

BANNER OF LIGHT.

MAY 4 1888

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1888.

\$3.00 Per Annum.
Postage Free.

NO. 8.

VOL. LXIII.

COLBY & RICH,
Publishers and Proprietors.

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The Proper Methods of Scientifically Investigating the Phenomena of Spiritualism.

A Report Made to the
AMERICAN SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE,
And Officially Adopted by that Body at its Regular Session, held April 18th, at 219 West 42nd Street, New York City.

The undersigned, appointed at a regular meeting of the Alliance, held on the 11th of January, 1888, to report on the "Proper Methods of Scientifically Investigating the Phenomena of Spiritualism," respectfully submit the following report:

Spiritual phenomena, like those of physical nature, can, of course, be properly investigated only by scientific methods, which must be based on principles obtained by an accurate induction of carefully observed facts. Such facts constitute the basis of the science of Spiritualism, as of that of every other department of nature, whether spiritual or physical. Every branch of knowledge, in order to constitute properly a science, must comprehend (1) an adequate basis of ascertained facts accurately determined or attested by competent and trustworthy observers; (2) a logical induction of principles from those facts; and (3) proper methods of investigation, deduced from them.

The facts of Spiritualism to be investigated and ascertained in this manner are (1) spirit-manifestations, either physical or mental; and (2) the influences by which they may be affected or controlled, as dependent (1) upon the medium, (2) upon the person, or persons, present at the séance, and (3) upon concomitant circumstances.

No investigation can have any claim to be scientific that does not, as far as possible, provide for these various influences, and does not fully recognize them in the results of experimental séances.

Spiritual investigation is differentiated from an inquiry into the facts and laws of physical nature chiefly by the circumstance that in the former we are dealing with ordinarily invisible entities that possess will, intelligence, and all the other elements of human personality; while in the latter we simply have to do with inanimate, material objects, or, as in zoological researches, with the visible possessors of instinct and intelligence devoid of self-consciousness, the basic element of personality.

All science that deals, in any way, with human nature as exhibited in our present state of being—such, for example, as ethical or social science—is found to be peculiarly intricate and difficult; but that science must be far more so that concerns the same human nature operated upon, and modified by, the conditions of another state of being, of which we know so much less than our own. However, we have a clew to unravel, in part at least, this intricate; and that is the law of spirit-affinity, which, with scarcely any possibility of doubt or question, we may allege to operate universally in the spirit-world—in every grade or sphere of spirit-life. Therefore, just as the astronomer is able to carry his researches even beyond the confines of the visible (as, for example, in the discovery of the planet Neptune), guided by the law of the attraction of gravitation; and as the chemist may transcend the limit of optical visibility, in applying the law of molecular attraction, so the spiritual scientist, in his far more difficult investigations, may explore the realm of the spirit with equal confidence and success by keeping constantly in view the law of spirit-affinity, and spirit-attraction consequent upon it.

It must also be assumed as a postulate that both medium and investigator are spirits, though embodied, and, of course, subject to this law equally with spirits disembodied, every person in this life, as a spirit, being the center of an environment of spirits attracted to him or her by affinity; and also that this affinity is purely and exclusively spiritual, depending not at all upon physical, intellectual, or social conditions, except as these may affect the spiritual status, or be related to spiritual progress or unfoldment.

To know, therefore, the ordinary or normal spiritual environment of a medium, as an individual, we must know, as fully as possible, the spiritual condition, or degree of spiritual unfoldment, of that medium; and, in like manner, to ascertain the kind of influences drawn to a particular circle, holding a séance with a medium, we must know the spiritual condition of the persons comprising the circle, and not only

that but their spiritual attitude in regard to the particular séance in which they are to take part. In this relation, the medium's own personal condition and environment become secondary to the united influences exerted by the members of the circle, particularly if those influences belong to a low spiritual plane, and most especially if that sphere, or plane, be one of deceit, animosity, treachery, willful opposition to, or even indifference toward, spiritual things. If the desire to apply materialistic tests to the investigation emanate from, or serve to engender, any of these unspiritual conditions, they must tend to create the very incidents, as spirit manifestations, which they are designed to prevent; since they draw to the circle spirit operators belonging to that lower sphere, against whose consolidated potency the tests used are neither barrier nor protection; and to circumvent whom the spirit hand of the medium, unless belonging to a very exalted sphere, may be quite powerless. Hence the great importance in all our investigations of spiritual phenomena of studying these influences, constituting, as they inevitably must, so great an element in spiritual science, both as to the facts, or manifestations themselves, and to the proper inferences to be drawn from them.

