never seen Mr. Foster.

I mentioned to Mr. Foster, in a general way, that I had recently received, from a stranger at a distance, an alleged communication from a spirit, which had passed away many years before; but I studiously withhold the name and all clue to personal identity, adding, however, that I should be glad if, through him, any further test could be given.

During the first part of the session Mr. Foster addressed himself entirely to Miss P——. The incredulous look with which that lady sat down soon changed to one of seriousness,

then of deepest feeling. The test she received that day led to researches which made her a spiritualist for life.*

Then he turned suddenly to me: "Mr. Owen, I see a spirit—a lady—standing beside you, perhaps the same of whom you spoke to me. She holds in her hands a basket of flowers. Ah! that is peculiar; they are all violets."

"Does she communicate her name?"

Mr. Foster paused. After a time, "No," he said, "but she has taken one of the flowers—a single violet—and laid it before you. Has all this any meaning for you?"

"Yes."

"But we ought to get the name. I usually do."

And, at his request, I wrote down seven female baptismal names, including that of Violet, taking care not to pause more at one than at the other.

Mr. Foster took the paper, and, with a single glance at it, tore off each name separately; rolled them up into small pellets and threw these down on a pile of pellets (some, twelve or fourteen) which he had previously made, some of them being blank. There were thus about twenty pellets in all. He bade me take them up and hold them, in my open hand, under the table.

* I am at liberty to give an outline only of the test here referred to, and have substituted another name (Medway) for the true one.

Mr. Foster said he saw the appearance of a young man standing beside Miss P——; and he described his appearance. "Above his head," he went on, "I see the words: 'Fidelity even beyond the grave!'" Miss P——'s face betrayed much emotion, mingled, however, I plainly saw, with doubt. Then Foster suddenly added: "Ah! here is a name—Medway." Upon which the lady sank her face on the table, without a word. Nor, throughout the rest of the session, did she allude to what had passed.

I afterward mentioned the name to a sister of Miss P——, asking if he had ever been among their acquaintances.

"How did you hear of him?" she asked me, astonished.

I told her.

"It is all true," she said in reply. "Many years ago we were intimately acquainted with him. My sister was engaged to him; but he died a short time before the day appointed for their marriage."

I did so. After a time he said to me: "The spirits desire to have your hat under the table." Accordingly he Put it there, but immediately replaced both his hands on the table, saying

"Spirit, when you have selected the pellet, will you let us know by rapping?" About a minute passed when the raps sounded.

Foster.—"Shall I take up the hat?"

Answer.—"No."

I.—"Shall I?"

Answer.—"No."

Miss P.—"Shall I?"

Answer.—"Yes."

Thereupon the table, with a sudden and somewhat violent movement, tilted up on Miss P——'s side, so that, without moving from her seat, she could reach the hat from the floor. Therein, lying between two gloves, was the pellet. She handed it to me and I was about to open it, when Mr. Foster said:

"Please do not open it yet. Let me try if I can get the same name written under the table."

He tore off a small piece of thin paper, took that and a pencil in one hand, and held both for twelve or fifteen seconds beneath the table. Then, withdrawing his hand, after a glance at the paper and the remark, "I believe there is a name on it," he handed it to me. The name was in pencil, but I could not make out a single letter. At Mr. Foster's suggestion I held the paper, reversed, against the window-pane. Then I read distinctly through the paper from the unwritten side, in minute characters, the name Violet.

Then only I first opened the pellet. The same name there.*

I did not suffer Mr. Foster to see either. After a few seconds his arm seemed slightly convulsed, as by a feeble electric shock; and he said: "The name is on my arm;" whereupon

* I have preserved the bit of thin paper, and also the pellet. I need scarcely here remind the reader, that, as already stated, Violet is an assumed name. Of course it was the true name, and the flower typical of that name, which were actually given.

he bared his left arm to the elbow, and I read thereon distinctly the name VIOLET. I did not, however, pronounce it, but left him to spell it out, letter by letter. The letters looked as if they had been traced by, a painter's brush, with pink color. They were about an inch and a quarter in height; printed characters as if somewhat carelessly done, but perfectly legible; the strokes being about an eighth of an inch in thickness. The first letter was near the elbow joint, and the rest were traced along the inside of the arm; the last letter being on part of the palm next to the wrist, just below the root of the thumb. Miss P—— read the name, deciphering it with out any difficulty.

During all the time of these experiments except at the moment when he placed my hat on the ground, and during the few seconds when he put the paper under the table to have the name written on it, Mr. Foster sat quietly *with both hands on the table.*

The room was well lighted by two windows.

Miss P—— had never heard Violet's name; nor, as I have already stated, had Mr. Foster.

Here were four tests: not presenting themselves spontaneously, indeed, as did those which came to me through Mrs. B——; on the contrary obtained by aid of a professional medium whom I had visited, hoping for something of the kind: but yet to be judged fairly, by their internal evidence, notwithstanding.

1. The appearance to Mr. Foster of the basket of flow" and the single flower laid down before me when I asked for Violet's name.

2. The pellet, selected out of twenty, taken from my hand and placed in my hat.

3. The writing, under the table, of the name so that it read on the reverse side.

And 4. The name written on the arm.

The peculiarity of the basket containing a single species only of flower, and the name of that species corresponding to the name of the alleged spirit, together with the selection of a single

flower when I asked for the name, cannot rationally be ascribed to chance.

As to the pellet, since Mr. Foster had his hands on the table, full in view, it was a physical impossibility that he should have taken it, even if he had known which, out of the twenty, to select.

As to the writing under the table, though it may be alleged that practice might enable a person to write so that it should read on the reverse side, and that this might have been done with one hand on the knee, yet the writing itself (now before me) seems to refute this. I have just carefully examined it. The paper is nearly as thin as tracing paper; the name is written in a current lady's hand, as if the pencil-point had just lightly touched the surface, the pencil not having sank at all into the paper; and there is no indication of the writing on the reverse. I do not think it possible for any one, holding a pencil and paper, in one hand, for fifteen seconds, under a table, to have produced a word thus written. But, in addition to this, Foster had no clue whatever to the name.

The same is true of the name on the arm, with this added difficulty: the arm having been covered, up to the moment when the medium bared it and showed the name, and his hands up to that time, having been seen by us resting quietly on the table, by what possible expedient could he have produced the pink lettering?

During the decade from 1860 to 1870 I have had, through various mediums, numerous communications from Violet: none, however, of any length, the longest being that relative to the birth of Christ. * They were usually only brief, cordial messages of affection, or short suggestions on ethical, philosophical, or spiritual subjects. On two occasions, at intervals of years, instead of the name, there was only allusion made to the flower. One of these came through a Boston medium, the

* See Book i. chapter 3, where it is given in full.

other through a lady (not a professional medium) in Washington city, both being strangers to each other and to Violet's name of history. Finally I obtained, by accident as we usually say, a remarkable test, differing in character from any of the above.

THE PORTRAIT WITH EMBLEM.

In the spring of 1867, being then in New York, I made the acquaintance of a Mr. Anderson, who, without previous instruction and by spirit influence, as he alleged, had produced likenesses of deceased persons, many of which were recognized by their friends. He stated to me that a clergyman of his acquaintance desired to meet me; and I met him, by appointment, at Mr. Anderson's rooms, on the afternoon of the twenty-first of March.

While we were conversing Mr. Anderson brought me a large sheet A drawing-paper, requesting me to observe that it was blank on both sides, and asking me to tear a small piece from one corner of the sheet, so as to be able to identify it. I tore irregular pieces from two corners. He then requested me to note the hour, and retired to an inner room.

I supposed that I should have a portrait; and, as my father was a well-known man, of Whom many engraved likenesses exist, I thought it would probably be one of him, and felt that, under the circumstances, even if it resembled, it would be an insufficient test.

But in exactly twenty-eight minutes, Mr. Anderson, returning, pinned against the wall a portrait, in pencil, not of my father, but a female head and bust, life-size, which, from its general outline and expression, I recognized at once as Violet's. On looking again, however, the features seemed to me more regular than hers and the whole face idealized. The pose was graceful: my eye ran over the lines, but was suddenly arrested—could it be? Hardly trusting my senses, I went closer to examine. It was unmistakable. There—as ornament at the

lower point of the opening of the dress in front—was the typical flower

I need not say that I had never made the least allusion to Violet in Mr. Anderson's presence; and that I am convinced he spoke truth when he declared to me that he had never heard of her.*

I carefully adjusted the torn fragments of paper to the corners whence I had taken them, and found the proof thus afforded that it was the same sheet I had marked twenty-eight minutes before it reappeared, absolutely perfect.

I showed the portrait, some days afterward, to my friend Mr. Carpenter, the artist,† without telling him how I obtained it. He examined it carefully. "A little out of drawing" he said, "but clever and graceful: peculiar, too. A young artist?"

"One without much experience, I believe. How long would a good artist take to make such a portrait?"

"That depends upon whether he hit off the likeness at once. If he did and worked hard, he might finish it in a day. But, in a general way, it would take two days, perhaps more."

"How if the artist had begun and finished it within half an hour?"

"There is no man living who could do so."

That was my opinion also, supposing the artist left to his own resources: but I was glad to have it confirmed by so competent a judge.‡

Upon me these cumulative proofs of identity have produced

* Mr. Anderson appeared to me a quiet, frank, simple man: speaking modestly of what he deemed a spiritual gift, and blaming himself for his own wavering faith in its continuance. He would accept of no remuneration from me: it having been, as he reminded me, a volunteered effort.

† Best known as the author of that most truthful and valuable historical painting: *The Emancipation Proclamation before the Cabinet*.

‡ I shall be glad to show to any artist or other sincere inquirer, the original portrait, with the attesting fragments, exactly as I obtained it, at the end of the twenty-eight minutes.

a profound Conviction that Violet has manifested herself; keeping a sacred promise after long years, and sending to me, from another sphere, missives of friendship and words of instruction. I cannot judge what degree of belief this recital of these proofs may create in others.

BOOK V.

THE CROWNING PROOF OF IMMORTALITY.

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, 'We will hear thee again of this matter.'"—Acts xvii. 32.

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT FAITH-ARTICLE OF THE FIRST CENTURY.

"If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain."—1 CORINTHIANS xv. 16, 17.

ACCORDING to the best authorities, the Book of Acts was written about thirty years after the crucifixion. It is one* of the most interesting and instructive of historical episodes, if we read it, as but few of us do, unblinded by the glamour of stereotyped preconceptions.

There was, of course, no New Testament in those days. During the first half of these thirty years there was not even a biography of Christ; and but one, that of Matthew, until near the close of that period: nor have we any proof that even Matthew's narrative was then known, or read, in the Christian congregations. All the apostolic letters of Paul, with the single exception of Thessalonians,* were written but a few years before the Acts were penned. The same is true of the other epistles; with the exception of that of James, which last was written about the middle of these thirty years.

Thus the faith of the disciples during this period was based

* Written about the year 53, or twenty years after Christ's death.

only on personal recollections, and on oral traditions of recent date. It was much strengthened, no doubt, by the appearance among them of those spiritual gifts * which Christ promised to such as trusted in him.† But it was founded chiefly on one great phenomenon: the appearance of Christ, after death, to a number of witnesses, of whom many yet survived. To this, on every great occasion, the apostles were wont to appeal.‡ It was, indeed, the rock-foundation of their creed, failing which they admitted that the entire superstructure must fall. If the &ad rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain."

The triumph of their faith, then, was, that immortality had been brought to light: not set forth as a probability by analogical argument, not recommended to belief by glosses and quiddities of the schools; but brought into the light of day, where the senses can perceive it, where the highest of all human evidences can assure its reality. And the test-proof of immortality among these early disciples of Christ was *that the dead could return*;§ it was that they themselves, to use the modern term, had seen the apparition of their Master.

Sceptics deny that they saw him. Strauss, assuming that an apparition would be a miracle, and holding miracles to be impossible, discredits the narrative. Yet he candidly states his conviction that the disciples, self-deceived through the excited state of their minds, firmly believed that Christ had appeared to them. He says.

* 1 Corinthians xii. 8-11.

† John xiv. 12.

‡ Acts ii. 32; iii. 15; iv. 33; x. 40, 41; xiii. 20, 31; and others.

§ It was not Christ alone whom (as we are told) they had seen: if we may trust the record "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and appeared unto many."—Matthew xxvii. 52, 53.

The decayed body does not come out of the grave; that is not the mode in which an apparition is formed: but that was the popular conception of the phenomenon in Matthew's day. How often are genuine phenomena incorrectly explained!

From the epistles of Paul and the Acts, it is certain that the apostles themselves had the persuasion that they had seen the Arisen.... For the rest, the passage from the first Epistle to the Corinthians is not hereby weakened which, undoubtedly genuine, was written about the year 59 after Christ, therefore not thirty years after his resurrection. Upon this information we must admit that many members of the first community, still living at the composition of that epistle, particularly the apostles, were persuaded that they had witnessed the appearance of the risen Christ." *

The text to which Strauss here refers is St. Paul's assertion that he has taught what he himself had received, namely, that, after Christ was risen "he was seen of Cephas [that is, Peter], then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain until this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles." †

—Seen, not by Peter and James alone, not by the apostles alone, but by *five hundred* brethren at once. And the belief of these men in the reality of what they saw was such that they endured bonds and scourgings and persecutions even unto death, under that sustaining faith. The record of all this, too, was made, within thirty years of the time it happened; and is admitted, by a critic so learned and critical as Strauss, to be undoubtedly genuine."

For any natural event such testimony would be overwhelming. Strauss, having made up his mind that an apparition is an impossibility, disbelieves the story. I, having, like the disciples, witnessed an apparition, ‡ know, as they did, that it is not impossible; and believe as they did, that Christ showed himself to them. I can thoroughly understand, though I might not have imitated, that constancy of faith which braved sufferings and death.

* *Leben Jesu*, pp. 629, 652.

† 1 *Corinthians* xv. 5, 6, 7.

‡ See Book v. chapter 3.

If the religious world is ever to attain the vantage ground that was occupied by the Christians of the apostolic age, it must convince itself that an apparition is a natural phenomenon, of occasional occurrence. Till then, a large fraction of the intelligent portion of society—its scientific leaders especially—will continue to deny, like Strauss—will stand out, like Thomas, saying: "I must see before I believe."

Therefore the question "Is it important to study the subject of apparitions?" resolves itself into another: "Is it important to have assured proof of immortal life?"

I make, to the reader, no apology for the space I occupy in illustrating this and cognate phenomena. The world owes to itself an apology for its apathy on the subject,

CHAPTER II.

APPARITIONS SHOWING THEMSELVES SPONTANEOUSLY.

To a mind not influenced by popular Prejudice, it will be scarcely possible to believe that apparitions would have been vouched for in all countries, had they never been seen in any."—REV. GEORGE STRAHAN, D.D.*

ONE of the most remarkable phases of scepticism is that which denies, what all ages have admitted, the occasional reappearance of what we call the dead. The fantastic accessories of current ghost stories—hideous spectres, naked skeletons clanking chains, odors of brimstone, lights burning blue—have mainly contributed to this modern Sadducism. False ideas and morbid feelings touching death have unsettled our judgment, even our perceptions. Those whom we loved in this world we have learned to fear, as soon as they passed to another. We think, with terror, of their reappearance; we faint, perhaps, if they suddenly present themselves: for terror blinds; it is the parent of superstition.

