

# The Spiritualist,

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The above diverse expressions of representative opinion, and sympathy, for and against the notorious fruitful philosopher of defiant Atheism, may serve as suggestive texts for a few psychological observations upon “Northampton’s elegant contribution to the senate.”

To be impartial, I will avoid current political disputes. This is not the place to discuss the Parliamentary claims of Mr. Bradlaugh. But, by an accident of circumstances, the great arch-enemy of revealed religion has become an historic figure; and as such, may be fairly subjected to critical analysis. Whilst intelligently prepossessed in favour of Christianity and the immortality of the soul, I will not—intentionally—misrepresent even the most emboldened foe of the world’s grandest hope and faith.

In the ethics of belief, Mr. Bradlaugh is no hypocrite. If he is not a born Materialist, his peculiar temperament certainly favours all that is revolutionary in theology and social relationship. The two cardinal forces of his character are intellectuality and combativeness in individual opinion. He is a pugilist of thought. He must get antagonistic, and strike somebody or something somewhere. The perpetual fight of which his restless life has been the embodiment, affords him a kind of savage pleasure. Other people’s mental un-comfortableness, is Mr. Bradlaugh’s sentiment of satisfaction. He feels at home amid the storm-distributed fragments of a wreck. What Byron was to literary quietude of imaginative reflection—a brilliant howling tempest teasing a naturally glassy sea—Bradlaugh is in the vulgar chaos of democratic revolution. However, his meaning is better than his methods of destruction, and propaganda. His intention is to reform, but, with materialistic cruelty and disregard of the finer feelings and traditions of opponents, he must perforce

and inevitably smash his way onwards, upwards, and forward. Devoid of *spirituelle* sympathy with any of the old faiths, he lacks emotional tenderness. His morality is consequently statuesque. Intellectual sternness alone, and the responsibilities of party leadership, would prevent such a man from being conspicuously wicked. But the moral goodness of Materialists of the Bradlaugh type only illustrates the uncontagious beauty and coldness of Parian marble. It is deficient in the glowing inspiration which grows and blesses, by a mysterious fusion of congenial elements. Such piety is platonic, defiant, essentially quarrelsome in its normal conditions and assumptions. The dogmatism of intrepid commanders either in warfare, or in controversial thought, begets a kind of combative holiness, which, when severed from the discipline of duty, bears as much resemblance to the sweet, affectionate, moral sentiments of religious spirituality as chalk to cheese. If the disbeliever or materialist happens to be a profound literary genius of the first water, like Shelley, then the interior gladness of music and passion alone rushes out into a morality which saves the aspiring soul from most of earth's grossness, and makes the daily life Heaven. In fact, poetic materialism is, and always has been, as rich in the odours of moral purity, as was the removed sphere of devotional sectarian society which produced Luther, Calvin, Channing, Wesley, and the lesser Christians whose beautiful walk and conversation recall Christ's saying about the salt of the earth. Mr. Bradlaugh is the inveterate antithesis of popular church and chapel belief. His scorn of Salem Meeting House is chiefly a temperamental aversion. He would be equally ill at ease in one of our most magnificent Cathedrals. Cromwell himself could not have less æsthetic interest in old ruins and temples. Bradlaugh, from normal defects of poetic and devotional sensibility, is impervious to sensuous charms and appeal. He could kneel only to the inharmonious disintegration of existing elements, monuments, and antique ways of thinking, from the same fine boisterous antipathis of feeling, which prevents Algernon Swinburne from bowing to do the polite to anything less annoying and destructive than fire, boiling sea-wrath, the hellish fall of rocks, and the splendid damaging play of the ribbons of lightning. But Mr. Bradlaugh would only posture, and menace, with commonplace slashing arguments against institutions and beliefs in his way; whilst the

lyrical poet would interest the witnessing world with dramatic entertainment, even in pulling down to spit upon society's conservative strongholds. Herein rest the prosy democratic efforts and sympathies of Bradlaughism, as contradistinguished from the more alluring materialistic standpoint of the philosophic and cultured sceptics among the great men of science, and the disbelieving portion of the literati. Mr. Bradlaugh cannot even tolerate the Bible as an excusable poem. He has no imaginative much less spiritual interest in the romantic records, be they fact or fable, of the written careers of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He ridicules all that intelligent millions have cherished most devoutly among all nations for thousands of years. It matters not to the chosen of Northampton whether men of the highest types of human goodness, before whose genius and clearness of intellectual perception most men pause—have respected religious tradition. It serves Mr. Bradlaugh's atheistic purposes to perpetually and at times vulgarly sneer, even at the reported idyllic home-life of the patriarchs and prophets. Viewed phrenologically, the now famous infidel politician possesses a splendid altitude of brain where veneration sits with soiled dignity to abuse its own gift of pre-eminence. But the head lacks breadth, poetry, kindness, the dreamy sway of art, and that emotional tenderness which only comes of ideality and the cultivated capacity for the raptures of music. Such a person could no more enter into the holy ecstasies of Handel and Mozart, or the anti-materialistic sweetness and *spirituelle* visions of Heber, Keble, Mrs. Hemans, Tennyson, or even the magnificent non-theological melodious soul-passage of the republican Victor Hugo, than an ordinary ironmonger's assistant could sing at the Italian Opera, or the railway navy could talk the unearthly language of the village belle. It is Mr. Bradlaugh's temperament, as it has become his sleepless mission, to fight and curse. This he does with gentlemanly vigour, and a certain politeness of eloquence not always associated with sworn infidels to whom existing faiths and historic forms of society are seemingly false and repugnant. From his earliest years Charles Bradlaugh, like the youth of ancient Rome, was trained for combat, if not on a Campus Martius, at least "outside the walls" of the communion which includes and softens his fellows. Small wonder that he should delight, not in the tenderness of peace, construction,