Most of the dangers of mediumship, both to those who exercise it, and to those who resort to it, for any of the ordinary purposes, arise from an ignorance or disregard of this principle, leading, as it so often has led, to the ruin, both physical and moral, of many mediums, to the degradation of mediumship in general, and to the disgrace of Spiritualism before the public. Analogous disasters would certainly be the consequence of permitting ignorant persons to tamper with, or experiment upon, the dangerous elements of physical nature—in chemical or electrical science, for example. Actual occurrences have illustrated this fact; but the rashness and folly of ignorant experimentalists in the physical domain do not, as too often in that of the spirit, lead to a senseless condemnation of the science which comprehends the discussion and elucidation of those dangerous elements.

We pass from these preliminary considerations to a necessarily brief discussion of the methods of investigation which are the special subject of this report. Here important discriminations must be made in order to attain success, or to entitle our investigations to be considered scientific. The methods should always be adjusted to our special design in the experiment—for experiment it certainly is, since, as must be quite obvious from what has already been set forth, we can scarcely ever be perfectly sure that there is no subtle and insidious element present that will interfere with, or totally frustrate, our design and desire. If, by using the medium, or using a fraud-proof cabinet, were all that constituted the science of Spiritualism, to be an accomplished adept in it would not entitle any one to much credit; for certainly every desideratum of that kind is within the reach of quite ordinary intellectual training or endowment; but, assuredly, scientific methods comprehend a vast deal more than, and something very different from, this exceedingly vulgar, materialistic, and wholly unspiritual performance.

As a basis for the discrimination in methods to which we have referred, we submit the following as a probably exhaustive enumeration of the special objects for the attainment of which séances are held:

1. To convince unbelievers of the reality of the phenomena, and their spiritual origin.
2. To extend the knowledge of spiritual facts and principles, that is, to enlarge the boundaries of spiritual science.
3. To afford an opportunity to Spiritualists to hold intercourse with relatives or friends in the spirit-world.
4. To obtain trustworthy information from spirits as to the spirit-life, its conditions, laws, etc., as well as other topics connected with the philosophy of Spiritualism.
5. To cultivate spirituality, that is, to promote the spiritual advancement of the members of the circle.
6. To ameliorate the condition, or aid in the spiritual progress, of the manifesting spirits, when such amelioration or aid is possible, necessary, or solicited.
7. Specially and primarily to establish the personal identity of the manifesting spirits.

Besides the adaptations required by diversity of purpose in the holding of séances, there are others dependent upon the character of the circle, particularly as to its homogeneity and consequent harmony, or the want of it, the latter, unfortunately, being the usual condition of public circles, bringing in antagonistic and mischievous influences, with disastrous consequences, especially to the medium, as well as to the credit and reputability of mediumship in general.

The methods to be adopted should also have reference to the medium, as (1) of well-established genuineness, or (2) of unknown or doubtful genuineness, or (3) of well-proved integrity, or (4) of doubtful integrity.

Moreover, the grade of development of the medium is also an important consideration in the adjustment of methods to circumstances, as well as in the estimation of results; for mediums very often, in the early stages of their development—that is, previous to the complete establishment of their spiritual environment for practical work—are unable to afford as reliable manifestations as at a later stage.

Moreover, the different phases of mediumship necessitate the employment of methods to some extent peculiar to each. Thus there are circumstances and principles that specially pertain to trance mediumship, which require careful consideration both as to methods and

results; and so in writing mediumship, whether impressional or automatic; in physical, psychographic, and photographic mediumship; and especially in cabinet séances for materialization; though, indeed, all these various branches of investigation have the same guiding principles, while the circumstances and conditions that affect the manifestations in each are special and diverse.