In the nursery, or by the home fireside, our children hear horrible ghost-stories, shuddering as they listen. This is spiritual poison, fatal alike to equanimity and to simple religious truth. If we speak to children of ghosts at all, we ought to tell them, just as we relate any natural event, that we shall all be ghosts by and by; that only part of our life is spent here; the rest of it in another world which we cannot see, but which is better and more beautiful than this. We ought to add that perhaps we shall be able to come back from that world and show ourselves to some of our old friends; and that, may be,

* In the Preface to his *Prayers and Meditations of Dr. Samuel Johnson*, London, 1785.

they themselves will be so fortunate, before they go, as to see some person who has gone before—or what people call a ghost. *

Possibly their nerves might be somewhat tried, in case this should happen; just as a person, hearing thunder for the first time, often trembles at the sound. But, if well-trained, they would soon witness, without undue excitement, either phenomenon. Whenever men, in the mass, attain to this frame of mind, apparitions will probably become more common. Spirits, reading our thoughts, doubtless often refrain from showing themselves when they perceive that they will only be objects of terror.

Short of space and having already treated the subject of spontaneous apparitions at considerable length,† I here confine myself to a single example; a narrative which I am able to fortify with name, place, and date. It is one of a numerous class, an appearance of a dear friend soon after death.‡

A FATHER, DYING IN EUROPE, APPEARS TO
HIS SON IN AMERICA.

In the year 1862, Mr. Bradhurst Schieffelin, of the well-known firm of Schieffelin & Co., New York, kindly furnished me with this narrative, sent with the following note:

"NEW YORK, *June 11, 1862.*

"DEAR SIR: Herewith inclosed I have the pleasure to hand

* I taught my children after that fashion. The result, even in early childhood, was some such expression as this: "I do wish I could see a ghost: could not you show us one, Papa?"

† In *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, Book iv. chapter 3, pp. 358-430.

‡ One of the members of a society formed in 1851 by distinguished graduates in the English University of Cambridge, for the purpose of investigating spiritual phenomena, told me that their researches had resulted in a conviction, shared, he believed, by all the members, that there is sufficient testimony for the appearance, about the time of death, or after it, of deceased persons.—See *Footfalls*, note, pp. 33, 34; and, for the printed circular of the society, see Appendix to that work, Note, A., p. 513.

you a letter from the Rev. Frederick Steins, relating the apparition of his father. Mr. Steins, a German gentleman of the utmost respectability, is pastor of the Madison Street Presbyterian Church in this city, having a large German congregation.

"This letter, which you may preserve as evidence, I have obtained for publication, and I shall be glad if it prove of service to you.

"Yours truly,

"BRADHURST SCHIEFFELIN.

"To the Honorable

ROBERT DALE OWEN."

The inclosure is as follows:

"NEW YORK, *June 10, 1862.*

"In compliance with the request in your note, I here give the special facts connected with the apparition of my father.

"It was on the thirteenth of December, 1847, as I was walking, with my two eldest sons, in Grand street, New York. It was in the forenoon, before twelve o'clock, and the sidewalk was full of people. There the whole figure of my father suddenly appeared to me. He was in his usual dress, his well-remembered cap on his head, his pipe in his hand, and he gazed on me with an earnest look; then, as suddenly, disappeared.

"I was very much terrified, and immediately wrote home, relating what had happened. Some time afterward I received a letter from one of my brothers, written from Neukirchen, Rhenish Prussia, the family residence, informing me that on the morning of the thirteenth of December, our father had died there. At breakfast on that day he was in his usual health, and had been speaking of me with great anxiety. After breakfast he passed out into the yard; and, in returning, he dropped dead, overtaken by a sudden fit of apoplexy.

"I learned afterward that, at the moment of death, he wore

the very dress in which I had seen him; the same cap on his head; his pipe, as usual, in his hand.

"Yours,

"FR. STEINS.

"TO BRADHURST SCHIEFFELIN, ESQ."

The anxious interest which the father expressed in his absent son, immediately before death, is a noteworthy incident in this case.*

Narratives of cases similar to the above could be multiplied indefinitely. A very remarkable one—a family reminiscence—furnished to me by my friend, William Howitt, will be found in the work to which I have referred.†

* Compare with this a similar expression of affection by the dying Mrs. Marshall toward the child Cecilia; to whom, immediately after death, she appeared. See preceding Book I chapter 1.

† *Footfalls*, p. 371.

CHAPTER III.

MY OWN EXPERIENCE TOUCHING APPARITIONS.

"Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus."

HORACE—A. P.

I HAVE no mediumistic powers—none of the spiritual gifts enumerated by Paul and considered by him as desirable. I can see nothing, hear nothing, except what others, with quick eyes and ears, can see and hear. As to the reality of subjective apparitions I have to trust to the testimony of the seer or seeress; fortified, sometimes, by information touching worldly affairs that has been furnished by these invisible forms, and afterward ascertained to be true.* Perhaps, at this stage of spiritual progress, I am, because myself an outsider, more likely to gain the ear, and the confidence, of the outside world.

If, some day, there should appear a man, endowed alike with the highest spiritual gifts and with the most eminent moral and intellectual powers, his influence on civilized society might be immense. Meanwhile a mere spectator may obtain a degree of credit for dispassionate judgment which would be refused to an actor.

I regret, however, that it has never been my good fortune to witness an objective apparition, spontaneously presenting itself. I had to seek before I found. But if my readers will follow me in the relation of what I did find, I think they will admit that I have taken what reasonable precautions I could, alike against self-delusion and imposture. That I was in search of what I found is, in itself, no proper bar to my testimony.

* A remarkable example will be found in *Footfalls*, Book iv. chapter 3; story of the *Old Kent Manor Howe*, pp. 414-427.

If I were about to make a study of earthquakes and volcanic phenomena, I should be likely to visit the western coast of South America, the southern portion of the Italian peninsula; perhaps the islands of Sumatra, Java, Iceland. It is no disparagement to results that they have been obtained by expressly placing one's self in the way of obtaining them.

My experience in this field, though not so varied as that of some others, has been a remarkable one. If my life were extended to the term ascribed to the antediluvian patriarchs, I should remember, to my dying day, the first time I was visited by an appearance which all the attendant circumstances concurred in proving to have been a visitor from another phase of being. It occurred, eleven years ago, at the house of Mr. Daniel Underhill, in New York.

AN EVENTFUL HOUR WITH LEAH FOX.

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 upstairs 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, I 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 check.* 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 ray 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 though 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.

* See an article entitled *The Child's Bones Found*; "Footfalls," Book iv. chapter 3. It relates to the Seeress of Prevorst. After stating that her mother and sister did not see an apparition which showed itself to her, it is added: "But both, at the times when the spirit appeared to the seeress, frequently felt the sensation as of a breeze blowing upon them:" p. 399.

Such a sensation, as I know from personal experience, frequently precedes, or accompanies, spiritual phenomena,

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 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 illumination 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 figure 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 farthest 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 perfectly 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 ray hand in, I felt no water. In so doing 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 mantle-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 of courage. There was, in truth, nothing of which to boast. The preceding and attendant circumstances were such as to prelude 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 phrase) frightened out of his senses; and so, is not entitled to credit as witness.

If it be objected that, before the sitting closed, the doors were unlocked, I reply first that all the most 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 be still 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 assistants should leave their seats, even for a moment, without my knowledge.

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.

A GHOST SPEAKS.

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' 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, the words: "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 sounds resembled the human voice, when low and gentle.

Mrs. Underhill afterward stated to rue 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 shoulder, 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,

an, I 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 in a coat-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.

Though I had every reason to be satisfied with my success I resolved to prosecute, these researches, hoping for an apparition by gas-light or daylight. But I was unable at that time to do

so. My duties as military agent of the State of Indiana called me from New York; and, in the rush of events during these stirring times, ray time and thoughts were otherwise engrossed. In the spring of 1862 Judge Holt and myself were appointed a Government Commission on Ordnance and Ordnance stores,* requiring a residence in Washington; and a year later I became chairman of another Government Commission, charged with the duty of reporting on the condition of the recently emancipated freedmen of the United States. Thus it was not till the close of the war that I could sufficiently withdraw my attention from public duties to follow out, in any regular or consecutive manner, spiritual studies. Perhaps this mingling of mundane work and ultramundane contemplations is of wholesome character; tending to infuse broader views and a more practical tone into speculative researches.

My experience of 1860 led me to the opinion that an objective apparition must be the workmanship of spirits, possible under rare circumstances. Sometimes these appear to be wholly independent of human agency or intention; sometimes we can, in a measure, promote them, and even anticipate, with more or less uncertainty, however, the result. In this latter case, we seem to obtain something corresponding, in a measure, to a production of human art; and, specifically, of the art of sculpture; but of sculpture in spiritual phase; evanescent, only partially material, and liable, at any moment, to dissolve or disappear.

What I particularly desired was to have an opportunity, in the light, of witnessing the formation of such an apparition;

* Judge Holt was a member of President Buchanan's Cabinet and afterward Judge Advocate General. We reported on accounts amounting to more than forty-nine millions of dollars, reducing the liabilities of the General Government, by our decisions, nearly seventeen millions: and our report was sustained.

Some men imagine that profound convictions touching Spiritualism and Spiritual phenomena incapacitate for business duties; but that is a mistake.

its actions, its movements from place to Place, and its disappearance. But it was not until the year 1867 that I obtained any further satisfaction. During the spring of that year I heard of Miss B——, of Boston, an elderly lady long known and esteemed in that city as a successful teacher of music and dancing. It was said that she, in a private circle, had obtained numerous objective apparitions, in a partially lighted room. This was afterward confirmed to me by a most estimable lady, who had herself been present at many of these sittings; Mrs. John Davis, widow of the well-known ex-Governor of Massachusetts, and of whom I have already spoken. *

Mrs. Davis expressed to me her conviction that Miss B—— was entirely sincere and disinterested; and that the phenomena which she (Mrs. Davis,) had witnessed in Miss B——'s apartments were genuine.

Miss B——, it seems, had several friends, married ladies in the middle rank of life, who had more or less power as mediums, especially in connection with spiritual appearances of an objective character. On several occasions, sometimes in one of their houses, sometimes in another, Miss B—— had herself seen an apparition.

None of these ladies were professional mediums; but it occurred to them that, if they met occasionally, they might, by their united powers, obtain very interesting results. Miss B—— offered the use of her spacious apartments; and during a series of experiments which were conducted there, phenomena of a marvellous character were observed: a great variety of spirits appearing, chiefly strangers to any of the assistants, in various costumes.

This was noised abroad, and brought requests, from the curious, for admission to witness such wonders. These were usually granted, but uniformly as a favor and without charge. Opinions were various: some visitors were convinced; others went away in doubt whether it was not an exhibition got up to mystify the credulous, or gratify a longing for notoriety.

* See Book iii. chap. 3.

This, of course, was very unpleasant to the ladies concerned; and when I called on Miss B——, in May, 1867, I found that, for several months, they had almost ceased to meet. When, however, I expressed to Miss B—— my earnest desire to investigate the matter intending, some day, to publish the results, she acceded to my wishes with the utmost alacrity. "I am so glad," she said, "to have some one, who will be listened to, test these phenomena. When one has no other interest or desire than to get at important truth, it seems hard to be subjected to groundless suspicion."

At the first two or three sittings a portion only of the ladies could attend; and Miss B—— was of opinion that the discontinuance of their regular sittings had, for the time, weakened their power. We had only rapping and phosphorescent phenomena, but of a remarkable character. Bright stars appeared on the person of one medium, a line of light along the forehead of another, the word "Hope," on the back of the hand of a third. These appearances were brilliant and could be seen, twenty feet off, across a dimly-lighted room. At other times the raps were so violent as to shake the sofa on which we sat.

But until the session, of June 4, there was no apparition. On that occasion we had one under very satisfactory circumstances; but I did not consider the test complete; for I did not witness either the formation of the figure or its disappearance.

It was not until the twenty-fifth of June that we were able to bring together all the ladies who had composed the original circle. I consider that day, like the twenty-first of October, 1860, an era in my spiritual experience.

AN APPARITION IN SHINING RAIMENT.

Miss B——'s rooms, which occupied the entire third floor of a corner house in Washington street, Boston, consisted of a large apartment, thirty feet front by thirty-five feet deep; opening, by folding doors, into a parlor back of it, which was

twenty-five feet by twenty. From each room there was one door of exit only, on a passage or stair-landing, thus:

The front room was lighted by eight windows, four on Washington street, and four on a gas-lit court-yard. As there were no curtains drawn nor shutters closed during the sitting) which was held after lamp-lighting, this room was so far lit from with out that, by any one seated in the back parlor, a few feet from the folding-doors, the dress and general appearance of persons in the front room could be readily observed and every motion they made distinctly seen. I took notice, however, that there was not light enough to recognize features, except close at hand. In this room, employed for dancing lessons, the floor was uncarpeted and waxed, All footsteps of persons walking across it could be very distinctly heard.

Except myself there was but one visitor present, Mrs. John Davis. The amateur mediums who assisted at the sitting were six in number: Mrs. S. J. D——, Mrs. George N. B——, Mrs. Sarah A. K——, Mrs. Fanny C. P——, Mrs. William H. C——, and Mrs. Mary Anne C——: all ladies, apparently, from thirty to forty years of age.

Before the sitting began, Mrs. Davis and myself passed around the room and examined carefully every part of it. The furniture consisted of a sofa, a piano, and numerous chairs set against the walls. There was no pantry, or press, or recess of any, kind. We locked the sole door of exit, and Mrs. Davis kept the key in her pocket during the sitting. Then we locked the door of the back parlor, retaining the key.

We sat down in that parlor directly before the folding-doors. The sofa (marked s. on ground-plan), on which Mrs. Davis, Miss B—— and myself were seated, was about four or five feet within the parlor. I sat at the left-hand corner of this sofa: the entrance through the folding-doors was draped by curtains, which were looped back; so that, from where I sat, I could see three of the four front windows looking out on Washington street and the corner of the room to the right of them. The six mediums sat three on each side of us.

All was quiet during the early part of the sitting, which

commenced a little after eight P.M. Scarcely any rapping. A few phosphorescent lights.

About a quarter past nine, all the mediums being seated by us, I saw dimly, near the right-hand corner of the front line of the large room (at x), at first a grayish, slightly-luminous vapor; after a time, a figure draped in white. At first it was then it moved very slowly past the two right-hand windows (A and B) to the centre of the front line of the room (at C), between two windows. There it remained one or two minutes, still but indistinctly visible. Then, very slowly and without sound of footstep, it advanced down the room, coming directly toward the centre of the folding doors. It stopped (at D) about twelve or fourteen feet from where I was sitting. Thereupon, of a sudden, a brilliant light, coming from the right, striking directly on the figure and only on it—not directly illuminating the rest of the room—enabled me to see the appearance as perfectly as if the entire room had been lit with gas.

It was a female figure, of medium height, veiled and draped, from head to foot, in white. The drapery did not resemble, in material, anything I have ever seen worn. It gave me, as on a previous occasion,* the exact feeling of the Scriptural expression, "shining raiment." Its brilliancy was a good deal like that of new-fallen snow, in the sunshine; recalling the text which declares the garments of Christ, during his transfiguration to have been "exceeding white as snow;" or, again, it was not unlike the finest and freshest Parian marble with a bright light on it, only more brilliant. It had not at all the glitter of spangles or any shining ornament; the tone being as uniform as that of a newly-sculptured statue. It stood upright, in a graceful attitude, motionless. Had I suddenly seen it elsewhere, and without having witnessed its previous movements, I might have imagined it a beautiful piece of sculpture, of singularly-pure material, and marvellously lighted up. The drapery fell around the figure closely, as usual in a statue; not

* June 4; already alluded to.

at all according to the modern fashion of amplitude. I think it was shown to us, under the bright light, as long as fifteen or twenty seconds.