or restoration, but in throwing the javelin which would draw blood from already aching hearts: the skilful thrower, stamping his feet, and gnashing with his teeth meanwhile. If, in dealing out counter-commands to the operative secularist crowd on whose platform applause Mr. Bradlaugh ravenously feeds, he appears to lack politeness in rudely disposing of the Christian's God, and the claims of a hallowing faith in a future world where Animalism is not the one passion of life, it must be admitted that this strange man's tact is phenomenal. Combined with evident expediency as to results, this wonderful tact in the recent Parliamentary dispute has ensured him a name just now as well known in Europe as our most renowned statesmen. The rare historic apotheosis of which he has just been the more than dramatic subject in the Clock Tower of St. Stephen's, might possibly have been partly anticipated by such a psychological student of events as Mr. Bradlaugh. Whilst the iron was being made hot, he was cautiously preparing to strike. The blow has been opportunely dealt; and he now stands the temporary conqueror of the greatest Legislative Assembly in the world. Therefore, the extraordinary personal character of such a man is worthy of the thoughtful attention of all persons interested in the almost occult sway of such an imperial will-power as few individuals possess. The future influence of such a bold, combative materialist is a matter for reflection. Despising the revelations of Scripture, the possibility of preternatural visions and the ordinary sweetness of home relationships, this eloquent Malthusian, who will not stoop to prayer, and who lacks the music of praise, is certainly one of the most unanticipated personages of the nineteenth century.

If natural temperament and intense theological antipathies deprive Mr. Bradlaugh of the delicacy and spirituality of poetic emotion, he is still a man of wonderfully positive character. His embittered will-power gives a certain popular effect, and at times a majesty of sustained utterance to gifts of oratory of no mean order. If he lacks the highest kind of verbal and written eloquence, namely emotional agitation and "inspiration from within," he at least has cultivated, and can at any time call to his aid a truly splendid accent and emphasis. On great occasions he may make this adroit sledge-hammer climax of sentences such a powerful instrument in Parliamentary debate, as has not been counted in the estimates by his

enemies, of his perplexing individuality. It needs no Lamartine to detect in those desperate lips an amount of intellectual determination which may make less pugilistic speakers cower before the artillery of his impassioned statements as an oratorical foe in the House of Commons. Possibly, however, as he will lack the democratic applause of the Lancashire mill operatives when he rises to address the most educated representative chamber in England, he may not "make the lightnings play round their heads" to the extent calculated, and as per his own dogmatic boast. To be in his element, even of destructive oratory, Mr. Bradlaugh must needs hear the clank of northern mills; recall the proverbs of Robespierre and the gleam of Phrygian caps, or enjoy an impulsive magnificent hatred of established thrones. Under such an inspiration the elect of Northampton reaches the finest combative point of controversial speech, and betrays a soul-force such as only agonising orators can put forth in the rancorous frenzy of a successful attack upon olden ideas, prejudices and institutions. Legal training has given to Mr. Bradlaugh's methods of iconoclastic attack, the cool poise and graduating climb of forensic argument. Early ambitions only partly realised even now are remembered, and applied with all the exceptional self-esteem indicated in his high narrow head, and notoriety is coveted as the only sure and certain hope of immortality—the immortality only of earth. To the psychological student of character, Mr. Bradlaugh's motives and actions are consistent and logical with his own limited view of life. From the cradle to the grave the space and duration meets his wants, and comprehends the cramped scope of his vision. He is an orator. He is an image-breaker. The lightnings which played so hotly in warnings at Belshazzar's Feast might be repeated, without frightening him. Ill-health only, and the decay of his unique intellectual faculties, may soften and hallow his defiant dangerous strength of will. Or the spirit of the living God may suddenly show him his littleness, as was the case with Saul of Tarsus.

The probable ultimate influence of his speeches, writings and political career, may make history applaud his fearful isolated power, or blush to recognise a revolution which he kindled in theology, morals, or politics. This must be decided by the lapse of time. The only object of this brief analysis of the character of one whose opinions and teachings I detest, is to impartially lay bare a few of the temperamental causes of the remarkable individuality

which now make Charles Bradlaugh so much hated and feared, and so influential and conspicuous.

Horsham, Sussex.

#### FORM MANIFESTATIONS IN NEWCASTLE.

The following letter is dated June 16th, but it reached us only a few days ago:—

*To the Editor of The Spiritualist.*

Sir,—When I awoke on Sunday morning last, I found the sun shining brightly, and as I lay a few minutes pondering whether to have a long walk into the country or attend the ordinary *séance* in the rooms of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, I thought of the hawthorn blossoms I might gather in some quiet country lanes I knew of, which would certainly be preferable to being cooped up in a closed and darkened chamber for two hours in a poisonous atmosphere. I however, bethought myself that if I went a-May-gathering I should not (without much inconvenience) have another opportunity for a few months of viewing the uncommon and unique phenomena occurring at the rooms. I looked at my watch, and finding it to be still early morn, I resolved, as the saying runs, on “killing two birds with one stone.” I rose to go in search of May-blossoms, getting back in time for the *séance* at Weir’s Court, which commences at 10.30 a.m.

On reaching the rooms, I counted some five and twenty persons present, among whom was Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Didsbury, near Manchester, and than whom I very much doubt if there be another enquirer more anxious to obtain *bona fide* phenomena. Mr. Blackburn’s extensive and varied experiences in this investigation pre-eminently qualify him as an observer, and as he is so characteristically independent in thought and expression, I am quite sure, on public grounds, he will not hesitate to correct or corroborate this report wherever it may either be inaccurate or a true statement of facts, and if I should unconsciously exaggerate in describing these and some other *séances* I attended in company with Mr. Blackburn, your readers may rest assured that his more cautious estimates will duly appear, for which none will be more grateful than myself, as I desire to report only what actually occurred, and what I believe to be thoroughly genuine phenomena.