To describe in detail all the various methods dictated by this discriminative classification, with appropriate illustrations, would require far more space than is afforded within the proper limits of this report. We can, therefore, refer to only a few, for the purpose of suggesting the principles to be kept in view, and of indicating a way for further research, and more minute specification when requisite.

When the object of the séance is to convince unbelievers, who are really interested in the subject, and desire information, we need particularly a medium of whose genuineness and integrity we are quite sure, and we need also to establish and maintain good spiritual conditions; because, the circle being comparatively negative, the barrier against extraneous, disturbing influences is correspondingly feeble. We do not include in this consideration the silencing of determined skeptics, or other positive opponents of the spiritual cause; because to attempt this, even under the most favorable conditions, is always fraught with peril.

As persons to whom the phenomena are entirely new, and who are, partly at least, unfamiliar with spiritual principles, always have more or less suspicion of fraudulent contrivance on the part of the medium, it is desirable that such conditions of test should be employed as will serve to eliminate this suspicion from the mind. But while the arrangements should always be such as to disarm any such suspicion, it is never desirable or proper to insist upon such tests as, of themselves, are tantamount to a charge of dishonest intention against the medium, since this always tends to change, to a greater or less extent, the spiritual environment, and introduce a lower, antagonistic or obstructive element into the experiment.

Everything that is liable to suggest deceptive contrivance having been carefully eliminated, it is always best to leave the evidential manifestations to the spirit-operators, who, with an harmonious, right-minded circle, reading the minds of the sitters, will seldom, if ever, fail to introduce such elements of proof as will fully suffice to demonstrate the genuineness of the manifestations.

When the special object of the séance is to enjoy spirit-intercourse with relatives, friends, or others, or to obtain evidence of the personal identity of the communicating spirits, the suggestions already offered are particularly applicable. In this case the mind of the sitter is intent not on the manifestations as proving spirit-intercourse, since, having graduated from that stage, it recognizes the possibility of spirit-intervention; but on the evidences of individual character, traits of personality, etc., presented by the communicating or manifesting spirits; and the indications of these constitute the chief or the only required conditions of test.

When, however, the séance is held for the special purpose of extending the knowledge of spiritual facts and principles, without regard to personal considerations, there exists a greater need of leaving the operations of the spirit-workers free from dictation or interference, permitting them to present whatever the conditions may render practicable, the sitters exercising their own judgment as to the value and importance of what is offered.

It is always to be borne in mind that in the search for spiritual knowledge the divesting of the mind of the inquirer from all selfish interests and desires invariably exalts the plane on which the inquiry is conducted, and attracts to it a sphere of intelligences at once wise and powerful as well as truthful and trustworthy.

This principle, therefore, is especially applicable when the object of the investigation is to obtain information in regard to the spiritual world, its special conditions, laws, and relations to our own, as well as the philosophical principles that underlie these various facts. It is, of course, of the utmost importance, when we ask for a revelation of things entirely new and strange, and of which we can learn nothing from the ordinary sources of knowledge—and especially of things beyond the realm of space, time, and mortality—that we should be particularly sure of our revelators, both as to their veracity and competency to instruct us. Hence, we should, as far as is possible, bring ourselves into relation with that spiritual society from which may be expected only wisdom and truth. We should remember, also, that we possess spiritual as well as material senses, and that in dealing with these advanced spiritual things we should endeavor to bring the former into play to the furthest limit of their cultivation, adding by means of this exercise of them to that culture, and in that way sharpening our spiritual intuitions and enlarging our horizon of spiritual truth.

With the culture here referred to, which those who do not possess it cannot appreciate or even apprehend, every one has, an inner light—a standard of truth—within his own soul, which is to him or her the best and surest guide, and is ever to be followed. It has been the prostitution of Spiritualism that this sacred light has been neglected or ignored in order to pursue the ignis fatuus of materialistic tests, or to engage in the miserably degrading employment of fraud-hunting and its consequent abuse, denunciation, and condemnation. This has been carried on systematically, with the design, real or ostensible, of purifying Spiritualism; while the actual and inevitable re-

sult has been to sink it to the lowest spiritual plane, to despoil it of its purity, and to cover it with almost irredeemable infamy—entirely irredeemable, indeed, unless its supporters and exponents can demonstrate, widely and forcibly, the principles which govern its phenomena, and, by securing their general recognition, establish better methods of investigation, thus avoiding those evils and abuses, an exclusive regard to which by the public has brought upon spirit-intercourse so much reproach.

