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PROPHETESS:

BEING THE LIFE,

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL,

OF

MRS. B——,

OTHERWISE KNOWN AS MADAME ROCKWELL,

THE FORTUNE-TELLER,

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS AT BARNUM'S MUSEUM, IN THE  
CITY OF NEW YORK.

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## THE FORTUNE-TELLER OF THE MUSEUM.

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IN fulfilment of destiny, I found myself in the picture-gallery of Barnum's museum, at New York, standing before a low glass door, whereon a placard hung, whose staring capitals proclaimed to the curious and credulous that within there any one, so choosing, might have revealed to him, or her, any particular fact in the past, present, or future—all for the extremely reasonable price of twenty-five cents.

Leaning for a little while against the railing of the gallery, and staring back again at those staring capitals, I deliberated about making the investment they proposed. While I thus deliberated, the letters grew still larger to view, and grander and more grand to my mind arose the ideas of PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE—and forgetting the sights around, and unheeding the heavy voice of the English giant in the room below, who repeatedly assured the crowd that his autobiography, of which he had still a few copies remaining on hand, was well worth reading, and dog-cheap at a shilling—I had a revery.

The PAST—ay, the dead and confined past, who may reveal it?—who lift up the mouldy lid, or roll away the stone from the mossy sepulchre's mouth? How far back into eternity did the time past extend? What was transacted in the days that are gone? Who existed, who acted, and who suffered therein? What principles or ideas, living and moving in those days, now lie buried in the dust of ages? Can science inform us?—not *our* science, for she is but the child of the old age of time. Can history tell? History!—alas, her scroll is too dirty with the dust of disputation, too much torn by the fingers of faction, too much blurred with the tears and blotted with the blood of truth's millions of martyrs, too much interpolated, expurgated, falsified, too insufficient, and very contradictory. No, whether lisping in primitive fable or drivelling in newspaper news, his-



tory must be confessed a sorry revelator of either ancient or modern matters and things. Can fame answer?—fame!—whose vocation is to set good men's gravestones over bad men's graves, while her trumpet still lies with a thousand false notes!—no, not fame.

Surely, if this woman in the little low room can truly tell one about the past alone, a quarter were well expended for the information;—yes, and another shilling along with it.

Then for the PRESENT, the breathing present, the busy, moving, tramping, crowding, rushing present, with its warm blood, strong sinews, firm flesh, and quick breath!—the palpable present, whose living forms stand all in the foreground, in the full daylight of to-day, straight before the eye, right under the nose, and close to the immediate touch! Who shall tell how much of the present is white truth, and how much a black lie? Sorry am I to say, not the savans or demi-savans of the lecture-room, nor the preachers in the pulpits, nor the orators in Congress, nor the spouters in the caucus, nor—most lamentable of all—the “Times,” nor “Presse,” the “Sun,” “Tribune,” nor “Herald.”

Now I am bold to say, of this madam “what’s-her-name,” who deals here in a small way in the line of past and present, that if her wares be but genuine, the prices she puts on them are certainly most moderate.

But she advertises for the FUTURE also. The future, that is not yet!—the unformed, unborn child of the present and past, in whose nostrils the breath of life has not been breathed, and whose very soul is still in abeyance—whose house is a castle of air, and whose home is the land of dreams! The illimitable future! Who shall take its altitudes and bearings—its latitudes and longitudes? The doubtful future!—whose truest scriptures are the ever-opposite promises of hope and bodings of fear! Who will answer for it, or who dare even to question it? The dim and misty, the dark and impenetrable future! What keen eye may pierce its vast abyss, or what bright light reveal its hidden things? From the museum’s roof, now the fierce Drummond light is throwing its intense and visible stream of rays full in the face of the night sky, paling the stars in the contrast, and well nigh extinguishing the little winking, twinkling, gas-burners below—yet this Drummond light can not illuminate our path one inch into the future. Realm of the to-be!—is there a clue to your labyrinths, a chart to your oceans, or a pathway on your deserts? Are you subject to laws or decrees, limits or boundaries? Has the future its *word*, that may be spoken and heard, written and read, by any under God?—or

has the Omniscient feared to burst such secret to the brightest of the angels, and folded the unuttered idea in his holy breast?

Yet here, as plain as print, it reads, that Madam Rockwell, the fortune-teller, will expose the future to the gaze of astonished men, for barely two shillings the peep. Impossible!—it would require an infinitude of wisdom, neither more nor less, and we human wretches are *not* infinite in aught save that conceit which sometimes shakes the upper spheres with angelic laughter. In all beside we are finite, very. No, no, she may tell the past, but not the unbidden future, that comes whether we call or not, bringing in its long train many most unwelcome guests;—not the abrupt future, that enters without knocking and departs without good-by;—not the inexorable future, whose locomotive wheel crushes, without exception, all sleepers on the track of time, shedding no tears for widow or orphan;—not the rich and powerful future, that gives life and death, disease and health, wealth and want, wo and joy, that abases pride and exalts humility, and bears in its cornucopia the flowers of time with the fruits of eternity;—no, not the future,——

Here the little door opened, and there came out one whose round and satisfied face showed she had been promised the lover of her heart.