For a fuller description of the conditions under which the facts I am about to recite took place, I must refer your readers to

previous reports. Suffice it to say that after Miss Wood, the medium, retired into the closet or cabinet, Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Martin, of Gateshead, effectually fastened the door by screwing it from the outside.

After sitting about half-an-hour, (and singing to pass time) in a light sufficient to allow each person present readily to see that nobody in the circle could, without immediate detection, actively aid in the evolution of the phenomena, a white filmy-like substance of the dimensions of a lady’s pocket-handkerchief fell on the floor, apparently from the inner side of the green curtains hanging in front of the closet.

I closely watched this white substance as it was being elongated and widened, when a general undulating movement of the mass, with a strong upward tendency, was observable; and as it developed itself, it gradually assumed in outline a form corresponding to the outline of the human figure and then appeared to become more and more consolidated, until the perfect structure was accomplished. It then quietly approached nearly all the sitters, affording evidence in various ways of its tangibility, and, I may add, the hand of the form coming in the way I have feebly, but faithfully described, took mine in its firm grasp, and I found it to be as tangible as the hand which now guides this pen.

After remaining with us about fifteen minutes, we desired it if possible to disappear from our view without retiring behind the curtains. Preparatory, I presume, to doing so, it displayed a considerable quantity of white drapery, behind which it appeared to screen itself, gradually receding from the centre of the circle until it came within a radius of about two feet from the curtains, when it appeared to sink very rapidly, until the likeness to the human form was entirely lost or destroyed, and naught remained but the elongated white substance, which gradually melted away. I may further remark that just as I was closely noticing the disappearance of the minutest speck remaining of the white substance, I heard a great many of the sitters simultaneously with my own silent observations exclaim, “It is gone now,” and immediately after this general exclamation there emerged from the inner side of the curtains a diminutive and (as Mr. Blackburn—with whom it was very friendly—described it) a “deformed” but very familiar form called “Pocha” at Miss Wood’s circle.

It was more particularly in Mr. Blackburn’s

neighbourhood than any one else. Although he had on this occasion better facilities than others to form a correct judgment of the matter, and although I do not know what his matured conclusions are, I shall endeavour to describe what occurred when the form was entirely isolated. It seated itself on the floor against the wall and close to the curtains, trying to speak to the sitters for a few minutes, when it suddenly shifted to the inner side of the curtains; but it was scarcely out of sight when there came immediately into view at the aperture of the curtains a columnar mass of white drapery, estimated to be fully six feet high, and which slowly moved to two or three of the sitters (Mr. Blackburn being one) and shook hands with them. It then retired behind the curtains, to be followed a few seconds after by a well developed form very much like the medium in height and structure; it was intimated to be the sister of the medium. A very noticeable difference was observed between the hands of this and the preceding tall figure by those who shook hands with both forms. This form also withdrew, and either it or a very similar form appeared at the aperture of the curtains, and without coming farther and after making a few inclinations, it opened the curtains wide and I observed it taking out the screws which fastened the closet door, after which, the medium in the chair, was in some unknown way dragged out of the closet, and turned round so that she was sitting in her chair with her back to the sitters and facing the curtains. A white handkerchief was placed on the head of the medium, who was sitting in a deep trance, so that all could see where she was sitting, and presently at the right of Miss Wood a shadowy form appeared. It attempted to get round the medium but failed, after which we were informed that the power was exhausted.

JNO. MOULD.

12, St. Thomas Crescent, Newcastle-on-Tyne, June 16th, 1880.

In relation to the above *séance*, Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Parkfield, Didsbury, near Manchester, sends us the following letter, which was written by him to his daughter the day after he witnessed the manifestations. He says that the letter was not originally intended for publication, otherwise he would have worded it differently here and there:—

Douglas Hotel, Newcastle, 4th June, 1880.

Dear Eliza,—For something to do, I will try to describe a splendid *séance* yesterday morning at Weir's Court, the meeting place of

the Association on Sunday. About twenty-five assembled at 10.30 in the morning. Miss Wood, (just the same as Katie Cook in height, but black hair and brown cloth embroidered jacket on) went into a cabinet formed in a corner, and made of thin calico like that on our greenhouse outside, next breakfast room—only room within it for one chair, and when she was seated I was asked to screw up the door of it, which I did. A green baize curtain half-a-yard from the cabinet, surrounded the cabinet for forms to materialise in. Light just enough to see ourselves, and we singing from ten to twenty minutes. Then "Pocha" shouted through Miss Wood, "I have entranced my medium and will sing through her; it is her organism I use, whilst other spirits are preparing to come." After two songs Pocha came in white; only a yard high, a deformed dwarf. She let me feel she was solid and not on her knees, with awful bow legs, and baby feet and child's face. We played awhile in middle of circle, sitting on the floor, whilst she got on my back; she was, say, 20lbs or more weight. She then said another was wanting to come, "a friend of mine," so she went behind the screen; but we asked for the next to come on the floor and grow up and vanish in the same way. She said, "I'll try!" We sang for a quarter of an hour, and outside the baize curtain appeared a little bit of white mist, which kept elongating along the floor for say one-and-a-half yards. Then inside it, hands or head began lifting it upwards, and suddenly it became a full human female form; it did not speak, but came, and with its warm hand, stroked my face, patted my forehead, fetched me from a side table a glass of water to drink, and I left her a little to taste, which she drank; she served many others in the room, then said she must go, and she gradually vanished before our eyes just as she came. In say eight or ten minutes other forms kept appearing, and it was a glorious sight. I am tired with writing and must finish my tale when I see you. I will return on Wednesday and shall telegraph you the hour. C. B.