Certainly, if spirit-communion is to be made ancillary to the cultivation of true spirituality—a means for the spiritual elevation of mankind and for the basis of a pure, rational religion—which, unquestionably, is its proper aim and office, the practice of it must be guided by the principles which we have here set forth; and for the attainment of this, as a special object, such methods should be applied as are best calculated to bring about this most desirable result. We cannot, consistently with any such object, enter the séance-chamber in a suspicious, dogmatic, or arrogant spirit, but with that reverence, docility, and humility which, while quickening the spiritual senses, will make us recipients of the higher influx, and attract to us those divine instrumentalities whose function it is to dispense that influx, wherever there is an earnest and sincere aspiration for the good that it bestows. In this manner we bring the religious element into a rational relation with spiritual science, each mutually cooperative, since the principles of this science, and only these, can afford the necessary rules and methods for spiritual culture, which is the end and aim of all that is of any value in religion.

Thus it will be seen, without further elaboration of this topic, how, in connection with, and in addition to, the investigation of the external manifestations of the spirit, we may pass to the inner soul-realm, where the objects of our scrutiny entirely transcend the physical senses, being cognized only by the inner light of spiritual intuition.

When we have reached this plane of investigation and study we have left a long way behind and beneath us those gross conditions and those low, earthly, selfish aims which now almost exclusively occupy the minds of so many who engage in spiritualistic study and research.

As bearing on one of the most important principles of this Report, we conclude at this time by citing the impressive words of Dr. Willis, uttered about ten years ago, as a protest against that erroneous view of scientific conditions which, since then, has proved so fertile a source of injury to the spiritual movement:

"I do not believe we have any right to approach mediums in an arrogant or dictatorial spirit, assuming them to be impostors, nor do I believe that we have a right to dictate to the spiritual world the terms and conditions upon which we will consent to receive its revelations, as if we were conferring upon it an indelicate condescension in deigning to receive the most inestimable boon that can be vouchsafed to humanity."

To this we may add a similar expression uttered about the same time by Mrs. Richmond, under spirit-control:

"We protest earnestly and emphatically against any class or body of people declaring that party a fraud beforehand, who will not submit to their particular dictation. Spiritualism is not a man-made movement. The manifestations do not come at the dictation of any human being; and no human being can justly declare under what circumstances manifestations shall take place. This is our word of protest, and we warn investigators as well as Spiritualists that the conditions for manifestations must be controlled by the spirit-world; and that, if you place yourselves in accord with them, ample satisfaction will undoubtedly be given."

The same principle was enunciated by spirit Fanny A. Conant, communicating at one of the circles of the Banner of Light a few years ago: "Go on, dear friends, and strive as far as possible to place the testing power in our hands; for by so doing we will give to you and others more than they could even ask of us."

These utterances are not cited as of authority, and we should not commend the principle they enjoin as a guide in scientific investigation, did it necessitate the abrogation or suspension, in the slightest degree, of the exercise of vigilance, critical judgment, or independent opinion on the part of the investigators, who must, of course, be always entitled to accept or reject results, requiring from the operating spirit intelligences the fullest elucidation of whatever may be doubtful or obscure, and asking that every rightful ground for suspicion or disbelief, either in the medium or in the manifestations, shall be removed, without the intervention of the investigators, or the dictation by them of the means of accomplishing this. We commend it because it is the only safe and rational principle upon which to act in order to solve the spiritual problems that confront us, and to acquire a reliable knowledge of spiritual facts, as well as to do justice to mediums, and conserve their purity, integrity, and reputation before the public. At the same time, however, we should keep careful watch over the character of the medium, as being an important element in our investigations, and condemn, as tending to prevent the attainment of truth, all excessive cupidity on his or her part, and especially a mere mercantile spirit, prompting to the prostitution of the sacred gift of mediumship to the mere purpose of money-making, or other forms of personal aggrandizement.