Mrs. K—— stepped out to meet it, going close up to it, and then returning to us. The figure followed her; and, as Mrs. K——, when she passed the folding-doors, had stepped aside to the right, the apparition advanced, with a gliding motion, into the parlor, till, as nearly as I could judge, it was within two or three feet of me. There it stopped (at E).

As it remained immovable I raised my left arm, hoping that I should be touched. As I stretched it out, the figure extended its right arm, covered with drapery, toward me; and dropped into my hand what proved to be a white rose; but its hand did not touch mine.

Thereupon the appearance, still keeping its face to us, slowly retired with the same silent, gliding motion which had marked its advance; not the slightest sound of footstep, on the waxed floor, being audible.

A second time it stopped, again about twelve or fifteen feet from me; and, a second time, an instantaneous light, coming from the right and falling upon it, gave it to be seen with the utmost distinctness. I was enabled to verify my former observations in regard to its appearance, and the unique, rich, resplendent character of the drapery.

Then it slowly receded, still facing us, to the centre of the opposite wall (at C), gradually diminishing in brightness; and finally it vanished before my eyes.

Mrs. K—— had followed it and remained, a few seconds, near the spot where it vanished. Then I saw her cross the window to the right on her return to us. She was dressed in black.

I am *quite certain* that one figure only—that of Mrs. K—— as she returned to us—left the spot. From the time the figure in white reached that spot, I kept my eyes intently fixed there, *without taking them off for a single moment*; and the light from the street was such that it was impossible for any object,

black or white, to pass one of the windows without my seeing it.

When a minute or two had elapsed after the disappearance of the figure, and while my eyes were still fixed on the spot, the thought rushed vividly upon me: "Is it possible that there can be nothing there?" This thought, *to which I did not give utterance*, had hardly crossed my mind when, as if in reply to it, the same sort of mysterious light which had previously illuminated the figure suddenly flashed over the space of wall between the two windows where the figure had disappeared, completely lighting it up, *while the windows and wall on either side were not illuminated*. The light remained long enough to show me that there was nothing whatever there, except two chairs set against the wall, as I had seen them before the sitting began.

Then, with my eyes still fixed on the place of disappearance, I rose and passed entirely around the room: nor did I, for a moment, take my eyes off the spot that had been illuminated till I reached it. Everything in the room was exactly as it had been before the sitting, so far as I could recollect. The outer door was still locked.

It is proper to add that two of the mediums, Mrs. K—— and Mrs. D——, informed me, after the sitting was over, that they did not remember seeing anything of the figure; both having awoke, as from a trance, at the close of the sitting. This, Miss B—— informed me, was usual with them.

I do not think that any of the assistants perceived the formation of the apparition as soon as I did; but while the figure was advancing and retreating, the whispered remarks of the ladies near me—"There it is!"—"Now it stops!"—"Did you see that light?" etc.—made me aware that they saw it just as I did. This was confirmed to me, on after inquiry, by all the ladies except Mrs. K—— and Mrs. D——. All the others observed the sudden illumination of the spot where the figure disappeared.

As on a former occasion, it is proper I should state here that,

throughout the sitting, though the impression produced was profound, solemn beyond expression, never to be forgotten, yet it did not partake at all of the emotion of fear. The predominant feeling was a deep anxiety that there might be no interruption, and that the sitting might not terminate until I had obtained incontrovertible evidence of the fact that the appearance was of a spiritual character, yet as real as any earthly phenomenon.

The allegation, by raps, at the close of the sitting, was that the apparition was that of Violet. Seven years before, during a sitting with Kate Fox, I had had a promise, purporting to come from her, that, some day when the conditions were favorable, she would appear to me. The veil quite concealed the features; but the height, the form and carriage of the figure, so strictly corresponded to hers that, when it approached me, I ceased to doubt that she had kept her promise.

My faith in the reality of this appearance is not at all shaken by reflecting, that a Signor Blitz, or a Robert-Houdin, having a theatre at command, arranged with ready entrances and exits, with practical trap-doors, with dark lanterns in the wings, with the means of producing dissolving views—could probably reproduce all I witnessed.

But here were a few ladies, in private life and in moderate circumstances, quietly meeting in two apartments which were daily used as school-rooms by one of their number; on the third story of a private house,* containing not even a recess where a chair could be hidden away. They meet to satisfy a laudable curiosity; admitting visitors, now and then, by courtesy only. No remuneration is demanded; nor, very surely, would any have been accepted. They meet, on this occasion, at my request, after having discontinued their researches for months, vexed with unjust suspicions. They allow us to look every exit, after a close examination of the rooms. Here is

* The floor below was daily used for mercantile purposes.

neither motive, nor opportunity to say nothing of qualification—for deception. The coin of the realm may be counterfeited, but the coiners must have professional skill, an appropriate location, and expensive machinery. Nor do counterfeiters ply their unholy calling except with the prospect of large gains.

Certain it is, that I beheld the gradual formation of the figure; that I witnessed its movements; that I received from its hand an actual flower; * that I saw the figure disappear. Add to this that the place of its disappearance was illuminated by invisible agency, in answer to an unexpressed thought of mine. If Robert-Houdin can read thoughts, he has a spiritual gift.

If the reader still withholds belief, deeming two or three examples insufficient to prove so strange a phenomenon as the formation, by spiritual agency, and the subsequent disappearance, of a form sufficiently material to grasp a substantial object and hand it to a human being—let him read the next chapter.

* I asked Miss B—— if there had been any white rose in the room. She replied that there were several nosegays there that had been presented to her by her pupils, and, very probably, there might have been such a rose among them. The flower which was given to me is still in my possession.

CHAPTER IV.

A NEAR RELATIVE SHOWS HERSELF, THROUGHOUT FIVE YEARS, TO A SURVIVING FRIEND.

A JUDICIOUS man of science, experimenting in his laboratory, seeks, before giving, to the world the result of an important experiment, to repeat that experiment more than once. Inasmuch as the governing law endures, any result obtained under that law must be capable of being reproduced: and its reproduction, time after time, will usually be deemed necessary to give assurance of its genuine character; seeing that a fallible observer may readily mistake or misinterpret, when his observation is limited to a single example.

Some physical phenomena, however, are spontaneous and cannot be produced at will. We cannot evoke an aurora borealis, or call down aerolites from the sky. Apparitions have usually been thought to be of that character, if believed in at all: and, to a certain extent, they are. Among the superstitious a belief has sometimes prevailed that the dead may be recalled by mystic and unlawful rites, as Saul by the so-called "Witch" of En-dor. But such a superstition finds few believers in modern times. All that there is of truth underlying it consists in this, that, under favorable conditions, of rare and difficult combination, we may occasionally obtain apparitions; and may even be favored so as to witness these again and again: not during weeks or months only, but throughout years.

I am fortunate enough to be able to lay before the reader one of the most remarkable—perhaps the most remarkable—example of this that has ever occurred; or, at least, that is to be found on record: with permission, from the witness, to give

his name in attestation. It is a name well known in the commercial and social circles of New York,—Mr. Livermore.

This gentleman, eleven years ago, lost a near and dear relative: let us call her Estelle. On her death-bed, perceiving the poignant grief that overwhelmed her relative at the prospect of his approaching loss, she earnestly expressed the desire that it might be possible for her, after death, still to assure him of her continued existence.

He attached little importance to this except as evidence of her affection; having himself, up to that time, found no proof satisfactory to his reason touching a Hereafter. Neither he nor Estelle had any faith whatever in spiritual phenomena; and both had been wont to regard the whole subject with repugnance.

When Mr. Livermore found himself alone, his extreme grief was terribly embittered by the thought that it was a separation forever. Expressing this in strong terms to his friend, Dr. John F. Gray, who had been Estelle's physician from childhood, that gentleman (one of the earliest believers in intermundane phenomena) suggested that there was a remedy capable of alleviating his grief, if he (Mr. L.) saw fit to resort to it. The reply was a contemptuous fling at Spiritualism and its delusions: and the sufferer went his way, hopeless and desolate.

After a time, however, came the sober second-thought that there might be something in a doctrine which so earnest and thoughtful a man as Dr. Gray implicitly accepted. Accordingly, at his friend's suggestion, he resolved to seek sittings with Miss Kate Fox.

The sittings were held sometimes in Mrs. Fox's parlor, sometimes in Mr. Livermore's. * In all cases the necessary precautions were taken to give assurance that no one entered the room, or left it, during the sitting, the room itself being thoroughly

* Both Mrs. Fox and Mr. Livermore changed residences during the time these sittings were held; so that the phenomena were obtained in four different dwellings.

examined, and doors and windows effectually secured. At several of the first sittings three or four visitors were admitted as additional witnesses. But it soon became apparent that the best results could be obtained with a single sitter only: and accordingly, as a general rule, Mr. Livermore only was present.

During the first sitting, which was held January 23, 1861, he, Mr. L., for the first time, heard the mysterious echoes—the "raps," as they are usually called. Then, throughout the first ten or twelve sittings, followed the, usual phenomena; spirit-touches, spirit-communications, moving of ponderable bodies, etc.: finally spirit-writing. During the twelfth sitting came a message, purporting to be from Estelle, to the effect that if her friend persevered, her spirit could be made visible to him. Then, throughout a dozen sessions more, came phosphorescent lights, disappearing and reappearing at intervals; at last, on the twenty-fourth sitting (March 14th), the dim outline of a figure, moving about. Three days afterward there came this message: "I know that I can make myself visible to you. Meet to-morrow night. Secure the doors and windows, for I wish the test to be beyond all doubt, for your good and the good of others."

The next evening the session was at Mrs. Fox's residence, but the family were absent, so that the medium and the sitter alone occupied the house. Mr. L. sealed the windows, sealed and locked the doors, and placed heavy furniture against them then searched the room thoroughly and extinguished the gas. Soon came the words: "I am here in form." Then a globular light appeared, with crackling sounds. After a time it became a head, veiled: then, but for a single instant only, Mr. L. recognized the features of Estelle. Then a figure was seen: all this being visible by phosphorescent or electrical lights in various parts of the room. During all this time Mr. L. held both of the medium's hands. Then the mode of producing raps was shown: an orange-shaped luminous ball, with blunt point attached, bounding up and down on the table, and the sound of

each rap coinciding with the approach of the ball to the table, top.

It was somewhat later, however, that

THE CRUCIAL TEST

was first obtained. I copy from Mr. L.'s record:

"No. 43. April 18, 1861. Wind south-west. Weather fail, Having absolutely secured doors and windows, we sat in perfect quiet for half an hour, my faith becoming weak. Then we were startled by a tremendous rap on the heavy mahogany centre-table which, at the same time, rose and fell. The door was violently shaken, the windows opened and shut: in fact, everything movable in the room seemed in motion. Questions were answered by loud knocks on the doors, on the glass of the windows, on the ceiling—everywhere.

Then an illuminated substance like gauze rose from the floor behind us, moved about the room and finally came in front of us. Vigorous electrical sounds were heard. The gauze-like substance assumed the form of a human head covered, the covering drawn close around the neck. It touched me; then receded and again approached. I recognized an oblong substance, concave on the side that was presented to us, and in this cavity the light was brilliant. Into this I looked intently for a face, but none appeared. Again it receded and again approached: this time I perceived an eye. A third time it moved backward, accompanied by electrical sounds, and when, a third time, it came close to me the light had brightened, the gauze had changed in form; a female hand grasped it, concealing the lower part of a face; but the upper part was revealed: it was that of Estelle—eyes, forehead, and expression in perfection. The moment the emotion of recognition passed into my mind, it was acknowledged by a succession of quick raps from all parts of the room, as though an unseen audience expressed its applause.

"The figure reappeared several times, the recognition becoming

each time more nearly perfect. Afterward her head was laid upon mine, the hair falling over my face.

Miss Fox (whose hands I had secured during all this time) and I sat about ten feet from the wall of the room which faced us. The light moved to a point about midway between us and the wall; the electrical cracklings increased; the wall was illuminated and brought out an entire female figure facing that side of the room, the light apparently in one of her hands. The form remained in sight fully *half an hour* and each movement was distinctly visible. Then came the message:

"' Now see me rise:'

And immediately, in full brightness, the figure rose to the ceiling, remained there a few moments suspended; then gently descending, disappeared.

"Afterward she showed herself between us and a mirror. The *reflection of the figure in the glass was distinctly visible*, the light being so bright as to show the veins in a marble slab beneath.

Here a heavy shower of rain fell, and there was spelled out: 'The atmosphere has changed. I cannot remain in form:' whereupon both light and figure finally disappeared."

At a sitting, held two days later, the following communication was received:

I here remark that, all communications obtained through Kate Fox were either spelled out, letter after letter, by the raps:

Or else written, sometimes by Kate's right hand, sometimes by the left; but the writing *always executed inversely*; so that it could only be read by holding it against a mirror.

Occasionally she writes two communications at once; both hands moving at the same time, each on a separate sheet. And I have myself witnessed the following: While her hand was writing, there was, by raps, a call for the alphabet; whereupon Kate called over the letters and took down the message, letter by letter, *without for a moment discontinuing her writing*. Mr. L. has often witnessed all the above phases of communication.

In addition to this, the internal evidence of many of the messages is, especially to those who know Miss Fox well, conclusive evidence that these originate entirely outside of her will and of her intelligence,

My heart is full of joy. We cannot be grateful enough to the Giver of this great boon. I have seen your heart—the shadows that rested upon it, the lights that now glorify it. Be happy and fear not. Peace be with you always.

"ESTELLE."

So far, the upper part of the face only had been seen; but on the evening after the above message was received (namely, April 21), the complete test was obtained. After giving the details of various manifestations apparently of a phosphorescent character, Mr. Livermore says: "At last a luminous globe which had remained stationary some six feet to my left floated in front, and came within two feet of me. It was violently agitated, crackling sounds were heard, and a figure became visible by its light. Then there was revealed the full head and face of Estelle, every feature and lineament in perfection, spiritualized in shadowy beauty, such as no imagination can conceive or pen describe. In her hair, above the left temple, was a single white rose; the hair being apparently arranged with great care. The entire head and face faded and then became visible again, at least twenty times; the perfection of recognition, in each case, being in proportion to the brilliancy of the light."

But, at this session, he, Mr. L., obtained other proof than that of sight to confirm the reality of the appearance. The head of the appearing figure rested for a time upon his, the luxuriant hair dropping over his face and into his hand. He says: "I laid hold of the hair, which seemed, to the touch, at first identical with human hair; but, after a brief space, it *melted away, leaving nothing in my grasp.*"

I select, at hap-hazard from numerous subsequent descriptions, the following:

"No. 66. June 2, 1861: 8.30 P.M. There came a reminder, by raps: 'Examine the room and take the keys of the doors;' which I did.

"We had scarcely seated ourselves when there were violent.

movements, succeeded at first by raps from various parts of the room, then by terrific, crashing reports on the table-top, like miniature thunderbolts, or loud discharges of electricity.

"A rustling succeeded; and a form stood beside me; its sphere permeating every fibre of my organization. Then there Was rapping on the back of my chair, afterward on my shoulders; and the figure, bending forward, placed a hand on my head. A bright light sprang up behind us; it rose, attended by electrical sounds. Then I was kissed on the head and a light but distinctly-felt substance passed over me. Thereupon I raised my eyes and beheld the face of Estelle, plainly visible in front of the light, which now vibrated rapidly, throwing its fitful gleams upon such beauty as, in beings of this world, it is not given us to witness. She looked at me with an expression radiant with blessedness.

"At this point Miss Fox became so excited that her irrepressible exclamations of wonder and delight seemed momentarily to disturb the appearance; for it receded, not appearing again until she became calm; and this occurred several times. Simultaneously lights appeared, floating about in different parts of the room.