Show this to anybody and they will say that twenty-five fools were present and not "wise men of the East."

I heard T. B. Barkas's lecture, a very clever one, in the evening.

MRS. MALTBY has given up her tenancy of the spare rooms of the National Association of Spiritualists, and those rooms are now empty.

## PSYCHOGRAPHY.

A private *séance* was held in Captain James's apartments, 129, Gower Street, London, last Saturday evening, with Mr. Rita as medium. Towards the end of the sitting, the controlling spirit desired his medium to go into the bedroom, over the entrance to which a curtain was hanging. The spirit desired Colonel Evans and Miss Burke to hold a double folding slate, which had previously been cleaned, tied, sealed, and the edges securely covered with gummed paper by General Maclean and Miss Burke. The sitters were then desired to give the initials of their surnames in the order they sat in front of the curtain, and soon afterwards Miss Burke felt, in the dark, a small soft hand on the slate and a scratching sound was heard as of someone writing. On a light being struck the slate was opened. On one leaf was found written "God bless you all," and on the other leaf a clearly formed M. and W. an indistinct J. and E. and a very distinct B., being the initials of the names of General Maclean, Mr. Wilding, Capt. James, Col. Evans and Miss Burke.

The slate, during the whole evening, was never out of the custody of Colonel Evans and Miss Burke.

## SPIRITUALISM IN VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

A trustworthy correspondent writes to us from Vancouver's Island:—"I have been having some very extraordinary occurrences at my *séances*—shadowy figures which several see more or less distinctly; between thirty and forty are counted frequently. Flashes, and round balls of primrose and pink colour are seen. A figure once stood opposite to me just as I stood up to light the candle (which was on the mantelpiece); he was dressed in Egyptian cut clothes, braided, and of purple hue. I have been much in the East, but never saw the face before, nor any clothes of that colour. We have no communications however. There are seven members in our circle."

## A PRIVATE SEANCE.

BY MAJOR GENERAL J. W. N. MACLEAN.

On Tuesday a small party, at the kind invitation of Miss Cook, assembled in Mr. Charles Blackburn's room at 33, Museum Street, London.

They were Mrs. and Miss Cook, Colonels Stewart and Evans, a lady and gentleman unknown to me, and myself.

Being aware of the partiality of our spirit friends for beautiful flowers, I had provided myself with a basket of choice roses, which I

took with me to the *séance* room, and with the medium's permission I placed them on the table round which we were to sit. The party having taken their places, the gas was turned down so as to give a subdued light, but this very shortly went out altogether, and we commenced our *séance* in total darkness.

We had been sitting but a very few minutes, when Lillie Gordon's sweet whispering voice was heard, accompanied by the usual signs that influences from the unseen world were present and at work. One of these, (rather a remarkable one), was the heavy table of its own accord rising in the air to a height of from one to two feet, and rocking to and fro like a boat in a rough sea for several minutes. Shortly after this had occurred, and the table had resumed its position on the floor again, Lillie gave thirty loud raps in succession, which she informed us represented the number of the band of spirits that accompanied her, ready to assist her. She then materialised, bringing with her a bright and beautiful light, so much so that her features could be clearly seen; even the colour of her eyes was discernible by it. She kissed several of the party in the most affectionate, gentle, and spirit-like manner, and kept up a constant flow of conversation.

On being asked if she had anything she valued in spirit land, she said, yes she had, and volunteered to bring her little stock of jewellery for inspection, which she did, and presented each of the visitors with some of it to look at and handle. To one she gave a bracelet; on my finger she placed a ring, and to a third person she gave a locket, and so on to each of us in succession. She also displayed some other remaining articles of jewellery on her spirit light, laying them on it so that they could be clearly seen. This light was one of the most beautiful I have ever seen; it appeared like a piece of bright transparent polished spar, lighted up with a soft clear luminous phosphoric substance, and was held in Lillie's hands under a corner of her white transparent drapery, through which it shone clear and bright. I have mentioned that I brought her a basket of roses, which I asked her to accept. She said, "Are they really for me—for my own self?" I told her they were to do whatever she liked with. She then said, "I will give one rose to my medium, and the rest I will take away with me; and if *I can*, the next time we meet, I will restore them to you in the same state they are now, except the one rose which I shall give to my medium."



She then took back her jewellery from each of us, and wishing us good night, she vanished from our sight. On lighting the gas we found the basket of roses had gone, and that Lillie, as good as her word, had really dematerialised them and taken them away.

I should have mentioned that before commencing the *séance*, I myself locked the door and put the key in my pocket, where it remained until the *séance* broke up.

Whether Lillie can fulfil her promise of restoring the basket of roses remains to be seen, but it should be remembered, she only said she would do so if she could.

57, Gloucester Gardens, Hyde Park, London.

#### THE EDITORSHIP OF "PUBLIC OPINION."

We have received the following letter from Mr. Seaman, who, it will be remembered, gave public testimony in *The Spiritualist* of the remarkable things he had seen in Slade's presence, and at a time when Slade was being attacked at law:—

To the Editor of "*The Spiritualist*."

Sir,—Will you give me the opportunity of informing your readers that, after seventeen years' association with *Public Opinion*, first as manager, and afterwards as manager and editor, that connection has terminated? I would take this opportunity of tendering my grateful thanks to my *confrères* on the press and to other numerous correspondents of *Public Opinion* for their exchanges, suggestions, and contributions—valuable help which has lightened my labours throughout many years past.

ISAAC SEAMAN.

11, Southampton Street, Strand, July 1st.