Respectfully submitted,
HENRY KIDDLE, } Com.
NELSON CROSS, }
E. H. BENN, }

Senator Ingalls is responsible for the statement that the public domain will not last more than twelve years longer. After that land will appreciate enormously in value, for there will be no "West" to go to where land is cheap.

The Fortieth Anniversary.

THE ANNIVERSARY IN SAN FRANCISCO.

BY J. J. MORSE.

The celebration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Advent of Modern Spiritualism was duly heeded on the Pacific coast by a noteworthy series of meetings in San Francisco, the commercial capital of the Golden State.

A series of four distinct assemblies was arranged in honor of the occasion, and while each was independent in conception and conduct of the other, all were uniformly successful and harmonious.

The first meeting was held at Odd Fellows Hall, under the direction of Mr. John Slater, the celebrated Eastern test medium, on Saturday evening, March 31st. The large hall of the Odd Fellows building was completely filled, upward of sixteen hundred persons being present, and that in spite of the fact that "two bits," i. e., twenty-five cents, was charged for admission. Mr. Slater, who has lately had a most successful season of four months in this city, made the meeting in question the occasion of the close of his present labors, so the gathering partook of a testimonial to himself on the part of his many friends, as well as the celebratory character adverted to.

The proceedings included the following programme: Piano solo (inspirational), Miss Lina Crews; vocal solo, "When the Tide Comes In" (Millard), Miss E. Beresford-Joy; imitations, John Slater; vocal solo, "In the Gloaming," Miss Florence Morse; piano solo (inspirational), Miss Lina Crews; recitation, "Woman's Mission," Miss Valerie Ricketts; vocal solo, Aria from "Dionora" (Meyerbeer), Miss E. Beresford-Joy; test séance by John Slater; vocal solo, "Thy Face," Miss Florence Morse; which was excellently accomplished by all concerned. The writer of these lines was appointed Chairman of the evening, opening the proceedings with a speech *apropos* to the spirit of the occasion. The event was a gratifying success in every respect, and will be long and pleasantly remembered by all who were fortunate enough to participate therein.

The next, in point of time, was the celebration at Metropolitan Temple by the Golden Gate Religious and Philosophical Society, with which body the present scribe is filling one of the most pleasant engagements it has ever been his lot to experience. The celebration, in this case, commenced on Sunday morning, April 1st, at 11 o'clock, and was resumed at 8 o'clock in the evening. The facts have already been recited in the BANNER, so but little more needs be said herein. That little, however, in justice, must make honorable mention of the excellent morning Anniversary address, "The Needs of the Hour," by the Society's President, William Emmette Coleman, and the address by Mrs. E. L. Watson, "The Fact We Celebrate," at the evening session. Both were full of good things, ably delivered, and fully appreciated by the immense audience present at each meeting. The writer, as Chairman in the morning, and as speaker at night, bore his share in the day's duties with apparent satisfaction to all present. Mr. M. B. Dodge, the ever efficient manager, exerted himself untiringly to ensure success, and the results more than vindicated all his labor to attain them.

The next meeting, in point of time, was the celebration by the Society of Progressive Spiritualists, at Washington Hall, held also on Sunday at 1 p. m., under the Chairmanship of Mr. S. B. Clark. Among the speakers were Hon. J. A. Collins, Dr. W. W. Mackay, J. J. Owen, editor *Golden Gate*, W. E. Coleman, Mrs. Hendee, Mrs. J. Schlesinger, editor *Carrier Dove*, the writer, and quite a number of other friends, good and true. Mr. John Slater also participated, giving tests during the session. The hall was crowded to excess, and the meeting was most enthusiastic throughout.

The final celebration was that, in the above-named hall, held by Mrs. Ada Foye, from whom there is not a more remarkable medium this side of the Rocky Mountains. Mrs. Foye gave one of her inimitable public test séances, being assisted by Mrs. Hendee and other mediums. The hall was again crowded to overflowing, and upon the writer and his family looking in about 10 p. m., after the Temple meeting had closed, it was only possible to squeeze into a corner and "peek" above a veritable sea of heads. So much has been written about Slater Foye's tests that one can only say that they continue as convincing and as astounding as ever.