I entered the cell, and stood before a woman rather this side of forty, thin and pale, simply dressed, of unpretending air, and without the least exterior sign of imposture. And as I looked in her mild and pleasant face, I could not help a twinge of remorse, for I had entered with my mind fully prepared to meet and detect an impostor, and a barefaced one too. At her bidding, I took a seat, and reached out my hand. Taking it in her own, and looking with fixed eyes right into the centre of its palm (not scanning the lines, as I had expected), she proceeded to business, and with a slender, but rapid and very earnest voice run on with the story of my past and present life;—and every word of it was true—as sure as that I live, it was entirely true!

She went on—the wonderful woman!—and while she hurried along, with business-like briskness, rapidly descending the scale of the past, pausing a moment on the plane of the present, and then, without falter, plunging into the abyss of the future, I confess that the mind of her astonished listener did not hold back, to weigh with nice scruples the probabilities of the facts having been learned by her through chance, or of her being able to divine by guess-work, the innermost and unwhispered thought; nor did it stop the way to calculate the profit and loss of a wholesale system of spies employed to gather an indis-



criminate mass of unimportant facts to be afterward retailed out by the two shillings' worth. It had far other business to do, in holding its rational balance against the in-rushing flood of wonder and the whirlwind of conviction that scattered skepticism to the clouds. It needed all the mind's activity to keep pace with the rapidly-told tale, and its greatest capacity failed to contain the multitudinous thoughts crowding upon it in that brief space of time—just as is sometimes experienced in moments of critical danger, when the ideas of years are crowded within minutes, and seconds give birth to long ratiocinations;—and thus the thoughts then came.

By some inconceivable power, this woman surely tells the truth concerning my present and my past; and that power can be no less than supernatural. This I do believe. Shall I go further, and, yielding to her full pretensions, acknowledge she can see the future also?—or must she be esteemed true half way and false for the rest—half veritable seer and half liar and cheat? Concerning what has been and is, she has conquered the impossible; has she anything harder to do in achieving what remains? Why not believe the whole? Has she not given me a sign?—and though signs be not always accorded to a wicked and adulterous generation, yet when they do come, the rational mind may not reject them. And then came back the nearly-forgotten story of Cræsus and the Delphic oracle, and I remembered how that king, in order to test the different oracles, set himself to the unguessable and unkingly employment of stewing a turtle and a lamb in a brass kettle, and had all the oracles of Lybia and Greece simultaneously inquired of concerning what he was about, and how all failed but the Delphic woman, who exclaimed—

“I count the sand, I measure out the sea;  
The silent and the dumb are heard by me.  
E'en now the odors to my sense that rise,  
A tortoise boiling with a lamb supplies,  
Where brass below and brass above it lies.”

and how this sign (a mere nothing to what was then being afforded me) had justly inspired the faith of Cræsus in the oracle's subsequent prediction that the Persian mule would prove more than his match—which prediction was fully accomplished when Cyrus conquered him. And thinking of this, I said to myself, “Yes, I will believe her, for the present, at least, or my brain will rend with the war of irreconcilable ideas; so to save my sanity and avoid a headache, I will for the present swallow the whole, without cavil or doubt. Yes, the future has indeed its



laws, its gospel and revelations. Its *word*, the word of God, does come to man, and Jeremiah lied not when he said so. It is breathed to the prophets, and by the prophets spoken to men—heard in the voice of Miriam and the seers of old Israel—coming to Ezekiel by the river of Chebar, to the Baptist in the wilderness, and to the Evangelist in his dream. The prophets *were* prophets; the soothsayers, sayers of sooth; and the witch of Endor, I don't doubt, was a decent and respectable woman.

The seers, who retired from the view of men to live in caves and deserts, were not companionless there, but, in these seeming solitudes, conversed with visitants from the inner spheres, and of the deep wisdom they thus learned, imparted to men—all that men were "able to receive." To the wizards of Scottish hills, standing on the verge of this life, the light of the next has been lent; *they* were honest, and we scoffers have been fools. And the humble fortune-tellers—those "wise women" who, in all generations, have been compensated for the scorn of the learned with the trusting faith of the wiser multitude, and who, in modern times advancing further, have challenged the attention of the highest, creating so much wonder, but so little permanent belief,—these poor fortune-tellers were and are the recipients of a wisdom with which all the poor exterior knowledge of the most learned is not to be compared, and which has no name short of *INSPIRATION*.

And this slender and pale-visaged woman with stuff-dress and plaid shawl, whose low-sounding words are making a strong man to tremble as an infant, and whose quiet utterings are producing on the surface of her auditor a perspiration that it would need the most approved preparations of antimony combined with thick blankets to produce;—this woman, who sits here in the upper room of a museum, rocking to and fro in a Boston rocking-chair, and for the bread of herself and family, following, in a business-like way, the poor trade of fortune-teller;—this woman is a *PROPHETESS*, whom Jeremiah would have honored and loved—a sister of Miriam—a daughter of Elijah. The wisdom of the higher worlds is on her thin lips; her mild eyes, with their reddened lids, are looking beyond the bounds of time and space, and her frail organization, that a single breath of the material wind seems enough to destroy, is now, even now, encountering the dread things of the invisible world.