Mrs. TAPPAN-RICHMOND:—On Thursday evening, last week, a meeting of the friends of Mrs. Tappan-Richmond, the American trance medium, was held at the Neumeyer Hall, Hart Street, Bloomsbury, London, to welcome her on her return for a short time to this country. Some remarks in accordance with the object of the meeting were made by the Chairman, (Mr. Stainton-Moses), Mr. Burns, Mr. Morse, and Miss Georgiana Houghton, and some excellent music and singing were rendered by Mr., Mrs., and the Misses Ward. An address from the First Society of Spiritualists at Chicago was read, commending Mrs. Richmond to the attention of English Spiritualists, and the chairman was empowered to frame an answer on behalf of the meeting. Mrs. Richmond addressed the meeting under control three times, and the proceedings were of a harmonious character. Mrs. Nosworthy, who had accompanied Mrs. Richmond from Liverpool, and Mrs. Strawbridge were among those who had taken an active and kindly part in promoting the meeting. Next Sunday at 7 p.m., Mrs. Richmond will give a trance address at the Goswell Hall, 290, Goswell Road, Islington, and next Friday evening she will deliver another trance address at the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly.

#### A PUZZLE FOR METAPHYSICIANS.

BY HARRIETTE WOODS BAKER.

In the month of November, 1845, the ship Sophia Walker sailed from Boston bound for Palermo. The owners, Messrs. Theophilus and Nathaniel Walker, had invited their brother-in-law, the Rev. Charles Walker, to go out to Palermo, as passenger, for the benefit of his health.

Among the crew was a young man named Frederick Stetson. He was the eldest son of the Rev. Caleb Stetson, at that time pastor of the Unitarian church at Medford, Massachusetts.

Frederick had been in a store in Boston, but, not being well, returned home to be under the care of a physician. His health did not improve; and Dr. Bemis, of Medford, advised a sea-voyage as the most likely to restore his vigour. Frederick was delighted with this prospect, and his parents reluctantly consented.

It was thought best for his health that he should go on board as a sailor; but a contract was made with Captain John Codman, that in case Frederick should become weary of his duties, he should be admitted to the cabin in the capacity of captain's clerk.

From the fact that the Rev. Mr. Stetson was a neighbour and friend, I became acquainted with these circumstances at the time the young man left home and embarked on board the Sophia Walker. The father also requested my husband to speak to Captain Codman, his former pupil, in regard to the youth.

In common with other friends I sympathised with Mr. and Mrs. Stetson in parting from their son under these painful circumstances; but domestic cares and other scenes gradually effaced these impressions, until I forgot the length of time he expected to be absent, and indeed lost all recollection of his voyage.

I relate these circumstances in detail that the reader may understand more fully the remarkable facts which followed.

During the latter part of February, 1846, the death of my mother, Mrs. Leonard Woods, of Andover, was succeeded by my own dangerous illness. In March I was seized with hæmorrhage of the lungs, and lay for days hovering between life and death.

One night, when the crisis seemed to have passed, a member of my husband's church, Mrs. Sarah Butters, who had been watching with me, retired soon after midnight to give place to my husband who was to watch with me till morning. I had taken the medicine prescribed by my physician, and was endeavour-

ing to compose myself to sleep, when all at once, with the vividness of a flash of lightning, the following scene was before me:—A tremendous ocean storm; a frail vessel pitching headlong into the trough of the sea; a billow mountain-high ready to engulf her; a slender youth clinging to the mast head; a more furious blast, a higher wave, and the youth, whom notwithstanding the darkness I instantly recognised as Frederick Stetson, fell into the foaming, seething deep.

As he struck the water I shrieked in agony; and my husband sprang to my side, expecting to see the crimson drops again oozing from my lips. My countenance, full of horror, terrified him.

“What is it?” he asked.

I motioned him to silence, unable to withdraw my thoughts from the scene. I still heard the roaring of the angry billows, the shouts of the captain and crew.

“Man overboard!” “Throw a rope!” “Let down the lifeboat!” “It’s no use; the ship has pitched beyond his reach!”

Fresh groans from my lips brought new anxiety to my faithful watcher. He seized my trembling hand, placed his fingers on my pulse, and started back with dismay when he felt their feverish bound.

“What is it? are you in more pain? shall I go for the doctor?”

“Oh, it’s dreadful!” I gasped. “I can’t tell. It’s awful!”

Then I passed into a still more remarkable state. Heretofore I had seen what was going on at the moment; now my mind went forward, and saw events that occurred two, three days, two weeks, later.

The storm had abated. The vessel, though injured, was able to proceed on her way. It was on the Sabbath; the crew were sitting in silent reverence, while the clergyman, Rev. Mr. Walker, read, prayed and preached a funeral sermon, caused by the late sad event. Every eye was moistened, every breath hushed, as the speaker recounted the circumstances connected with Frederick’s voyage, and endeavoured to impress upon the minds of his hearers the solemn truth of the uncertainty of life.

Another scene. Our own chamber: a messenger coming in haste with a letter from Captain Codman announcing Frederick’s death. The words of the letter I could read.

One more scene. I seemed to be again on board the Sophia Walker. Mr. Stetson was there, standing by Frederick’s open chest, into which the captain had thoughtfully placed every

article belonging to his late clerk. The father’s tears fell copiously while Captain Codman dilated on Frederick’s exemplary conduct during the entire voyage. When they reached Palermo, he had expressed his wish to enter upon the duties of a clerk, according to their contract, if tired of a sailor’s life, and since that hour had taken his place with the officers in the cabin.

All this passed before my mind with the rapidity of lightning. I lay trembling with agitation, until startled to present realities by my husband’s voice, while he held a spoon to my lips.

The first question I asked was “What day of the month is it?”

“The 10th of March.”

“What time did you come into the room?”