Very noticeable was the spirit of harmony and good-will pervading all the above noted gatherings. Equally prominent was the desire for unity and fraternity on the days in question; very pleasant was it to see animosities and divergences for once laid aside, and something of the spirit of our beautiful philosophy brought into practical operation. Some day our brethren here will surely hold a union celebration, where, under one roof, all can congregate in peace and unity. May that 31st of March be not far distant.

There were liberal and beautiful floral displays at each meeting, contributing much to the beauty of the different platforms. The day was one of California's finest, and the respectful attention of the leading city dailies was not the least among the many causes for congratulations concerning the celebration of our Fortieth Anniversary in the good city of San Francisco.

This brief synopsis of the occasion is not presented as a "report," but is merely offered as a running comment, which may afford the readers of *THE BANNER* some slight idea of "how it was" out here, and give a wider circulation to the fact that our "Friscoans" were as mindful of the day as the good souls "back East" were.

Albany, Wis.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The Fortieth Anniversary was celebrated by the Spiritualists of Albany on Saturday evening, March 31st. The meeting was a pronounced success.

We commenced our meetings here in January, 1887, and with no outside assistance have continued them until the present time. That we have succeeded in making our influence felt is evidenced by the fact that our good Christian brethren, evidently feeling "hurt," have something to say nearly every Sunday against us and our work.

Our Anniversary meeting (as are our regular sessions) was held in Grange Hall, which for this occasion was provided with seats for two hundred, which were occupied with attentive, and, if we may judge by the applause, highly appreciative listeners. The following programme, under the direction of our efficient President,

CONNECTION WITH NEW YORK.

"French Ghosts."

In the April number of *Murray's Magazine*, London, Eng., Ashton Brand devotes eight pages to an article captioned as above, in which the traditions and "folk lore" of the Gallic land are interestingly treated of.

"Every country [says this writer] has its peculiar stories of supernatural visitations, usually termed superstitions, and ridiculed by the educated classes. Why, however, should we be ashamed of a harmless, popular superstition, when there may be something mysteriously real in the ghostly traditions found everywhere, and believed by all races of men, however different in nature and training?"

In France, notwithstanding the national brightness of humor, and the practical, prosaic, common-sense very generally found among the French, there are among the lower classes, tales as yet current, as strange as any of the weird legends of the Scotch Highlanders or Irish peasants.

After speaking of various orders of beings supposed to haunt the land, to threaten the evening wayfarer, he says each pilgrim, according to belief, "must especially beware of the 'mois noir,' or 'black month'—November—when the spirits of the dead are supposed to be as numerous in the air as the dead leaves in the byways. On the night of the Feast of All Souls (November 2d) the Bretons lay the table and light the fire, that the poor souls who leave the cold churchyard to visit their former homes may be warmed and comforted."

Most of the tales cited by this writer have the religious cast strongly noticeable in Catholic countries, but the following deal entirely with present or recent transactions:

"The strangest mystery of actual present occurrence is that belonging to the *presbytere* or rectory of St. Symphonien, not far from Avranche. Here, for several generations, strange noises have been heard, to which no amount of careful investigation has ever been able to assign a natural cause. Footsteps run up and down the passages and stairs, and no one is seen. When the present Curé, like his predecessors, is sitting in his private room reading or writing, he hears some one running along the passages, and coming to the door, which then opens, the steps quickly crossing the room to his side, when he has the particularly disagreeable sensation of an invisible being standing near him. Nothing is said or done, the steps recede, and the door closes.

The same strange incidents are noted in the life of the Curé d'Ar, a contemporary humble village priest, whose extraordinary virtues were known far beyond the surrounding country, and finally so celebrated that it became the fashion for the fine gentlemen and fair ladies of the second Empire to go to Ars in order to seek his counsel in their difficult cases. Crowds of visitors from all parts of France besieged the poor *presbytere* and rude village church to obtain an interview, if only for a few minutes; and all left him wondering at the wisdom and extraordinary spiritual lights so possessed by the simplest and most unassuming of men, who led a life of absolute poverty, denying himself all comforts, and even necessities, to give to those in need. But here again were strange visitations, known to all around. The windows and doors of the *presbytere* were violently shaken, strange sounds were heard, and it was even reported that in the morning there were signs of a violent storm, though with unknown powers. But of this Curé never spoke, only answering inquiries by saying:

"Yes, they were very noisy last night."