"A card with which I had provided myself was then taken from my hand and, after a time, visibly *returned to me*. On it I found a communication beautifully written in pure, idiomatic French; not a word of which was understood by Miss Fox: she has no knowledge whatever of the language."

Passing over several intervening appearances on separate evenings, I find this, under date June 4:

"No. 81. Weather cool and pleasant. Wind north-west." After detailing sundry less important phenomena, Mr. L. proceeds:

"There were very distinct rustlings, and there rose, several feet above the table, a light so vivid as to illuminate all surrounding objects. As it approached me, a dark substance was suddenly interposed. This descended from the light and remained stationary about two feet from my eyes. Gradually it

opened, disclosing a glimpse of Heaven and of an angel as bright as imagination can picture. The figure of Estelle stood there, the same pure, white rose in her tresses: features and expression absolutely perfect under a full blaze of light.

"Six or seven times in succession, this form instinct with life and beauty vanished and then reappeared, before my eyes. When perhaps a quarter of an hour had elapsed, figure and light both disappeared; but in a short time the light again showed itself; this time in a corner of the apartment, where it shone out so brightly that every article of furniture in that part of the room was distinctly visible. And there, just as plainly visible, stood a female figure, in full proportions, the back toward us, and a veil, apparently of shining gauze, covering the head, and dropping, in front, to the knees.

"I asked if she would raise her arm. She did so—the attitude inexpressibly graceful. No pen can describe the exquisite, transcendent beauty of what was this night revealed."

I do not see how we can reject, or explain away, such evidence as the above, even if the record were arrested here. But what will the reader say when he is informed that more than THREE HUNDRED additional sittings were still to be held; all confirmatory of the above experiences.

It is impossible, within the limits of this volume, to follow Mr. Livermore throughout his voluminous record. I can but pick out, here and there, a few of the more salient and irrefutable results.

CORROBORATION THROUGHOUT SEVERAL YEARS.

Here is an item touching on the resemblances between this world and the next:

"No. 93. July 17, 1861. Each succeeding appearance seems more nearly perfect. This evening the figure of Estelle was surrounded by floating drapery of shining, white gauze. In her hand, held under her chin, was a bunch of flowers; and neck and bosom were completely covered with roses and violets.

"I asked: 'Where do you obtain these flowers?' The answer was: 'This world is a counterpart of yours. We have all that you have—gardens and spiritual flowers in abundance.'"

Next month came this, among many others:

"No. 116. August 29. The figure of Estelle appeared soon after we entered the room. She stood quietly while a light floated close to face, head, and neck: as if to show each part more distinctly. While we were looking on, her hair fell over her face, and she put it back several times with her hand. Her hair was dressed with roses and violets, beautifully arranged. This was the most perfect of her efforts: she appeared almost as distinctly as in life.

"By her side stood a form, dressed, as we clearly saw, in coat of what seemed dark cloth. Miss Fox became greatly alarmed and very nervous. Because of this, or for some other reason, the face of this second form was not visible and it soon disappeared." More of this figure hereafter.] The form of Estelle, however, remained.

Then we have an incident going to prove that an apparition may handle earthly objects. The weather being warm, Mr. Livermore had brought with him, and laid on the table before him, a fan. This was taken and held by her, in various positions, sometimes concealing a portion of her face. He (Mr. L.) adds:

"The figure must have been visible to us, during this sitting, *for an hour and a half.*"

It appears that the robes with which it was invested, though they dissolved in the hand, had a certain materiality.

"No. 137. October 4. The figure of Estelle came in great vividness and with extraordinary power. A light floated about the room and she followed it, gliding through the air; at one time her long, white robes sweeping over the table, and *brushing from it pencils, paper, and other light objects, which fell to the floor.*"

DOCTOR FRANKLIN.

By the raps it was announced that the dark-robed figure which had once or twice appeared was that of Dr. Franklin; but no further proof of his identity was obtained until the sitting No. 162, of *November 11*. Then his face was first seen, by a light which seemed to be held by another figure. "If any judgment can be formed from original portraits of the man," Mr. L. says, "there would seem to be no mistake about his identity. He was dressed in brown coat of the olden style, with white cravat: his head very large, with whitish or gray hair behind the ears; the whole face radiant with intelligence, benevolence, and spirituality."

The next evening he came again. Here is the record:

The raps requested that a chair be placed for Dr. Franklin on the side of the table opposite to where we sat. But the idea of such a vis-a-vis made Miss Fox so nervous that I did not insist. After a time she became quiet, and we heard the chair moved to the desired spot.

At this time the lights were dim; but I perceived a dark figure standing near me. Very soon it moved round the table, a rustling was heard, the lights brightened, and we saw what seemed the old philosopher himself seated in the chair; his entire form and dress in perfection. So vivid was the light, and so palpable (as it would seem) the form before us, *that its shadow was thrown upon the wall*, precisely as if it had been a mortal seated there. The position was easy and dignified, one arm and hand on the table. Once he bent forward, as if bowing to us, and I observed that his gray locks swayed with the movement. He sat opposite to us *more than an hour*. Finally I asked him if he would draw nearer: whereupon figure and chair moved toward us, and our silent neighbor was in close proximity. Before he disappeared he rose from his chair; both face and form distinctly visible."

This was at Mrs. Fox's; but the sitting of November 30th

was hold in Mr. Livermore's own house. He tells US What he then and there saw:

"No. 175. Doors locked and sealed. Heavy concussions and electrical sounds; a chair opposite moved into position; then a request for matches. These were taken from my hand, as I held them at arm's-length.

After a time the sound of friction, as in drawing a match, was heard; and, after Several apparent efforts, a match ignited. By its light we saw that it was held by the figure, supposed that of Franklin, which appeared in perfection, dressed as before, only that the color of his coat showed more perfectly.]But as soon as the match went out the figure disappeared.

Afterward he reappeared (by match-light) ten or twelve times. The third time my hat was on his head, worn as by a living person; and then it was removed from his head to mine. The last time he appeared, the figure of Estelle showed itself, leaning on his shoulder: but Miss Fox became nervous, and her exclamations (apparently) caused the final disappearance of both figures. Then there came the following:

"This is what we have long labored to accomplish. You can now say that you have seen me by the light of earth. I will come again, in further proof.

"B. F."

This promise was kept on December 12; again, in Mr. Livermore's house. His record is:

"No. 179. At my own house. I had procured a dark lantern, covered with a cloth casing and provided with a valve so that I could throw a circle of light two feet in diameter on a wall ten feet distant.

"I placed this lantern, lighted, on the table and held the medium's hands. Soon it rose into the air and we were requested to follow. A form, carrying the lantern, preceded us. The outline of this spirit-form was distinct, its white robes dropping to the floor. The lantern was placed on a bureau; and we stood facing a window which was between that bureau and a large mirror.

"Then the lantern again rose, remaining suspended about five feet from the floor between the bureau and the mirror; and, by its light, we discerned the figure of Franklin seated in my arm-chair by the window, in front of a dark curtain. For fully ten minutes at a time, the light from the suspended lantern rested on his face and figure, so that we had ample time to examine both. At first the face seemed as if of actual flesh, the hair real, the eyes bright and so distinct that I clearly saw the whites. But I noticed that gradually the whole appearance, including the eyes, was deadened by the earthly light and ceased to wear the aspect of life with which the forms I had seen by spiritual light were replete.

"Several times I was requested to adjust the valve, so as to allow more or less light; and this I did while the lantern remained suspended, or held by invisible power.

"At the close of this sitting we found written on a card:

"My son: it is for the benefit of the world. I have worked for this.' B. F."

Other strange items come up, incidentally, in this record. Here is one:

SPIRIT-FLOWERS.

No. 218. February 7, 1862. Sky clear; atmosphere cold. Doors and windows secured with sealing-wax.

"A card which I had brought with me was taken from my pocket; a bright light rose from the table, and by it there was shown to us the card, to the centre of which there had been fixed what seemed a small bunch of flowers. The light faded and we were requested to light the gas. The flowers were a red rose, with green leaves and forget-me-nots; very beautiful, and apparently real.

"I inspected them for several minutes, at intervals; turning off the gas and relighting five or six times. The flowers still remained. Above them was written:

"Flowers from our home in Heaven.'

"Finally the flowers began to fade, and we were requested

to extinguish the gas. When we did so, it was replaced by a spirit-light under which the flowers were again distinctly visible. Then, by the raps: 'Do not take your eyes off the flowers: watch them closely.'

"We did so. They gradually diminished in size, as we gazed, till they became mere specks; and *then they disappeared before our eyes*. When I lighted the gas, I found no trace of them on the card.

"Then I carefully examined the seals on the doors and windows, and found them intact."

Here is another item from the record of sitting 283, November 3, 1862.

The hair of the figure (Estelle's) hung loosely over her face. I lifted it, so as to see her more perfectly. Then she *rose into the air and passed over my head*, her robe sweeping, across my head and face."

And here is another of an incident that occurred during sitting 335, of December 31, 1862:

"I turned down the gas partially only. By its light I distinguished a hand, with white sleeve encircling the wrist. It held a flower which, with its stem, was about three inches long. I reached my hand to take it; but at the moment my fingers touched it, there was a sharp snap, as from a powerful electric spark. Then I turned on the full gas. The hand, floating about, still held the flower; and after a time, placed it on a sheet of paper which lay on the table. It proved to be a pink rose-bud with green leaves: to the touch it was cold, damp, and glutinous. Then a peculiar white flower, resembling a daisy, was presented. After a time they all melted away. *While this occurred the room was as light as lay.*"

Under date October 21, 1863 (session 365), Mr. Livermore says: "I brought with me, this evening, the dark lantern already described; and, as soon as the figure of Estelle appeared, I throw its light full on her. She quailed a little, but stood her ground, for some time, while I directed the light to

her face and eyes, afterward to different parts of her dress. Then she disappeared and I had the communication: 'It was with the greatest difficulty that I could hold myself in form without disappearing.'"

Through all of the above experiences it will be observed that Mr. Livermore himself and the medium were the only witnesses; and it will suggest itself that the proof would have been more complete had others been admitted to the sittings. This did occur, during the latter years in which these experiments were made.

TWO ADDITIONAL WITNESSES.

It is well known to those who have experience in spiritual researches that the admission of an additional sitter into a circle always diminishes the power for a time; retarding and weakening the phenomena. Sometimes it arrests them altogether; but, in many cases, after a few sessions, the newcomer seems gradually to fall into magnetic relation with the circle, and the phenomena resume their vigor. This law became manifest when additional members were admitted to Mr. Livermore's circle. That gentleman has recorded *ten* sittings at which Dr. Gray was present, and *eight* at which his (Mr. L.'s) brother-in-law, Mr. Groute, assisted.

Dr. Gray is well known in the city of New York, as one among its most esteemed and successful medical men; * and I doubt if there be any one in the United States who has devoted more time and attention than he to the phenomena and the philosophy of Vital Magnetism and of Spiritualism.

The first opportunity he had of joining Mr. Livermore's circle was during sitting No. 256, of June 6, 1862. On that occasion the figure of Dr. Franklin appeared, but evidently with difficulty, and without the full expression which he had

* With the single drawback, as some men would esteem it—but I am not among that number—that his practice is homoeopathic.

previously worn. The hair, however, and clothing were both nearly as usual, and were handled by Dr. Gray.

Eleven days later, Dr. Gray was present a second time. On this occasion the figure of Dr. Franklin showed itself several times; but the features, at first, were not recognizable, and, on another occasion, a portion of the face only was formed, presenting a deformed and disagreeable aspect. This had not occurred during any of Mr. Livermore's previous sittings. Estelle did not show herself on either of these occasions.

The third time (June 25) the figure of Franklin appeared in perfection, and was recognized by Dr. Gray.

During the fourth sitting, there was a message to the effect that a piece of the spirit's garment might be cut off with scissors and examined. Both Dr. Gray and Mr. Livermore availed themselves of this permission. For a time the texture was strong, so that it might be pulled without coming apart. They had both time to examine it critically before it melted away.

Other observations touching the partial, and the gradual, formation of apparitions, were made, during subsequent sessions by Dr. Gray, and will be adverted to in the next chapter.

During subsequent sittings the figure of Dr. Franklin appeared to Dr. Gray as perfectly, and under as bright light, as it had ever done to Mr. Livermore. But Estelle showed herself before the Doctor on a single occasion only; during sitting No. 384, of November 10, 1865. This was at Mr. Livermore's house. She appeared with a white gossamer covering over her head and a transparent veil; the lower portion of the dress loose and flowing.

Mr. Groute was present during sitting, No. 346, of February 28, 1863; and he held the medium's hands. As soon as the gas was extinguished, Mr. L. was pulled, apparently by a large hand, to the sofa; above which Franklin's figure then appeared, the light rising from the floor. When Mr. Groute saw him and became convinced that it was the appearance of a human figure, he went instantly to the doors to "sure himself that they

were still locked. He then returned and handled the garments of the figure.

But he seems to have been of sceptical temperament; for, a week later, he came again, resolved to make all safe. He himself secured doors and windows: he "had no idea," he said, of being deceived."

This time the figure of Franklin appeared much more vividly than before. It held, in its hand, a light, as if that it might be thoroughly examined, and the "unbelieving Thomas" be fully satisfied. Mr. Groute, who had been holding both Mr. Livermore's and Miss Fox's hands from the beginning of the sitting, approached the figure, saw and touched; and, like the apostle, frankly acknowledged his conviction.

During one sitting (No. 355, of May 1, 1863), both Dr. Gray and Mr. Groute were present: the form of Dr. Franklin was perfect and was fully recognized by both gentlemen. Next evening, Dr. Gray being the only visitor, the figure of Dr. Franklin appeared in the air, about two feet above Dr. Gray's head, as if stooping toward the doctor and looking down upon him. He was clothed in a dark mantle, and floated, for some time, about the room. Dr. Gray, familiar as he was with spiritual phenomena, declared this manifestation to be "stupendous."

The last time the figure of Estelle appeared, was during session. No. 388, held April 2, 1866. From that day forth, though Mr. Livermore has received, even up to the time I write, frequent messages of sympathy and affection, he has seen the well-known form no more.

The first thing which will occur to any upright man, having the good of his race at heart, is that—supposing this narrative to be strictly true—the witness of such unexampled phenomena—selecting, of course, his own time, place, and manner—had no moral right to withhold from the world the experience which God had permitted him to enjoy. To whom much is given of him shall much be required. I know that Mr. Livermore

testifies with that natural reluctance which men feel to expose themselves, even for the greatest truth's sake, to the imputation of being either deceivers or deceived. I know that he gives his testimony under the solemn conviction that the most trivial misstatement, the slightest exaggeration, the least attempt at false-coloring for the sake of effect, would be little less than blasphemy—would be treason to a sacred cause.

Deceived by anything resembling imposture it is impossible to imagine that he could have been. I have known Kate Fox for years: she is one of the most simple-minded and strictly impulsive young persons I have ever met: as incapable of framing or carrying on, any deliberate scheme of imposition as a ten-year-old child is of administering a government. Dr. Gray, who has been intimate with her from her early infancy, writing to a friend in England in regard to Mr. Livermore's experiments, under date January, 1867, says: "Miss Fox, the medium, deported herself with patient integrity of conduct; evidently doing all in her power, at all times, to promote a fair trial and just decision of each phenomenon as it occurred." But if she had been the wiliest of impostors the attendant circumstances would have rendered her intentions powerless. The locality of the experiments was, in every instance, selected by Mr. Livermore; often in his own house. Doors and windows were secured with sealing-wax. The medium's hands were held during all the most important manifestations. Finally the experiences stretched over *six entire years*, and were observed throughout *three hundred and eighty-eight* recorded sittings, under every variety of circumstance. The theory of persistent imposture, in such a case, is a sheer absurdity.