“It was past twelve when I gave you your medicine. Soon after you seemed greatly distressed. Can you tell me now what it was?”

“It is dreadful,” I whispered, gasping between every word. “Frederick Stetson is drowned; I saw him fall into the sea.”

“Oh, no!” was the cheerful reply. “You had been thinking of him and dreamed it.”

“No; I was wide awake. I saw him fall. I have not once thought of him for weeks. Oh, what will his parents say?”

Soon after this, exhausted by my terrible excitement, I fell into a troubled sleep. When I awoke it was dawn, and I immediately commenced narrating to my husband the scenes I had witnessed, he making a note of them and their precise date.

Perceiving that this conversation greatly agitated me he left the chamber to enquire whether the Sophia Walker had come into port, and promised to direct our son, a school-mate of Edward Stetson, to ask whether Frederick had returned from his voyage.

This he did, thinking to allay my nervous excitement, which he fully believed to be the result of a fevered dream.

At an early hour Dr. Samuel Swan, one of my physicians, came to my bedside. He expressed his disappointment at finding my pulse greatly accelerated, and asked the cause.

I then, though not without great exhaustion, repeated to him what I had seen, my husband being present, Mrs. Butters (the lady already referred to), and a woman who had lived in my family for years.

In the course of a week several persons were made acquainted with these facts, though, from the fear lest they should reach the ears of the parents, they were told under an injunction of secrecy.

In the meantime I listened eagerly to my son's daily bulletins from his schoolmate.

"Fred is coming soon." "Mother has his clothes all ready." "Father says he may be here any day now." "The Sophia Walker is due this week."

It was two weeks before the ship arrived in port; but I was so far convalescent that I was permitted to sit up, wrapped in blankets, for an hour or two each day.

On one of these occasions, while Mr. Baker and the family were at dinner, the bell rang, and presently I heard my husband, in answer to the summons of the servant, hurry to the door.

It was scarcely a minute before he entered my chamber, pale, and evidently trying to conceal his emotion. He had an open letter in his hand, upon which his eyes were fastened.

"You have Captain Codman's letter," I said.

"Yes," he answered, "and in almost the words you repeated to me."

I held out my hand for the sheet, and my tears fell fast as I read the following lines, evidently written in great haste:

"Rev. Mr. Baker.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I must beg you to perform a painful duty. Poor Frederick was lost overboard in a gale on the 10th. You must tell his father, I cannot.

"I never had anything occur that has given me so much pain. He was everything that I could desire; and I can truly say that I never had occasion to reprove him, and that his uniform good conduct won the esteem and love of us all. There was this satisfaction—that no one of us was so well prepared for death.

"I will detail the circumstances at more leisure; but enough to say now, he was lost from the foretopsail yard in a gale of wind, and human exertion could not save him. You can best administer consolation to his distressed parents. Show them the sermon preached on the Sabbath following his death, which accompanies this, and assure them of my heartfelt sympathy.

"Yours truly,

"March 25th, 1846."

"J. CODMAN.

While my eyes glanced over the lines, familiar as if penned by myself, Mr. Baker was making hurried preparations to go to Mr. Stetson's.

"Young Hall brought it out," he explained. "Captain Codman wished me to have the letter at once, lest the parents should hear the sorrowful tidings in an abrupt manner."

The sad scenes which followed are too sacred to be even touched upon here. Mr. Baker did not return home for hours, having offered to go to Cambridge, and convey the sad intelligence to Merriam Stetson, the second son, who was a member of Harvard College.

"I am to go into Boston to see Captain Codman in the morning," he said. "Mr.

Stetson is anxious to see him, and I shall ask him to return with me."

I recalled the last scene on board the Sophia Walker, and said—"I thought he himself went in. It is the first thing not exactly in accordance with my vision."

I called it vision, for I was not asleep, and therefore it could not be a dream.

The next morning, when Mr. Baker called at Mr. Stetson's house to take any additional messages, he learned that, impatient and restless, the sorrowing father had found it impossible to wait, and had taken the earliest conveyance into Boston, where a scene occurred like what I had witnessed.

There was no longer need of secrecy in regard to my prescience or foresight, if so it may be called, and it speedily came to the parents' ears. Persons of intelligence of both sexes speculated and puzzled over these remarkable mental phenomena, unlike most recorded by philosophers in the fact, already stated, of the mind not only recognising what was passing at the moment at distance of hundreds of miles, but going forward in advance of events, and foretelling them with minute accuracy.

I make no effort to explain my mental state, which I am entirely unable to do; but I may be pardoned for quoting from a philosopher of the present century, who, speaking of visions and dreams, remarks—"It is in vain to attempt an explanation of them. They scarcely appear referable to any principle with which we are at present acquainted."

Priestly, another metaphysician, adds—"If the nerves and brain be a vibrating substance, all sensations and ideas are vibrations in that substance; and all that is properly unknown in the business is the power of the mind to perceive or be affected by these vibrations."

The following case, somewhat analogous to the one narrated above, is from "Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers," which says, "I relate this without any attempt at explanation, and without any other comment than that its accuracy may be relied on in all its particulars:"—

"Two ladies (sisters) had been for several days in attendance upon their brother, who was ill of a common sore throat, severe and protracted, but not considered as attended with danger. At the same time one of them had borrowed a watch from a friend in consequence of her own being under repairs. This watch was one to which particular value was attached, on account of some family associations, and anxiety was expressed that it might not meet

with any injury. The sisters were sleeping together in a room communicating with that of their brother, when the elder of them awoke in a state of great agitation, and having roused the other, told her that she had had a frightful dream.

“‘I dreamed,’ she said, ‘that Mary’s watch stopped, and that when I told you of the circumstance you replied, ‘Much worse than that has happened, for brother’s breath has stopped also.’”