Who, no one dared to ask. . . . Before concluding this series of articles, one of an incident which, according to our appreciation, though not the most terrifying, is yet the most extraordinary and inexplicable of all; having occurred in our own time to a gentleman well known in the scientific world of Paris, whose name we have ourselves met in society, and whose veracity is unimpaired; the late M. B—y, one of the editors of the *Annales Scientifiques*, a man then in the prime of life, constantly engaged in scientific research, and most unlikely, from his pursuits and frame of mind, to give way to undue credulity or freaks of imagination. The story, which he is willing to relate, was, however, told by himself to mutual friend, through whom it became known to the writer of these pages.

M. B—y stated that he had another friend, who from boyhood had been dear to him as a brother, and who went to Algeria as a colonist, in the more inland part of the country. M. B—y had been for some time without news of him, but felt no anxiety, and was not particularly thinking of him, when one night, while sitting writing in his private room, to his joyful surprise he saw the traveler come in, wearing a strange dress which he had never seen before. He started up and hastened to meet the visitor, heartily extending his hands, when to his astonishment he drew back, saying:

"Do not touch me; I am dead!" ("Ne me touchez pas—je suis mort!"); adding that he had come to Algeria to prepare his mother's funeral, that the shock might not be too sudden.

The whole was so unlike the conventional "ghost" that M. B—y, according to his own statement, felt no more fear than if he had seen his friend under the most ordinary circumstances. The apparition then took his place in an arm-chair opposite to the one occupied by M. B—y, and the two conversed freely as in former times; the one still belonging to this world, receiving the assurance of the other that he was "very happy" (*très heureux*), but that he was not permitted to stay here. The strange visitor then told him that he would come again two days later, at the same hour, and disappeared.

When he found himself alone, the awe and terror which had been absent from the interview, came in full force, and overpowered M. B—y, who then braced himself by seeking every kind of natural explanation of the wonderful sight he had witnessed. Hallucination—a passing fit of delirium—a delusive dream, everything seemed more satisfactory than the reality. Finally he determined not to cause perhaps needless affliction to his friend's mother, and connected with him by writing to her, as he had been requested to do.

When the time came for the apparition to return, he prepared a large fire, placed an arm-chair in readiness for his visitor; then distributed lights in the room, so as to give it festive brilliancy. At the exact hour the apparition appeared before him—but grave and sad; mildly but earnestly reproaching him for not having written to his mother, and entreating him to do so without loss of time, or she would hear the sad news too suddenly from other sources. M. B—y promised to atone for the omission, and again the friends conversed. M. B—y remained perfectly calm and without fear. The visitor then bade him farewell, saying that he should see him no more on this earth; and as M. B—y gazed he saw him gradually disappear. Again he was seized with intense awe and terror; but this time he did not hesitate to write to his friend's mother, saying that circumstances which had come to his knowledge led him to entertain serious fears as to the safety of her son. Scarcely had the poor mother received this first intimation of danger when the official communication reached her announcing the sad event as having taken place on the very day when M. B—y had first seen his mysterious visitor, and enclosing a photograph representing his friend in the strange dress which had surprised him, and which he found was the one adopted by colonists in that distant part of Algeria."

A man is a great bundle of tools. He is born into this life without the knowledge of how to use them. Education is the process of learning their use, and dangers and troubles are whetstones with which to keep them sharp.—Ez.

Passed to Spirit-Life.

From her home, in Stratford, Vt., April 17th, 1888, Mrs. Alvira Roberts, aged 60 years.

On her sixty-ninth birthday our dear mother has left us and gone to live in the loved ones in the bright beyond. For the last twenty years her life was an earnest spiritual. We know it is well with her ardent soul. M. R.

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