There remains the hypothesis of hallucination, so often put forth as a last resort. But, in this instance, it is singularly out of place. Mr. Livermore is, in the strictest sense, a practical man of business. He has been engaged, during most of his life and up to the present day, in enterprises, financial and industrial, of an extensive, sometimes of a colossal character; and in these—this the world can appreciate—he has been uniformly

successful. During the very time of his spiritual experiments he was conducting vast operations involving constant watchfulness and responsibility.

This, then, is no dreamer, secluded in his study; shut out from the world and feeding on his own thoughts: no theorizer, with a favorite system to uphold; and, though a man of decided convictions, not even an enthusiast. Dr. Gray, writing to an English periodical in 1861, says of him: "Besides his general character for veracity and probity Mr. Livermore is a competent witness to the important facts he narrates, because he is not in any degree subject to the illusions and hallucinations—which may be supposed to attach to the trance or ecstatic condition. I have known him from his very early manhood, and am his medical adviser. He is less liable to be misled by errors of his organs of sense than almost any man of my large circle of patients and acquaintance."

Add to this that the evidence does not rest upon Mr. Livermore's testimony alone. There is the corroborative experience of Dr. Gray and of Mr. Groute. I have conversed quite recently (October, 1871) with both these gentlemen, and they have declared to me, in the strongest terms, their unqualified conviction touching the reality of the phenomena and the accuracy of the entire record.

Upon what theory with any claim to consideration is this mass of testimony to be set aside? Are we to imagine, on the part of these gentlemen, a base plot to palm upon the world, in support of the great doctrine of immortality, an impious falsehood? Did the sittings not take place? Or, if they did, was no figure seen, touched, examined, month after month, year after year? Is the story of its appearance and disappearance, hundreds of times, by spiritual light and by the light of earth—of its floating through the air, of its thousand actions, demonstrations, messages written by no human hand—is all this but baseless fable? Is the entire six-years' record a forgery?

Each reader must decide this question for himself. I will

not, however, withhold my opinion that any one who should put forth such a hypothesis as ground sufficient for rejecting these proofs of man's continuous existence in another world and of his occasional power thence to communicate with earth, would be setting a precedent which, if consistently followed out, would go to subvert all reasonable confidence in human testimony.*

* This chapter has been read over by me to Mr. Livermore (October, 1871), and its accuracy assented to by him. I had previously received from him, with permission to publish it, this note:

FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK,
July 26, 1871.

MY ESTEEMED FRIEND:

I cannot refuse your request for particulars of some of those experiences which I have read to you from my Journal of 1861-66. In giving them I desire, by way of averting misconception, to make a few explanations.

I commenced these investigations an out-and-out sceptic. They were undertaken solely with a view to satisfy my own mind; and with no thought, motive, or desire for publicity.

After thorough and careful scrutiny I found, to my surprise, that the phenomena were real. After ten years of experience, with ample opportunities for observation (often with scientific men), I arrive at these conclusions:

First. That there exists, in presence of certain sensitives of high nervous organization, a mysterious force, capable of moving ponderable bodies, and which exhibits intelligence.

For example: A pencil without contact with human hand, or any visible agency, apparently of its own volition, writes intelligently, and answers questions pertinently.

Second. That temporary formations, material in structure and cognizable by the senses, are produced by the same influence; are animated by the same mysterious force, and pass off as incomprehensibly as they came.

For example: Hands which grasp with living power; flowers which emit perfume and can be handled; human forms, and parts of forms; recognizable faces; representations of clothing and the like.

Third. That this force and the resulting phenomena are developed in a greater or less degree, according to the physical and mental conditions

I do not expect to see this ground taken. I fear, rather, the thoughtlessness with which a busy world—engrossed with a thou sand cares, duties, pleasures of this life—passes by, Like the Jews listening to Paul in the Athenian Areopagus, anything that relates to another. "And when they heard of the resurrection of the, dead, some mocked, and others sail We will hoar thee again of this matter."

Yet I know there are many, longing for full satisfaction, in whom the above narrative—even if it fail to work entire conviction as to spirit intercourse will kindle an earnest desire, should opportunity offer, to examine for themselves whether such phenomena—ineestimable if they can be substantiated are a bright reality or a perilous delusion.

of the sensitive; and, in a measure, by atmospherical conditions.

Fourth. That the intelligence which governs this force is (under pure conditions) independent of, and external to, the minds of the sensitive and investigator.

For example: Questions unknown to either, sometimes in language unknown to either, are duly answered.

The origin of these phenomena is an open question.

You may rely on these records as being free from exaggeration, in each and every particular.

Very sincerely your friend,
C. F. LIVERMORE

The Honorable

ROBERT DALE OWEN."

CHAPTER V.

WHAT APPARITIONS ARE AND HOW FORMED.

Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Mill have."—LUKE xxiv. 39.

THESE words are ascribed by Luke to Jesus, as having been spoken to his affrighted disciples, when he appeared in the midst of them, on the third day after his crucifixion. They are not given by any other Evangelist; John, who touches on the subject, merely saying that Jesus "showed unto them his hands and his side."

It so happens that these words are quoted by Ignatius, * one of the oldest and most eminent of the Apostolic Fathers, the disciple and familiar friend of the Apostles. But, as he quotes them, there is a variance from the text in Luke, thus "Handle me and see, for I am not a spirit without body (daimonion asomaton.)"

I believe this to be the true reading. Facts appear to favor the opinion that man is composed—*First*, of an earthly or natural body, visible to us and which, subjected immediately after the death-change to the chemical laws which govern inanimate matter, rapidly decays: *Second*, as St. Paul alleges, of a spiritual body; and this, it would seem, pervades, during earth-life, the entire natural body, and issues from it at the moment of death: *Third*, of a soul, as to which we have no evidence that it ever appears or exists except in connection with the spiritual body.† According to this view, we must regard the

* He is usually believed to have been a disciple of St. Peter, and was Bishop of Antioch about the year 70. He suffered martyrdom under Trajan, at an advanced age, probably about A.D. 107.

† Throughout this work I have employed the word spirit to mean a soul invested in a spiritual body.

denizens of the next world as men disencumbered of the natural body: the soul and the spiritual body surviving the death-change.

It is an opinion fortified by all we hear on the subject through ultramundane sources, that the spiritual body exhibits a close resemblance, in form, to the natural body. There seems good reason why we should think of our departed friends not as impalpable shades, but as real, individual personages, whom we shall recognize, at sight, in another world, even as we recognized them, erewhile, in this: their forms, perhaps, gradually becoming more felicitous expressions of a gradually ennobled individuality.

This spiritual body is not usually visible to human sight. Those only can see it to whom, as Paul has expressed it, the power of "discerning of spirits" is given. Naturally-gifted seers undoubtedly see the Spirit; that is, the spiritual body animated by a living soul. Nor should this surprise us.

"Men have no right," says John Stuart Mill, "to mistake the limit of their own faculties for an inherent limitation of the possible modes of existence in the universe."

But as this gift of spirit-discernment is rare, and as the proof it furnishes can bring direct conviction only to the seer himself, it is evident that if the outside world is to obtain similar conviction, there must be presented to our sight something more material than the celestial body which appertains to our next phase of being.

The evidence I have adduced goes to show that a spirit may—under certain conditions and aided, probably, by other spirits—fabricate an ephemeral *eidolon*, resembling the body it had while on earth; but evanescent, especially under earth-light; so that the poet's line,

"It faded at the crowing of the cock,"

is in strict accordance with the character of the actual phenomenon.

Those who have been fortunate enough to witness this product

of spiritual art under its various phases, allege that it may sometimes, under favorable conditions, be marvellously perfect and even transcendently beautiful. Dr. Gray, one of the most accurate and dispassionate of observers, told me that on one of the occasions, already referred to, when the image of Franklin presented itself, he looked steadily in the eyes of the figure and noticed their life-like and expressive character; even that their expression changed in accordance with what was passing at the time. "The living glance of these eyes," he said to me, "wrought in me a thorough conviction that it was the old philosopher himself, and no other, who sat in the opposite chair."

By what process this temporary induement (if it be correct to regard it as induement) is effected, we certainly do not know at this time; and perhaps we never shall, until we learn it, on the other side, from the spiritual artists themselves. All that one seems justified in surmising is that there are invisible exudations from the human organization—more or less from all persons, but especially from the bodies of spiritual sensitives *

* Like Leah and Kate Fox, D. Dunglas Home and other favored "mediums;" in whose presence these formations occasionally appear. There are facts which seem to indicate that there exists in the physical systems of some so-called "mediums," a superfluity of phosphorus; and this may be one of the principal ingredients. Dr. Wilson, of New York, whom I have already mentioned, told me that he had been one of a committee of six persons who, during a carefully-conducted experiment where the strictest precautions against deception were taken, obtained from the tips of the fingers of a well-known medium, phosphorus, slightly varying from the phosphorus of commerce. He showed me a small quantity of this which he had preserved, as evidence of the result.

There appear to be exceptions, however, to the rule that apparitions and other spiritual phenomena can be manifested only when a "medium" is present. I have already stated that endemical, as well as personal, influences seem occasionally to make possible such phenomena, persistent through several generations, in certain localities; usually in old houses which thereby acquire the character of being haunted. It may be said, in a general way, that we know very little touching the precise conditions under which such occurrences take place.

which spirits can condense, or otherwise modify, so as to produce not only what to the senses of human beings is a visible and tangible form, but also substances resembling earthly clothing and other inanimate objects. It appears that they can thus produce also what we might call sculptured representations of portions of the human figure, as of hands and parts of hands, and the like. Let us bear in mind, however, that the fact of a phenomenon is independent of its explanation.

I have myself had one opportunity of witnessing the last-mentioned phenomenon.

WHAT APPEARED AS DETACHED PORTIONS OF A
HUMAN FIGURE DISTINCTLY SEEN.

On the evening of July 27, 1861 I was at Mr. Underhill's house. Mrs. Underhill proposed that, instead of sitting there, we should adjourn to her mother's residence, No. 66 West 46th street, where we should probably be able to add her sister Kate to the circle. We did so.

Preparations were made to sit in the lower parlor; but as I observed that there were no keys in the doors, I proposed to sit in the upper parlor, which was at once assented to; and we moved thither.

By the raps, I was requested to secure the doors, which I did, putting the keys in my pocket. I also carefully examined the whole room, which had no press or closet. Then we were bidden to put out the gas. Within a few minutes afterward there were three or four most violent raps, as by a heavy bludgeon, on the table; then a quiet interval of some fifteen minutes; after which there suddenly appeared, between Kate and Mrs. Underhill, the figure of an arm and shoulder. The hand was not distinct. The arm was well-shaped and seemed that of a woman of medium size; the elbow bent and the lower arm turned upward. Behind it was a light, but I could distinguish no central point whence this light emanated, as it might from a lamp or candle. The arm showed quite distinctly, from

the wrist to the shoulder, against this light:—distinctly, but not in sharp outline; the outlines being softened off, as in a mezzotint engraving. There depended, from the arm, drapery, banging down some five or six inches; it was gauze-like and semi-transparent. This arm and shoulder approached, moving just above the table and passing Mrs. Underhill in front, until it came within seven or eight inches of me; the drapery waving to and fro, with the motion of the arm.

There it remained for about a minute; then disappeared and reappeared, at intervals of some four or five minutes, three several times; so that I could deliberately observe it and make sure of my observations; for the light, whencesoever its origin, moved with the figure; appearing and disappearing coincidentally with it. I saw no head or features above the arm: but adjoining it, dimly indicated, what seemed a small portion of a human form.

After a time a luminous appearance, more bright than the first, came over the table and stopped not more than four or five inches from ray face. It resembled a cylinder, illuminated from within; its length being about five or six inches and its apparent calibre about one inch. Over it was something hanging in dark streaks. By the raps was spelled out "Hair." I asked that it might touch me: whereupon it was waved forward and touched my forehead with unmistakable distinctness: the touch resembling that of human hair. After a few minutes it disappeared.

The other sitters described these appearances as seen by them precisely as they were seen by me.

As soon as the sitting closed I examined both doors and found them locked. The room in which we sat, be it borne in mind, was selected by myself.

Some years after the above, * Dr. Gray, speaking of the sittings he had with Mr. Livermore, told me that, at one of

* May 5, 1868.

these, there was laid on the table before them a cylinder about the same size as that I saw: but, more fortunate than I, they had an opportunity of handling it. It seemed, Dr. Gray said, to be of rock crystal, or some similar hard, perfectly transparent material, and to be filled with some incandescent fluid, which was only faintly glowing when at rest; but when the cylinder was agitated the light shone out brightly. During the time they saw and examined it, there was no other light in the room except that which it emitted. By the raps it was stated that the, cylinder was the light-vehicle employed by the attendant spirits to illuminate their ephemeral productions; being, itself, as ephemeral as the rest.

On the same occasion Dr. Gray stated to me that he saw a detached hand appear and disappear four or five times. At first it was of a dark-bronze color; but each time it became lighter in color, until, on its final exhibition, it was as fair as any Caucasian hand.

At another time his spectacles, which he had on at the time, were carried off and soon after brought back. He asked to be shown how this was done: whereupon there appeared two imperfect fingers, almost resembling talons, attached to a small strip of hand reaching into the darkness. These appeared to be animate, or at least obedient to some will: for, like living tongs, they picked up and bore away the spectacles; then, after a minute or two, replaced them. *

To a question asked by Dr. Gray why the whole hand was usually shown instead of two detached fingers, the reply, by raps, was that most persons would be alarmed or disgusted at sight of such an amorphous formation.

At another time a mass of what seemed flesh was laid on Dr. Gray's naked foot which he had exposed for the purpose. Left there, at his request, for some time, it became intolerably hot; and he supposes it would ultimately have burned him, This suggests that phosphorus may have been one of the ingredients

* Session 342. Mr. Livermore found the fingers solid to the touch.

employed: and perhaps it affords a clue to the stories of a spectre grasping the wrist or hand of some terrified wretch, and leaving thereon the marks of burning fingers.

Dr. Gray related to me a still more interesting observation. On one of the last occasions that the figure of Franklin presented itself, the face appeared, at first, imperfectly formed: showing one eye only: for, in place of the other eye and part of the cheek, there was a dark cavity which looked hideous enough. Kate Fox caught sight of it and screamed out in mortal terror, causing the temporary extinguishment of the light under which the figure appeared.

"Silly child," exclaimed the Doctor, seizing her hands; don't you see you are interrupting one of the most interesting experiments in the world—the gradual formation of an apparition?"

This philosophical view of the case quieted, by degrees, Kate's excited nerves and dispelled her superstitious terrors: so that when, after less than five minutes' interval, the face of the sage again appeared every feature perfect and the expression that of bright, calm benignity, she herself was the first to exclaim: "How beautiful!"

This was during one of the last sittings at which Dr. Gray assisted. On several of the earliest occasions, as the Doctor informed me, the face, though distinctly marked, seemed sometimes shrivelled and as if made of dough, at other times it resembled the face of a corpse.

Other details* and minor incidents I omit; seeing that all we yet know furnishes no sufficient basis on which to found

* Both Dr. Gray and Mr. Livermore informed me that, on several occasions when apparitions presented themselves—especially when Estelle appeared—the room was suddenly pervaded by a delicious perfume. This seemed to be emitted from the person of the appearing figure.