“To quiet her agitation, the younger sister immediately got up, and found the brother sleeping quietly, and the watch, which had been carefully put in a drawer, going correctly.

“The succeeding night the very same dream occurred, followed by similar agitation which was again composed in the same manner, the brother being again found in a quiet sleep, and the watch going well. On the following morning, soon after the family had breakfasted, one of the sisters was sitting by her brother, while the other was writing a note in the adjoining room. When her note was ready for being sealed, she was proceeding to take out for this purpose the watch alluded to, which had been put by in her writing-desk—she was astonished to find it had stopped. At the same moment she heard a scream of intense distress from her sister in the other room. Their brother who had still been considered as going on favourably, had been seized with a sudden fit of suffocation and had just breathed his last.”

But to resume my narrative. I find it impossible at this distance of time to recollect all the persons to whom these operations of my mind were made known before the letter of Captain Codman gave reality to my vision. Among them were Dr. Swan and two female friends, who have since passed beyond the scenes of earth. During his life my kind physician frequently urged me to publish an account of these remarkable facts. My reasons for not doing so are suggested in a letter to Rev. Mr. Stetson, which, together with the reply and the testimony of other eye and ear witnesses, I subjoin for the satisfaction of those who may desire additional proof of the strict accuracy of this narrative—

“Rev. Caleb Stetson :—

“Dear Sir,—If any apology is necessary for my addressing you this note, I trust it may be found in the friendly relations which have long subsisted between your family and ours, and in our personal relations to the subject of this letter.

“You will no doubt recollect the singular mental phenomena which occurred during my severe illness

some weeks before your son Frederick’s death, and which at the time caused considerable discussion in literary and scientific circles. By some conversant with the facts I have been urged to write an account of them for philosophical inquiry, they being considered in many respects a more remarkable instance of pre-science or foresight than any on record; but the fear of being classed with visionaries and Spiritualists has therefore prevented me.

“Now, however, on a fresh application to state the particulars in detail, I have consented to do so, and would consider it a great personal favour if you will carefully examine the accompanying statement, and, so far as memory will enable you, add in a note to me, which I may be at liberty to publish, your corroborative testimony respecting it.

“Mr. Baker unites with me in very kind regards to yourself and family.

“With great esteem and respect,  
HARRIETTE W. BAKER.

“Dorchester, February 16th, 1870.”

Rev. Mr. Stetson, having been sick for several weeks, requested his wife to answer for him. She writes :—

“Dear Mrs. Baker,—We have read your manuscript with the deepest interest. You have expressed clearly and correctly the whole subject as it has laid hidden in our memories; and so vividly, too, have you portrayed it, that the sad event of by-gone years comes to us with the freshness of yesterday.

“Mr. Stetson also wishes me to add that it might be well for you to procure the testimony of those who were informed of your wondrous vision before the event transpired, as so many years have passed since that fatal storm of March 10th, 1846.

“With our best wishes for yourself and husband,

“Most affectionately yours,  
“JULIA M. STETSON.

“Lexington, February 19th, 1870.”

Acting upon the suggestion contained in the above note, I received the following communications from those who have seen or heard this article in manuscript. The first is from the daughter of Rev. David Osgood, D.D., a predecessor of Rev. Mr. Stetson, and for a long course of years pastor of the first church in Medford.

“Dear Mrs. Baker,—In answer to your enquiries, I could state that I have a distinct recollection of hearing from you in your sick-chamber an account of your vision in regard to the death of Frederick Stetson, immediately after the sad events which you have so vividly portrayed. The circumstances made a deep impression on my mind, and I have always considered your mental state as remarkably analogous to all that I have ever heard of Scotch second-sight.

“Most truly yours, L. OSGOOD.

“Medford, March 5th, 1870.”

From Mrs. Sarah B. Butters, to whom I have already referred, I have also the following testimony :—

“This certifies that I was acquainted with the remarkable vision narrated by Mrs. Baker before the knowledge of the death of Frederick Stetson reached me by the arrival of the ship Sophia Walker in Boston, on the 25th day of March, 1846, and its exact correspondence

with the circumstances of that sad event so impressed me at the time as to leave in my mind a distinct recollection both of the vision and its fulfilment.

SARAH B. BUTTERS.

"Medford, March 2nd, 1870."

I will introduce but one other witness, who was with me on that fearful night, and was an actor in some of these scenes. He writes:—

"I am happy to bear my testimony to the truthfulness and fidelity of the record of facts contained in this narrative, and to assure the reader of its entire trustworthiness. I thought them at the time, and have ever since considered them, among the most remarkable mental phenomena of which I have any knowledge, and worthy of a place in the history of metaphysical science.

"A. R. BAKER.

"Dorchester, Massachusetts, March 8th, 1870."

#### MEDIUMS AND THE LAW.

At a recent meeting of Spiritualists held at 38, Great Russell Street, London, a paper was read by Mr. Stainton-Moses on the above subject, in which, after speaking about a memorial about to be sent in to the Government in relation to this matter, he stated that some Acts of Parliament which might conceivably be employed against mediums, could be so used by Spiritualists only, but this was not the case with the Vagrancy Act. Yet a medium is not a vagrant, but has a home and is usually to be found there; to call him a vagrant is wresting the law from its intent, and a perversion of justice. In the course of his paper he described Dr. Purdon's article as an illogical and unscientific diatribe, and spoke of the emoluments received by the Archbishop of Canterbury as compared with those of mediums, for the exercise of spiritual gifts.

Mr. T. Shorter asked that the proposed memorial to the Government should be read, and wanted to know to whom in the first instance it was to be presented.

Mr. Stainton-Moses said that it was not decided to whom it should be presented, and that it had been sent out for signature to Lord Lindsay, Lord Dunraven, Mr. Varley and others, who had also been asked whether they would join a deputation to present it.