When the Church of Rome speaks of some of its saints "dying in the odor of sanctity," the expression may possibly refer to an actual phenomenon.

any distinct theory touching the precise character and formation-process of apparitions.

I do not doubt that, even in this world, we shall, some day, know much more about the matter.* These eidola, appear to be gradually becoming more common; and it may enter into God's purpose that, in the future of our world, such a phenomenon shall be the foundation of a universal belief in immortality.

I consider this the more probable because it is apparent that moral and spiritual progress has not, in modern times, kept pace with intellectual and material. But ability, mental or physical, is a doubtful good, if there lack an ethical and religious element to give beneficent direction to it.

Nor do I see how such a civilizing element can manifest itself in full power—can prevail against error and vice, can dominate our race—without the aid—not of a vague belief adopted from written creeds—but of a living, abiding, fervent conviction (such as sense-evidence brings home), that there is a better world where all earthly thoughts and deeds, how secretly-concealed soever here, shall unfailingly bear their appropriate fruit: ill-feeling, ill-doing infallibly entailing sorrow and suffering; well-feeling and well-doing as inevitably bring in" about an after-life of satisfying happiness, such as it is not given to us here to conceive.

* I have not any doubt that some of the apparitions seen by Mr. Livermore—casting, as they did, a shadow on the wall and a reflection—might, by proper appliances, have been photographed in a mirror and I regret much that it did not occur to Mr. L. to attempt this.

How satisfactory would it have been, in giving his narrative, to reproduce an actual photograph of Estelle, in all her spiritual beauty!

BOOK VI.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS OF THE FIRST CENTURY APPEARING IN OUR OWN TIMES.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit."

—1 CORINTHIANS xii. 4.

CHAPTER I.

CURES BY SPIRITUAL AGENCY.

—"to another faith by the same spirit; to another the gift of healing by the same spirit."—1 CORINTHIANS xii. 9.

THE facts which go to attest the substantial coincidence between the signs and wonders related in the Gospels, and the spiritual epiphanies of the present day, merit a volume: but I can make room here in favor of that branch of the subject, for two brief chapters only.

Whenever this topic is fully treated, the results, to Christianity, will be beyond calculation. Now, after eighteen hundred years, we cannot conceive any evidence in proof of the Gospel narrative so strong as the fact (if fact it be), that wonderful works and spiritual gifts of similar character to those mentioned in the New Testament come to light among us now. If they do occur now, it is not conceivable that they were imagined, or invented, by the Evangelists and by Paul. If they do appear to-day and if we still set down the Gospel narrative as fable, I know not what fact, two thousand years old, can be established by any historical evidence whatever. Caesar may not have lived in Rome, nor died in the senate chamber. Socrates

may never have spent his life in teaching philosophy, nor lost it in defence of the truths he uttered.

Of the various spiritual powers exercised by Christ, that of healing was the chief. His mission, according to his own view of it, was to bring health to the sick and glad tidings to the poor. When John the Baptist sent, asking: "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" Jesus, for answer, sent him word: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.* So also of his disciples.

This power has been claimed by the Church of Rome, as exercised by her holy men and women, and, after their death, by their relics. Among what may be called a dissenting sect of that Church—the Jansenists—it appeared, at one time, in wonderful phase.†

We have overwhelming proof at the present day that it is not confined to the Roman Church. The curative powers of what has been called vital magnetism are admitted by all, except the hopelessly prejudiced. This phase of the healing power has shown itself chiefly in France; sometimes on a great scale. The Marquis de Guibert, a benevolent French noble, established, on his estate of Fontchateau, in the Commune of Tarascon, an hospital in which, during the six years from 1834 to 1840, upward of three thousand three hundred patients were treated by magnetic agency, gratuitously. The Marquis, a powerful magnetizer, operated personally; and has given the

* Matthew xi. 5.

† In 1656, at Port Royal. See *Footfalls*, p. 83. And again, in far more marvellous guise, in 1731 and for years thereafter, at the tomb of the Abbe Paris. Those who are curious in such matters, will find details in a paper contributed by me to the *Atlantic Monthly*, entitled: *Convulsionists of St. Medard*, and published in the numbers for February and March, 1864. See also *Footfalls*, pp. 85-87.

detailed results in an elaborate report, in which each case, with its separate malady, is set forth.

Of the patients treated by him more than one half were thrown into somnambulic sleep, while upward of five hundred were wholly impassive to magnetic influence. *Nearly three, fifths (1,948) left the hospital cured; and three hundred and seventy-five more were partially relieved.**

I do not allege that these are cures by spiritual agency; but they were wrought by an influence with which we are little acquainted; and which, in past ages, has been again and again mistaken for miraculous. It is an open question, also, whether a magnetizer, employing an occult and imponderable agent, and

* I have not been able to obtain the report itself. But its results are summed up in a French work, *Physiologie, Medecine et Metaphysique du Magnetisme*," by Dr. Charpignon, member of the Medical Faculty of Paris, and of several learned societies. He gives (at p. 274) the following table:

	Total Patients.	Impassive.	Somnambules.	Cured.
Men	1,194	180	424	663
Women	2,121	324	1,259	1,285
Totals	3,315	504	1,683	1,948

Here are some interesting results. We find—

That of the women more than two-thirds were cured, and of the men more than one-half (0.55).

That of the women nearly three-fifths were affected by somnambulic influence, and of the men little more than a third.

That nearly an equal proportion of both sexes—a little more than one-sixth—were wholly impassive; nearly five-sixths being more or less susceptible.

Charpignon does not give a detailed list of the maladies; but he mentions that there were fourteen cases of contraction of the limbs, of which seven were cured.

He states, on the authority of a medical friend of his (Dr. Despine, who visited the hospital at Fontchateau), that so great were the Marquis's powers of magnetization, that he could prod Lice, in a few seconds, effects which he (Dr. Despine) and others required half an hour, or more, to obtain.

devoting himself, like the Marquis de Guibert, to the relief of human suffering, does not receive spiritual aid. I think the weight of evidence is in favor of the theory that he often does.

I am fortunate, however, in being able to furnish two narratives, attested by name, place, and date, in which I think it cannot rationally be denied that the curative agency was unmistakably spiritual. The first I obtained in this country, the second in Europe.

PARALYSIS OF THE MOTOR NERVE.

In the month of February, 1858, a lady, the wife of Mr. Davis, of Providence, Rhode Island, 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 nerve, 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 completely 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, 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 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 3, notwithstanding the doubts expressed by Mr. Davis whether his wife would be able to endure the journey;

* Then Mrs. Brown. Mr. Brown died long after; and eventually, Mr. Underhill married his widow.

reached New York next morning, and proceeded at once to Mrs. Underhill's.

Mrs. Davis was so much exhausted on her arrival, that she kept tier bed 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. Before doing so, however, Mrs. Underhill requested Mrs. Davis, for her own satisfaction, to examine the room and its furniture. Mrs. Davis, from motives of delicacy, at first declined; but as Mrs. Underhill urged her request, Mrs. D. finally made the examination in a thorough manner, discovered nothing under the tables or elsewhere to excite suspicion, and convinced herself that there was no one in the room. 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.* 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 the 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 ever did in her life. She paced up and down the room, to assure herself that it was a reality: the pain, the paralysis was

* The allegation, by rapping, was, that the agency was that of a deceased brother of Mrs. Davis.

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 husk was laid in Mrs. Davis' 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 paralysis, or weakness, or loss of temperature, in either limb, from that day to the present time; * that is, during four years.

In communicating the above to me, as Mrs. Davis did, in presence of the same friend who had accompanied her to Mrs. Underhill's, Mrs. Davis kindly gave me permission to use her name. †

The next case is of a still more remarkable character.

* Written July, 1862, when this narrative was communicated to me.

† 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.

THE INSTANTANEOUS CURE.

It occurred on the thirteenth of April, 1858, at Passy, near Paris, in the parlor of Monsieur B——, a gentleman who formerly occupied a position of rank in the household of Louis Philippe.

The lady who was the subject of it, Mrs. Emma Kyd, is the wife of Mr. A. Kyd, a gentleman of independent fortune, son of the late General Kyd, of the British Army; and is the mother of several grown-up children. The family were then residing in Paris.

Mrs. Kyd had been, for more than half her life, a grievous sufferer. For twenty-five years she had had a disease of the heart, gradually increasing in violence. At the time of this narrative it had reached such a point as to cause, every day of her life, severe pain, and entirely to deprive her of anything like a quiet night's sleep. She could never rest except on the right side; the bedclothes were sensibly moved by the powerful beating of the heart; and if she sought relief by sitting up in an arm-chair, she was frequently unable to rest against the back of it, so violent were the palpitations. She walked with great difficulty, and only slowly and for a short distance; and had frequently to be carried upstairs. Though fond of singing, she had been compelled wholly to abandon it.

This, however, was only one of several diseases under which Mrs. Kyd was suffering. She had chronic diarrhoea, of six years' standing; and this had proceeded so far, that small portions of stale bread, and of roast meat and rice, with occasionally a little tea, constituted the entire range of her diet. Even with such restriction, she was compelled daily to resort to powerful medicine: nor could she safely travel for an hour, or make a visit to a friend, without first taking a preparatory dose. The disease frequently produced violent cramps and spasms. In addition she was afflicted with a falling of the womb of an aggravated character; together with a disease of the bladder, accompanied

by obstruction enduring for many years, and producing pain. For this latter complaint she had consulted Dr. Phillips, of Paris.

Her life, as she herself expressed it to me, passed with constant reminders of her infirmities; and when she rose from a restless bed, to the sufferings of a new day, tears would gush from her eyes, at the hopeless prospect before her. Her husband had spent a little fortune in taking the advice of eminent medical men. Dr. Locock, Dr. Chambers, Sir Charles Clark, Dr. Chelius, of Heidelberg, and many others had been consulted; but in vain: nor did they hold out any hope, except of temporary alleviation.

It was under these circumstances that, a few days previous to the date above given, she had visited Monsieur B——, attracted by astounding reports touching the wonders of his psychograph, * and the extraordinary phenomena attendant on its writing*

Its first movements, so like those of a living being, astonished

* Now known among us under the name of *planchette*. So far as I am informed, Monsieur B—— was one of the first persons who ever made or used one. It need hardly be said that this little instrument has nothing mysterious about it. It is a mere physical contrivance to gather vital-magnetic power and facilitate involuntary writing. It is easier, by outside agency, to put a castor-working planchette in motion than it is to influence the human arm or guide the human hand: that is all. The same power which causes the instrument to write would, if in stronger measure, cause the hand to write without its intervention.

I have seen Monsieur B——'s planchette write, as fast as an ordinary scribe: I have seen it write forward and backward, then write inverted, so that one had to place the writing in front of a mirror in order to read it. I have held long and spirited debate with it on abstruse subjects; two daughters of Monsieur B—— having placed the tips of their fingers on its surface. I have had the pleasure of frequent conversation with these young ladies, who were sprightly and accomplished; they could talk charmingly on the commonplaces of the day or the last opera; but I am as sure that neither of them could have maintained such a debate for five minutes as I am that they could not converse with any one in Chinese or Arabic.

her beyond measure. After a little while it raised itself up, moved toward her and remained, for a considerable time, the pencil suspended in the air.

"What is it doing?" she exclaimed.

"I am only taking a look at you," was the reply instantly written out by the psychograph. After a time it added: "I see you have not come from mere idle curiosity, but from a better motive." Then it proceeded to set forth some of its peculiar doctrines, and concluded by requesting her to return in a day or two and to bring her husband with her.

The night between the twelfth and thirteenth of April was, to Mrs. Kyd, one of even more than usual suffering, and she awoke feeling utterly unable to make the promised visit. But she summoned courage; and, fortified as usual with a dose of medicine and having prepared another to be taken on her return, she drove, accompanied by her husband, to the house of Monsieur B——.

There she found seven or eight friends of Monsieur B—— assembled, and seated herself in a corner of the room to watch the proceedings. They were experimenting with the psychograph; two of Monsieur B——'s daughters lightly touching it, as usual. * The results obtained seemed even more astonishing than on the previous occasion; and, almost out of herself, she involuntarily exclaimed: "It seems so like something divine, that I think if it were to bid me do anything in the world, I would obey."

"Why, your faith is enormous, Mrs. Kyd," said some one present.

Shortly afterward the psychograph suddenly wrote: "Emma, come here!" She advanced to the table and it continued: "Get a chair and sit down." She did so: then it added: "More to the left and closer to me." She brought her chair close to that part of the table where the psychograph was.

* It ought here to be stated that both these young ladies are highly susceptible and lucid somnambules.

"You shall be cured," it wrote: "it shall be to you according to your faith."

Then, suddenly and to the utter astonishment of all present, it sprung (with the hands of the two assistants still upon it) from the table against her heart, remaining there for three or four seconds, pressing gently against her, with a sort of fluttering or tremulous motion; then, as suddenly, it sprang back to the table and instantly wrote:

"You are cured. Go home and do not take that nauseous draught which you had mixed up, against your return. Eat whatever you please, as you used to do before you were ill. Do all this nothing doubting, and be assured all will be well."

Mrs. Kyd informed me that no words could express the sudden revulsion of feeling—the emotion utterly unlike anything she had ever experienced in her life—which shot over her, causing her to believe that the cure was real. She seemed actually to *feel* (as she expressed it to me) the revolution throughout her entire frame, and the return of the several organs to their normal state. She breathed long and deeply, without effort or pain. She rose and walked; already, so it appeared to her, with renovated strength.

When she returned home she ascended the stairs lightly and without effort; in a word, as she had not been able to do for fifteen or twenty years past. This she repeated several times; scarcely believing, even then, in its possibility. The medicine was thrown out; and from that day, to this,* she has not consulted a physician nor swallowed a single dose.

That day, at dinner, she looked at the various interdicted dishes which the day before she could not have touched without the severest penalty; hesitating still, with natural reluctance, to taste them. But then the injunction to eat, nothing doubting, recurred to her mind. She did so; felt no evil effects whatever, and spent a night of almost undisturbed repose such as for long years she had never been permitted to enjoy.

* Related to me in Paris, on the 18th of April, 1859.

More than a year has passed since then: and, during that period, she has not had the least return of any one of the maladies which had made of half her life one long martyrdom. To describe how gratefully and wonderingly she enjoyed her relief; or with what zest she entered upon her new life, which even day after day seemed to her more like some beautiful dream than any earthly reality—was, she declared to me, impossible.

The allegation, as written by the psychograph, was, that the cure was the result of Mrs. Kyd's strong faith.

The particulars of this marvellous case I had, first in somewhat general terms from Monsieur B——, the gentleman at whose house the circumstance occurred, and whom I met in London in January, 1859; and afterward, during a visit to Paris, in minute detail, from Mrs. Kyd herself, in the presence of her husband: he confirming the narrative in every point. From earnest desire to serve the cause of truth and in token of gratitude to God for benefit so unexpectedly received, Mrs. Kyd granted me permission, in publishing the case, to give her name; and to this her husband also assented. In view of the peculiarity of the circumstances, I at first felt reluctant to avail myself of so generous an offer; as, indeed I did also in Mrs. Davis's case. But on further reflection I decided that, in the interests of truth and spiritual science, I had no right to refuse such an opportunity of authentication.

I am authorized also to furnish Mr. Kyd's address to any medical man, or other earnest inquirer, who may desire direct testimony for what will usually be deemed incredible.

The public cannot have a better voucher for the sincerity of the narrators. I myself have stronger proof; for I became well acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Kyd, and I have the additional testimony touching their intelligence and uprightness which any one acquainted with the world instinctively derives from daily intercourse with the earnest and the cultivated.

I may add, what has been stated to me by Monsieur B—— and confirmed by Mrs. Kyd herself, that he had given her no

reason to believe that a cure could be effected through the intervention of the psychograph; nor, though he knew Mrs. Kyd was in bad health, was he apprised of any of the details of the case. Monsieur B—— also stated to me that Mrs. Kyd had paid his family many subsequent visits; and that it was long before she could see the psychograph, an inanimate medium though it was, without shedding tears.

It should be stated that a previous cure, though by no means so striking a one, had been, as Monsieur B—— informed me, effected in a similar manner.

Mrs. Kyd also told me that she had since procured a psychograph; that, with her hands and those of one of her daughters upon it, they had, after several weeks' patience, succeeded in getting it to write as fluently as that of Monsieur B——; and that, even up to the present time, if Mrs. Kyd has a headache or other slight indisposition, by placing her hands upon it and retaining them there some time, the effect is to cast her into magnetic sleep and, in every case, to afford relief. Indeed she and her husband seemed to regard the little instrument as a familiar friend and adviser, to whom, when they felt need of information or counsel, they might resort.*

I might go on, filling a hundred pages with the details of cures wrought among us by magnetic or spiritual agency. What are called "healing mediums" are to be found, in city and country, by the hundreds; and though, doubtless, many are pretenders and many more often fail to relieve, that is only

* The above narrative, as here written out, was submitted by me, at Paris, on the twenty-third of April, 1859, to Mr. and Mrs. Kyd; and its accuracy in every particular assented to by them.

It may not be out of place here to repeat a caution already given. There is great temptation, when an inestimable blessing has thus been received through spiritual agency, to accept, without scruple or scrutiny, all opinions which may be obtained from the same wonder-working source. But this is dangerous as well as illogical. The power to cure is one thing; the capacity to utter truth unmixed with error quite another. We have proof of the former: we have no proof—indeed fallible creatures can have none—of the latter.

what happens in the case of thousands who have a legal right to add M.D. to their names.

But further detail is needless. The proof that the gift of healing inheres in certain favored natures is as complete, and as readily attainable, as that some men and women are born poets and others musicians.*

And space fails me to touch except on a single additional point. It has been sometimes alleged that Spiritualism tends to produce insanity. I have never known, or found proof, of such a case: yet doubtless such have occurred. We have hundreds of examples of mania caused by religious excitement; as at revivals or camp-meetings: and it would be strange if

Spiritualism, when unwisely or extravagantly pursued, should prove an exception to the rule. There have, however, come to my knowledge two cases in which insanity has been cured, or averted, by spiritual influence; the subject, in both instances, being a widow.

For several years previous to 1860, a Mrs. Kendall had been an inmate of the Somerville Lunatic Asylum, near Boston; and she was considered by the resident physician of that institution one of his most dangerous patients. Her lunacy had been caused by the death of her husband, six years before; and she remained insane until January, 1860. At that time she was taken from the asylum, to be received into a family where there were several mediums. With them she remained many months; obtaining, from time to time, communications alleged to come from her deceased husband.

On the tenth of January, 1861, the above circumstances

* I have the full particulars from the patient himself—but no room here to relate them—of a cure effected by the well-known Dr. Newton. The subject was a New York merchant of high standing, and he told me that his case was regarded by friends and physicians as absolutely hopeless; and that he sought Dr. N. in sheer despair. Several manipulations, throughout two weeks, effected a marvellous and radical cure; and for years and until the day I saw him, there had been no relapse.

were stated to me by her son, Mr. F. A. Kendall. His mother was then at home, completely cured. He told me that he was not a Spiritualist; not having had what he deemed sufficient evidence: but he freely admitted that his mother's cure was due solely to her residence among Spiritualists, and to the consoling assurance which she there found that the husband to whom in life she had been devotedly attached still lived and still thought and cared for her.

The other lady is personally known to me, though I am not at liberty to give her name. I knew her when her husband was alive; and her devotion to him was such that I shared the fears which I sometimes heard expressed by other friends of hers, that if she lost him, the consequences might be fatal. To her despair, he enlisted when the war was at its height, reached the rank of Major and died in a New Orleans hospital.

When the news, no longer to be withheld, was finally broken to her, it produced a fit of frenzy; and for weeks she was drifting into hopeless insanity. She had never been a Spiritualist; indeed she usually, as I well remember, had treated the subject with ridicule: but a sister, visiting a medium in hopes of getting something for herself, received, instead, a message to the disconsolate widow. It was repeated to her; and it was the first thing that roused her out of brooding despair. She went herself to the medium, received numerous messages embodying incontrovertible tests of identity; brightened day by day: and when I met her, many months afterward, she had regained all her cheerfulness; and told me that she felt as if K—— (his pet name) were living and conversing with her still.

Thus, in our day, as in Christ's time, lunatics may, by spiritual influence, be restored to "their right mind." The time will come when this truth will be acted on by the managers of insane asylums.

CHAPTER II.

OTHER SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

DEEMING it highly important to run out the parallel between the spiritual gifts enumerated by Paul and by the Evangelists, and those which manifest themselves in our times, I had prepared five chapters, with narratives illustrating the general similarity between ancient and modern "signs and wonders;" to be here inserted.* But my manuscript has spread over an unexpected number of printed pages; so that lack of space and a desire that this book should be sold at a moderate price cause their exclusion. If I should live to write another work this omission may be supplied.

Meanwhile a few references, in this connection, may be acceptable.

Of the gift of prophecy, considered by Paul one of the chief (—"desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy"†), some very remarkable examples, exhibited during somnambulism, are given by French writers on physiology and vital magnetism‡ of acknowledged reputation. In this volume an

* As will be seen by those who may have looked over a condensed table of contents included in advance specimen-sheets of this volume, already issued by the publishers.

† 1 Corinthians xiv. 1.

‡ See, for example, *Manuel Pratique du Magnetisme Animal*, par ALPHONSE TESTE, D.M. de la Faculte de Paris; membre de plusieurs societes savantes: 4th Ed. Paris, 1853; pp. 120-128. This book has been translated into several languages.

See also *Physiologie du Systeme Nerveux*, by Dr. GEORGET, of Paris, vol. ii. pp. 404, 405. As to Georget's character and standing, see Footfalls, pp. 53, 54.

example is supplied; * and in a former work of mine there are several.†
Bunsen believed in this faculty.‡

As illustrating St. Paul's text—"to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit,"—I had intended here to give a collection of what I have good reason to regard as spiritual communications to myself; but I now limit myself to one—an average specimen—relating to this very power of prevision. It purported to be from Violet, and I obtained it [§ through], a non-professional medium. I entitle it

THE PROLEPTIC GIFT.

"There is a faculty which is the complement of memory. Memory causes that which does not now exist, but which did once exist, to become, as it were, present. So this other *faculty*—let us call it prevision—causes that which does not now exist but will hereafter exist, to appear—like the past when we remember it,—to be present. But the faculty of memory is one possessed, in a greater or less degree, by almost every one; while the faculty of prevision is the privilege of comparatively few: and it is enjoyed by these few in different degrees; sometimes only as a dim presentiment or premonition, sometimes as a clear prevision.

"Prevision, though it be not as common, is as natural a faculty, as memory: and it may present to us, quite as clearly and even more clearly than memory, that which (as regards time) is remote from us. Our minds may, under certain conditions, anticipate more distinctly than they can recall: for our own feelings in the present often mix less with our previsions than with our recallings.

* See narrative entitled *A Trifle Predicted*, in Book ii. chap. 4.

† In *Footfalls* will be found the following examples of presentiment, or prophetic faculty, in its various phases: *The Negro Servant*, p. 204; *The Fishing Party*, p. 151; *How Senator Linn's Life was Saved*, p. 133; and others,

‡ See preceding page 178

§ November 15, 1801.

As there is, in reality, no up or down—these terms being relative only—so, as to time, there is, in one sense, no past or future. All IS.

"If this faculty of prevision had not shown itself, at times, throughout all the recorded past history of the world, prophets and prophecy would not be the common words they are."

This communication furnishes, at all events, material for thought. In connection with a subject which we cannot expect, in this world, fully to comprehend, I commend to the reader a remarkable and suggestive little pamphlet-volume entitled, "The Stars and the Earth;" published some twelve or fifteen years since, by Bailliere. London; and since republished in this country.*

As regards the gift designated in the text—"to another discerning of spirits"—it is the less important that I should here advert; seeing that I have furnished examples both in this volume† and in a former work.‡

As regards the Pentecostal epiphany—"to another divers kinds of tongues,"—the most remarkable modern example has been already alluded to; namely the phenomena that came to light in London, among the Rev. Mr. Irving's congregation,

* Mr. Bailliere informed me that the manuscript of this little treatise came to him anonymously, accompanied by a sum of money to defray part of the expense of publication; and that all his exertions to discover the author had been unavailing. A rare example of literary bashfulness!

† As *Sister Elizabeth*, preceding page 401; the vision of *Violet* by Mrs. B—of Cleveland, Book iv. chapter 3; the vision to *Mr. Bach* in dream, Book iv. chapter 2; and others.

‡ See *Footfalls*: the continuous visions of *Oberlin*, p. 364; *The Dead Body and the Boat-cloak*, pp. 367, 368; *Apparition in India*, p. 369; *The Brother's appearance to the Sister*, p. 872; visions of *Madame Hauffe.*, pp. 390-100; *The Old Kent Manor-house*, pp. 415-417; and others.

and which, as we have seen,* were deemed genuine by so sound a thinker as Baden Powell.

Mr. Livermore also testifies to the fact that he received, through Miss Fox, messages in languages unknown alike to her and to himself† I examined one of these (in good German) the day after it was received.

Then there was the power which Jesus exercised by Jacob's well—the perception of the hidden Past—causing the Samaritan woman's exclamation to her neighbors: "Come! see a man who told me all things that ever I did." The same faculty was possessed, as in his autobiography he informs us,‡ by a well-known and much-esteemed German author.

Finally we have Paul's words:—"to another the working of miracles" (dunameon): referring to other spiritual powers or phenomena, not specified. We can but conjecture what these were.

I have myself either personally witnessed, or had trustworthy evidence for various phenomena, *seemingly* more miraculous than any related in this book; as the powers of levitation,§ of elongation, of handling glowing coals without injury, and the like.

* Prefatory Address, see. 14; preceding page 178.

† See Mr. Livermore's letter to the author, at the close of chapter 4, Book v.

‡ *Eine Selbstschau*, von Heinrich Zschokke, 4th Ed. New York reprint, 1851; pp. 283-287. Zschokke's works are collected in forty volumes.

§ Lord Lindsay, in a recent letter to the (London) *Spiritualist*, narrates the following incident:

"I was sitting with Mr. Home and Lord Adare, and a cousin of his. During the sitting Mr. Home went into a trance, and in that state was carried out of the window in the room next to where we were, and was brought in at our window. The distance between the windows was about seven feet six inches, and there was not the slightest foothold between them, nor was there more than a twelve-inch projection to each window, which served as a ledge to put flowers on. We heard the window in the next room lifted up, and almost immediately after,

As to some of these manifestations I am not, for the present, at liberty, even did space permit, to give to the public the evidence which is in my hands.

I do not doubt that, as the years pass by, additional proof will accumulate that Christ's promise to his followers—that they should do the works that he did and greater works still* is in progress of fulfilment among us.

we saw Home floating in the air outside our window. The moon was shining into the room; my back was to the light, and I saw the shadow on the wall of the window-sill, and Home's feet about six inches above it. He remained in this position for a few seconds, then raised the window and glided into the room feet foremost and sat down. Lord Adare then went into the next room to look at the window from which he had been carried. It was raised about eighteen inches, and he expressed his wonder how Mr. Home had been taken through so narrow an aperture. Home said (still in trance): 'I will show you;' and then, with his back to the window, he leaned back, and was shot out of the aperture head first, with body rigid, and then returned quite quietly. The window was about seventy feet from the ground."

*John xiv. 12.

BOOK VII.

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS IN
IMMUTABLE LAW AND IN
RELIGIOUS PROGRESS.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

CHAPTER I.

SUMMARY.

AN author who assumes to write with a view to the improvement of his race owes it to his readers, ere he takes leave of them, to sum up clearly what he seeks to do, and how he seeks to do it.

I address this summary to those who have convinced themselves of the universal and persistent reign of Law, and who have faith in constant spiritual progress and in the ultimate triumph of Christ's teachings as the religion of Civilization. I specially address Such believers, because they will best appreciate the general tenor of argument throughout this book.

Consider, I pray you, the following brief propositions, in connection with each other,

The teachings of Christ, as set forth in the Gospel narratives, so intimately connect themselves with the wonderful powers (dunameis) there ascribed to him, and with his claim to be the Anointed Messenger of God, and with his alleged appearance to his disciples after death, that if the claim be rejected and the phenomena denied, faith in the teachings will be rudely Shaken; the most rudely in the most candid and upright minds. Neither Strauss nor Renan speak of Christ, in terms, as an

impostor; yet the virtual effect of their theories touching the signs and wonders of the first century, is to represent him as one who lent himself to deceit. But a spiritual system which had its origin in deceit presents slender claim to become the supreme religion of a civilized world.

The Church of Rome recognizes this truth. But because she does not believe in invariable law as the rule of God's government, nor in spiritual phenomena occurring under natural law, she regards the wonderful works and gifts of which we read in the Gospels, as miracles, wrought by one of the Persons of the Godhead eighteen hundred years ago, and still wrought by Him within the jurisdiction of a single Church. She sets down all persons who deny miracles as denying that these works and gifts ever had existence; and she declares all such persons to be anathema; that is, accursed of God.

You, believing in invariable law and believing also in Christ, as Civilization's great Spiritual Teacher, can say to the Church of Rome: "We admit that the works were done and that the spiritual gifts were exercised: we deny, however, that they were miraculous."

But the Church of Rome has a right to reply: "Your theory is illogical. You say the works and gifts in question occurred under natural law, and you assert that all natural laws are universal and perpetual. If so, the law under which these works and gifts appeared must have remained unchanged, and must be still operative at the present day; and, under that law, similar signs and wonders must be occurring now throughout the world. But this does not happen. They occur within our Holy Church—the only Church of Christ—and nowhere else. They are still wrought by Christ; and they are wrought by him, not under a general law, but among us exclusively and miraculously, in proof that the Catholic Church is his Church, and that he recognizes no other."

It is a very strong argument. It has convinced millions. To its power is mainly attributable the success of the Tractarian movement at the English University of Oxford, in 1832,

carrying over such vigorous thinkers as John Henry Newman and others of his school. To its power is to be ascribed much of that enthusiasm and earnest conviction and self-sacrificing faith which has ever marked the Church of Rome. The phenomena, do occur. In favor of her claims that Church has the evidence of her senses; the same evidence which Christ's disciples had. Thousands witness the wonders. On them she bases her right to canonize. Through them her greatest triumphs have been achieved.

Now, what are you to reply? That the phenomena do not occur within the precincts of Roman Catholicism? That allegation has been tried and has failed: men continue to believe that they do occur. You will be beaten on that issue, as we have seen that for the last three hundred years you have been. If I have proved to you, in the preceding pages, that similar phenomena may be observed outside the precincts of the Roman Church, why not within these precincts? But if I have not proved this, then where do you stand? What can you reply to the Catholicism of Rome?

You cannot deny that a universal, invariable law which was in operation in the first century must be in operation still. And if you fail to show, by modern results, that it is in operation to-day, then the Church of Rome reasons fairly when she tells you that it never had existence; therefore that Christ's wonderful works were not done under law; therefore that, if they be not miracles, they are fables. She places before you the naked alternative—Renan or St. Peter.