The Chairman, Mr. Fitzgerald, asked whether Spiritualists could not organise their own police to deal with fraudulent mediums.

Signor Rondi wished to know whether the Chairman would send his police to private mediums, for private mediums were to be found in nearly every house.

The Chairman would only employ the proposed police against such alleged public mediums as deceived the credulous.

A visitor remarked that the paper had said nothing about the state of the law in foreign countries.

Signor Rondi said: In answer to the question, I beg to say that in Italy we have no special laws against mediums. Spiritualism is spreading in every town and village. I have seen mediums working in theatres as well as in public squares, producing the most wonderful phenomena, and the public as well as the police taking part, all pleased to see the inexplicable manifestations. In Rome alone, when it was under the Pope's Government, mediums were not allowed to exercise their gift, and if they attempted to do so they were sent to prison. Mr. Home was sent away from Rome because he gave some *seances*. I was in Rome when the Brothers Davenport arrived; they gave some splendid *seances* in public, and did a great deal of good to prove the spirit power. The police did not molest them. But we have laws there as well as in other

parts of the world, which punish those who attempt to commit a fraud upon the public good faith. I am glad to say we have not, as far as I know, paid mediums, but some have been travelling from town to town without being molested by the police or anyone else.

After some remarks on another subject by Mr. Wilson,

Mr. W. Coffin said that the author should have said something about the law in other countries. The American Consul-general had informed him that in some of the New England States there were old laws which might be used against mediums; they had never been repealed, and had been forgotten. If anybody tried to enforce them they would be repealed. In the New States, there were no such laws. He thought that a comparison of English Statutes with those abroad, would show to the advantage of the latter. It was usual in defining a legal position, to compare English laws with those of other countries.

A visitor having suggested that the paper should be printed and circulated, the Rev. W. Miall thought that if this were to be done, it would be best to omit the reference to the Archbishop of Canterbury and his remuneration for the exercise of spiritual gifts.

Dr. Wyld was of the same opinion. If the paper were to be circulated by the Association, it should first be revised by a committee. The memorial, which had been seen by him, was an admirable one, but too long to be studied by Mr. Gladstone or other busy people; a few sentences might have contained the pith of the matter. It said that in America there were eleven millions of Spiritualists, which he did not believe to be a fact.

Mr. Moses: The memorial is not before us.

He (Dr. Wyld) thought that three or four millions would be nearer right.

Mr. Parkinson Ashton saw no harm in keeping in the name of the Archbishop of Canterbury, even if the Association were to circulate the paper.

After a few words from Mr. Wallis and Mr. Fletcher,

Mr. Shorter said he was sorry that the memorial was not before the meeting for consideration. He thought the assertion of eleven millions of Spiritualists in the United States to be "a gross and mischievous exaggeration." Mr. Tebb had made careful inquiries on the point in the States, and had come to the conclusion that the number of Spiritualists there was certainly not more than three-quarters of a million.

The Chairman: This is out of order.

Mr. Stainton-Moses: I protest against the criticising of a document which is not before us.

Mr. Shorter wished to know the ground of action set forth in the memorial, and thought with Dr. Wyld that the paper just read to them should be revised by a committee if it were to be circulated by the Association.

Dr. Wyld wished to know whether the memorial would be submitted to the Association before adoption.

Mr. Stainton-Moses said that the memorial would be submitted to the Council, and that he would not submit to revision his paper just read.

The meeting closed with the usual votes of thanks.

THE new book *Psychic Facts* was published last Tuesday MR. P. P. GOOD, Master in Chancery, of Plainfield, New Jersey, a well-known American Spiritualist, is in London this week, and will leave shortly for the Continent.

MR. F. O. MATTHEWS, the medium who was imprisoned at Wakefield because of the action of ignorant people, is in London, and was at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's *seance* last Wednesday night.

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## INFORMATION FOR NON-SPIRITUALISTS.

In thirty years Spiritualism has spread through all the most civilised countries on the globe, until it now has tens of thousands of adherents, and about thirty periodicals. It has also out-lived the same popular abuse which at the outset opposed railways, gas, and Galileo's discovery of the rotation of the earth.

The Dialectical Society, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, appointed a large committee, which for two years investigated the phenomena occurring in the presence of non-professional mediums, and finally reported that the facts were true, that the raps and other noises governed by intelligence were real, and that solid objects sometimes moved in the presence of mediums without being touched.

Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, deviser of the radiometer, and discoverer of the new metal thallium, investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism in his own house, and reported them to be true. Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Cromwell Varley, Prof. Zollner, and a great number of intelligent professional men have done the same.

## HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or stranger to the family present.

The assertions of a few newspapers, conjurors, and men of science that the alleged phenomena are jugglery are proved to be untrue by the fact that manifestations are readily obtained by private families, with no stranger present, and without deception by any member of the family. At the present time there are only about half a dozen professional mediums for the physical phenomena in all Great Britain, consequently, if these were all tricksters (which they are not), they are so few in number as to be unable to bear out the imposture theory as the foundation of the great movement of modern Spiritualism. Readers should protect themselves against any impostors who may tell them that the phenomena are not real, by trying simple home experiments which cost nothing, thus showing how egregiously those are duped who trust in worthless authorities.

One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena:—

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.
2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is of little importance. Any table will do.
3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening.
4. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.
5. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first indications will probably be table-tilting or raps.
6. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three raps be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.
7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class or messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of the messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.
8. Should no results be obtained at the first two sittings because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

Mediumship may either be used or abused. Mediums should not lower their strength by sitting more than about twice a week; angular, excitable people, had better avoid the nervous stimulus of mediumship altogether.

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