If you have any mode of escape from such a dilemma, other than by the path which this volume indicates, I pray you to come forward and set it forth.

And if you cannot suggest any other, think where you stand!

On one side a Church which claims exclusive infallibility, and with it a right which properly inheres in the Infallible—the right to persecute even unto death; a Church which claims the right to circumscribe scientific inquiry; a Church which pronounces her doctrines to be irreformable and her creed to

be a finality; a Church which denies to humankind religious progress.

On the other hand a Christianity which had birth in fabulous legends; a Spiritual System of which the historians—impostors or self-deceivers—narrate lies; a system pretending to bring immortality to light, yet assuming, as crucial test whereby to establish that great truth, a childish superstition. For such—with all due respect to the talents and the sincerity of the man—is Renan's Christianity.

With the issue thus made up, I think the Pope will have the best of it. I see no reasonable ground for the assurance that the brilliant Frenchman's rationalism will not go down before the Church of Rome.

As little do I believe that Secularism will prevail against her. It has nothing to offer but this world, and that is insufficient for man.

But this is dealing in negatives only. "Leave these," you will say to me, "and let your summary inform us, plainly and briefly, what system, in your opinion, will prevail."

Willingly. A system that can reply thus to Papal argument: We admit that the natural law under which the signs and wonders of the Gospels occurred is in operation still. We admit that similar signs and wonders have occurred, and still occur, within your Church. We add that they occur, as we can testify, outside of your Church also. They are oecumenical. Whether within your Church or without it, they occur in accordance with universal and enduring law. They afford proof, as strong as that which was vouchsafed to the apostles of immortality: but they afford no proof whatever that Roman Catholics are God's children of preference, or that, out, side of St. Peter's fold, there is no true religious life."

It suffices not, however, to have a system that can reply to an opponent's argument. If we would succeed against that opponent, we must discard the errors upon which our opposition

to the Roman Church is, or should be, based. We must discard

Belief in every phase of the INFALLIBLE, in connection with any religious matter whatever.

Belief in the MIRACULOUS, past or present.

Belief in the right of PERSECUTION; whether by ecclesiastical excommunication or social outlawry; whether by employment of rack and fagot, or by suborning of public opinion.

Belief in the EXCLUSIVE, as applied to any Church or sect, supposed to be God's favorite.

Belief in a FINALITY, as found in any branch of knowledge, including religion.

Belief in Vicarious Atonement, in Imputed Righteousness, in a personal Devil, in an Eternal Hell and in Original Depravity.

It may be added—though this is a Protestant rather than a Roman Catholic error—belief in the saving efficacy of faith without works.

There remains another duty, as imperative. If, misled by a wholesale spirit of condemnation, we have rejected certain valuable tenets of the Old Faith, because the form in which they appeared pleased us not, we ought to reconsider our rejection. Great truths are often covered up in unseemly garb. Let us reflect whether we may not properly admit our belief

Not in a Purgatory of flames, whence sinners are rescued by virtue of the Church's intercession; but in a state of progression, intermediate between the life which now is and the higher phases of another.

Not in the Intercession of Saints, for we need not holy men to remonstrate in our favor with God, as some of the Jewish prophets of old assumed to do; but in grateful recipiency of such guardian aid and wise counsel as may come to us from the denizens of a better world.

Not in the efficacy of paid masses that find favor in God's sight and induce him to release from suffering in penal fires those to whose benefit these ecclesiastical ceremonies inure,

but in the influence of fervent prayer, offered here below, to aid a soul struggling upward to the light, whether the struggle be on our earth, or in that other life, a supplement to this, where a spirit laden with Sid equally needs, ere it rises to better things, effort and repentance. *

For the rest, I think that he is the most likely to distinguish Christianity in its purity, who, with ears happily closed to the harsh murmurs of the scholiasts† reads, in the spirit of a cultivated child, the teachings ascribed by the Synoptical Gospels to Jesus; interpreting these by that inward light—God's holy spark within us—to which Christ himself so often refers.

I hope that in preceding chapters I may have succeeded in giving you, in a general way, my idea of the aspect of Christianity when divested of canonical ceremonies. Here, ere I close, I may briefly epitomize. It seems proper in discarding so much that is called orthodox, to advert to the grand truths that remain.

* See, for an example, how repentance may, by its regenerating influence, change the character and condition of a criminal in the next world; and how prayers and counsel from this sphere may bear fruit in another, Footfalls, pp. 396, 397, 399. The incident there given is very suggestive.

† "Wen, als Knaben, ihr einst Smintheus Anacreons
Fabelhafte Gespielinnen,
Dichterische Tauben umflogt, und sein maonish Ohr
Vor dem Lerme der Scholien
Sanft zugirrtet—"KLOPSTOCK.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT UNDERLIES CHRIST'S TEACHINGS, AS FOUNDATION-MOTIVE

"And now abideth Faith, Hope, and Love, these three, but the greatest of these is Love."—1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 13.

"Thy kingdom come!"—MATTHEW vi. 10.

"REPENT! for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand:" these, as we have seen, are the earliest recorded words of Christ's public discourse.

The Pharisees asked him: "When shall the kingdom of God come?"

And he replied: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say 'Lo here!' or 'Lo there!' For behold! the kingdom of God is within you."

—Is within us. The light within. The divine, indwelling spirit of truth. How far—passing by Christ's words—do we wander, seeking that which is in our own hearts!

We think by vast searchings to find out God and his kingdom and his Spirit. But the Spirit of God is not in the fierce wind of Dogmatism, desolating in its sweep; it is not in the earthquake of warring creeds, rending and convulsing the religious world; it is not in that fire of zeal which persecutes and consumes; it is in the still, small voice which, so it be not quenched, speaks from the soul of every one of us.

—Often obscured; stifled sometimes by adverse influence and vile surroundings: not unheeded only, alas! unheard: yet as surely existing, down under the crust, in the Bushman, or in the Caffre, or in the nomadic outcast of Civilization, as shining in the Christian who lives the nearest to the bidding of his Lord.

"Thy kingdom come!"

We repeat a thousand times these words of Christ's prayer, for once that we fully appreciate their deep meaning: forgetting that the kingdom whose advent we implore is (if we accept Christ's interpretation) a sovereignty of which we cannot witness the coming; to which we cannot assign this place or that; seeing that we bear it ever about us. We pray, even if we know it not, that the spirit of God within us may assert itself and rule. We pray for the sovereignty of enlightened conscience. We pray for the coming of ethical, of spiritual development; and we pray that, when it comes, it may be the governing power of our race.

Conscience is God's vicegerent, rightfully ruling the heart of man. Under her rule alone is human life satisfactory. That is Christ's doctrine. How simply and how strongly has he expressed this!

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

—Hunger and thirst, not after this dogma or that sect; not after ritual or ceremonial or long prayers in the synagogues or much speaking; nor yet after silver and gold: hunger and thirst after THE RIGHT—that Kingdom of Heaven within.

Christ's plan is—right-doing because it is the right. Right-doing, come what will of it, for that is God's affair. Accept the consequences. Do we not pray: "Thy will be done!"

Things may seem to go ill. Men may revile and persecute and speak evil. No matter. Even then, Jesus declares, is the right-doer blessed. He may seem forsaken; bread itself may be scant: yet, in the end, it is he alone who shall be filled. If we seek first God's Right, all else—that is Christ's assertion—shall be added unto us.

Yet he states this as a fact, not puts it forward as a motive. The motive on which he relies is not the prospect of gain; it is the hunger and thirst. We may conform to man's law through forced obedience, fear of penalty, hope of reward. God's law can be fulfilled through love alone.

Christ has nowhere said that they are blessed who act right

in order to win Heaven or escape Hell. Fear, a base motive, enters not at all into his scheme. He does not, like the Psalmist, inculcate the fear of God: * his wisdom has a far nobler beginning. It is based on perfect love—that love which casteth out fear.

The poet expressed a thoroughly Christian sentiment when he prayed:

What Conscience dictates to be done
Or warns me not to do;
 This teach me, more than Hell, to shun,
That, more than Heaven, pursue."

This matter of basic motive underlying a religion is of vast practical importance. We poorly appreciate Christ's spiritual polity if we fail to perceive that it trusts, for a world's reform, to awakening in man the slumbering love of the Right, for its own sake; not to arousing his cupidity or playing on his fears.

If a child, passing from under his teacher's hand, grow to Manhood honest merely because he thinks that honesty is the best policy, he may be a fair dealer, and so far commendable; but

* If this startle any one, I beg him to examine, for himself, whether, in the entire Gospel record, there occur, even once, the direct injunction by Christ, "Fear God:" an injunction repeated, a hundred times, under the Old Dispensation. He will find, in Matthew (x. 28), this: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in Hell."

Yet the very words next following are these:

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. *Fear ye not*, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."

The fair interpretation evidently is this: "It is more reasonable to fear one who has power over both body and soul than one who had power over the body only. But fear not your Heavenly Father; for ye are under his constant care."

With this accords the spirit of the whole record. "Fear not, little flock," said Christ. And he declared that his disciples should be known by their love, not by their fears.

he is not a disciple of Christ. If a professor of religion exhibit the liveliest zeal for his Church, actuated by no higher principle than that which caused Louis XIV. to repeal the Edict of Nantes—namely, to save a worthless soul from Hell—he may be a useful Church member, but he is not a Christian. There is no Christianity except that which has for foundation the indwelling love of the Right.

Let us not despair that, some day, such may become the basis of civilization's morality, public and private. A little introversion may encourage. When we have been looking back upon our early youth, has the thought never come over us that we are not what we might have been—that our nature was better than our education? Do we not sometimes feel—the dullest among us—that there are springs of virtue within us that have rarely been touched; generous impulses that have seldom been awakened; noble aspirations that have never found field of action? And do such convictions come to us alone? Shall we stand up in the temple and thank God that We are not as other men? Is it not written that man was created in the image of God?

Let it not discourage us that such a change of motive from the ruling selfishness of the day involves a reform radical even to regeneration. Christ admitted that. He saw how blind to the heaven within was the world around him. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

A consideration which will suggest itself to every one here intervenes.

Conscience alone, if it be uninstructed and undeveloped, suffices not, how earnest soever, to reform the world. The most sincere love of the Right can work only according to light and knowledge: but the light may be feeble and the knowledge scant.

Beyond the result to be hoped from the general progress of Civilization, does Christ's system open up to us no special source *whence* to supply this need?

The reply connects itself with a subject treated of in one of

the most important chapters of this volume.* Jesus, as I have already reminded you, said to his followers, at the close of his earthly life:

"I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, shall come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak."

Whether Christ, in virtue of his proleptic power, foresaw that it entered into the economy of God, at a certain stage of human progress, to vouchsafe unto man mediate spiritual revealings, coming to him perennially from a wiser world than this; whether the Author of Christianity here indicates the source whence he believes that the human conscience (so soon as the world can bear it) shall derive light and knowledge: that I leave for you to decide. In the preceding pages I have furnished you what aid I could, in making up your decision.

This, however, I pray you to observe: that you have to decide not at all whether the mass of alleged spiritual communications of the day can fitly educate conscience;† but whether, when prudence and reverence preside, a Spirit of truth, from an ultramundane sphere, speaking not of itself but from the knowledge which a heavenly residence imparts, may not be the medium, promised by Christ, for the regeneration of mankind.

* Book i. chapter 2.

† What impartial historian would judge the Protestantism of Luther's day by the extravagances of the Anabaptists, or the atrocities of the Peasants' War?

Some of the best and most intelligent friends I have are endowed with one or more of those spiritual gifts of mediumship, as to which Paul declares that we should all desire them: and many more share my own convictions touching the great truths of Spiritualism. Shall I discard these excellent friends, or hear them arraigned for their belief without; solemn protest, merely because the new faith has, like early Lutheranism, attracted its waifs and strays; or because it has been often interpreted, like Lutheranism, by those whose zeal outruns their knowledge?

—Promised conditionally. The basis of all—the indispensable condition—precedent—is loyalty to conscience. The promise is to those who hunger and thirst after the Right. It is their hunger, their thirst, which, from a spiritual source, shall be stilled.

I check the temptation to enlarge on this. A recapitulation must not stretch out into a second work. Yet permit me to add a disclaimer, not needed for thoughtful minds, but which may avert misconstruction.

I have not been asserting—far be it from me—that, in our day and generation, severity is always misplaced, or that legal penalties are useless; still less, that we should not carefully explain to children the suffering they incur by doing evil, the pleasure which results from doing well: that is an educator's bounden duty. I but say that Christ discards—as the world will some day discard—force and fear and selfish gain as motives. I but remind you that Christ trusts, for a world's reformation, to influences higher, nobler than these—to an impulse strong as hunger, strong as thirst,—to a love seeking not her own, rejoicing in the truth, that shall draw men, as by chain of steel, to do that which is right.

Other characteristics of Christ's teachings will readily suggest themselves. The element of forgiveness, in a degree unknown among us yet. Am erring brother pardoned even to seventy times seven. The merciful blessed; they shall obtain mercy. A frail offender, excommunicated by society, set free, uncondemned, and bidden to sin no more.

Beneficence, especially to the weary and heavy-laden, is another marked feature. Helping the poor. Ministering to the stranger, the hungry, the naked, the sick and those in bonds. That which we do unto them we do unto God.

We are warned against the danger of riches; against overmuch thought for the morrow; against eager seeking of place or power. The treasures which moth and rust corrupt, the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in synagogues

are declared to be objects unworthy to engross the heart of man.

There are enjoined meekness, peace even to non-resistance of evil, purity as much in thought as in action, resignation under whatever God sends.

We are encouraged to have faith and hope, based on the assurance that the Father knows our needs and will provide, before we ask Him; but, above all and beyond all, as stamp and witness of our discipleship, as the very fulfilment of God's behests, we are incited to something greater than faith, greater than hope—uplifting as their influence is—even to the supreme law of all—LOVE.

A mere skeleton sketch is this; yet it is all that space permits. Is not such a Spiritual System worthy to be called inspired? Is it not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness?

May this generation prosecute more and more careful researches into that Debatable Land on the confines of which we have been straying! Aided by spirits that have passed on, in advance of our spirits, under the triumphal death-change and into the beautiful Beyond—the still, small voice our monitor, Christ our chief guide—safely shall we question the Unexplored: safely and profitably. We need the lessons that are taught by its laws. We need the evidence that is supplied by its phenomena. In the Border-land between two worlds we come upon much-needed influences, far more powerful than any of earth: gracious influences fitted to fortify degenerate morality and foster spiritual growth.

THE END.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THIS VOLUME.

FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD

WITH NARRATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS.

"OF this work there have been sold, in this country and in England, about twenty thousand copies, and in both countries it won notices from almost all the leading periodicals. A fair example of its reception is that it met in *All the Year Round* (September, 1860), from CHARLES DICKENS; who, after dissenting from many of its conclusions, said: "I rise from the perusal of this book with a high regard for Mr. OWEN personally. He is a gentleman of a sweet temper, and expresses himself as a gentleman should. He is a good writer, and has an admirable power of telling a story. That one of his stories which is called *The Rescue*, is by far the best of its kind to be found. Excellent throughout, it is told with a singular propriety, modesty, clearness, and force."

BEYOND THE BREAKERS

A NOVEL FOUNDED ON VILLAGE LIFE IN THE WEST.

"The chief characteristic of this book is the knowledge of the human heart which its author displays, and the quickness with which he brings before us its most hidden secrets. Mr. Owen shows his skill in treating that kind of preternatural influence which may be connected with common life, and we commend the work for the pure morality, its sober pleasantries, and unassuming simplicity."—*Hearth and Home*.