The conclusion of these reflections found me walking rapidly up Broadway, two miles beyond the museum, with the cold night-air of December reducing the temperature of my brain,



and the rattling noises of the natural world recalling me to my common senses. In truth, I was greatly moved by the interview with the mysterious woman, and it needed a long walk to restore me. I turned and went home, to dream of wizards and witches.

The morning found me again at the fortune-teller's cell, where I completed my inquiries relating to my own life. The following day I thought of something further to ask about, and the next and the next still found me there; and it was thus, and in researches respecting her, that most of my visit to the city was occupied. The inquiries which I diligently made, more than justified my first impressions in her favor; nearly all I spoke with had something new and startling to tell concerning the fulfilment of her predictions, and the great wonder was, that I, though living far distant, and of retired habits, had not before heard of the wonderful Madam Rockwell.

But it is to be observed that, saving that her name appeared in the museum advertisements, she had never been brought forward in the newspapers, for, having always had more visitors than she could conveniently attend to, there had been no need to put in play any of that well-known enginery by which public opinion is manufactured in favor of those who need it. Herself a reader of destiny, she had never resisted the decree, long before shown to her, by which a portion of her career was allotted to this kind of life, and she has been without friends who were disposed to make exertions for bringing her properly before the public. But while passively yielding to this passive fate, she had full well known that it was in due time to change. The time *had* become due.

I remember that at the close of my first call she intimated that I was the one destined to write her life, and that during the second one she renewed the subject; but it was only in a subsequent conversation, in which she freely yielded to my cautiously-expressed curiosity and gave me a sketch of her career, that she seriously charged me with writing her biography, and told me that at the moment I first stepped over her door-sill she had recognised the author of her book, in the very features in which, years ago, he had been shown in a vision. Thus honored by one who could not have heard whether I could write or not, and thus commissioned through lips by which Fate herself spoke, I could but obey.

In the arrangement of the book, I shall follow the order in which the thoughts arose in my mind, as the materials were dictated by her. Times and places will be correctly given, but not



her true name. This reservation is made out of regard to the feelings of her family, who, she thinks (groundlessly perhaps), would dislike any greater publicity than is really requisite; but the day is not distant when her richest relatives will be glad to avow connection with her whom the world shall acknowledge to be *at the least* one of the rarest manifestations of the spirit of prophecy since the days of the sacred seers.

"O Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee!" O Barnum, of the Museum, that catchest the prophets, and cagest them in glass cases, to be exhibited for the small change that perisheth! O liberal and enlightened community of this nineteenth century, now approaching its focus and zenith in this year 1849, who, when Barnum has fairly caught and caged a prophetess, come and pelt her with twenty-five-cent pieces in lieu of stones, which were the ruder, but hardly wickeder, missiles used in Stephen's case!—where do you expect to go to when you die?

In the dreamy East and the far-distant time, such as possessed any spark of this woman's gift were recognised, believed in, and received. Kings came to consult them, and multitudes thronged from afar, bringing the incense of a trusting faith, and rendering the homage of an implicit obedience. Of the seers so revered, this one would then and there have been accounted a queen and a star; a temple would have risen around her cell, and her oracles would have resounded through the nations. How differently is she treated here and now!

There she sits, in that museum-box, unrecognised by the world. From a thousand pulpits are twinkling the farthing candles and rushlights of disputatious theology, while millions account themselves brightened and gladdened in the rays. Do those millions know that there is one near by who converses at will with the spirits of the dead, and brings the *latest* intelligence from the abodes of the past-away?

There she sits, unnoticed and unknown to science. The scientific, who go about star-gazing for new masses of nebulae, and fretting their brains in nicely calculating the comings and goings of baby-comets—whom it were the part of wisdom to let pass by in silent contempt;—the scientific, still stumbling among displaced strata, or grinding sharp their prying noses in the search for new fossil minims, burning their fingers in experimenting for new chemical combinations, and spoiling their own tempers and deafening our ears with disputing over them when discovered;—do *they* know, that high up in that museum there sits the professor of a science great beyond comparison, shedding down on



the fields of their petty research a blaze of light that would obliterate to the sense all those fine lines and nice shades of distinction wherewith they are now so busy, and opening *up* into the very arcana of creation?

Poh! The scientific crowd are humbugs. A dog chasing his tail all day in the sunlight might teach them wisdom.

No, the scientific know her not. They do not wish to know her. They would feel exceedingly grieved at being forced to know her, for the learning she brings is too deep for their shallowness, and the things whereof she treats, too large for their capacities. They have read how that a beaten path is safest, and they exceedingly love the beaten path. When a great truth, bursting from some humble source—humble as the ground whence the flowers spring—flashes too glaringly on their astonished perceptions, like frightened ostriches, they fly to hide their heads in the sands of conservatism, where they skulk until the new discovery finds *them* out, and not *they* it.

Those who have read will know, that from the very earliest days, and through all times, the conservators of science have continued to encounter the wonders of the supernatural world, but have always refused to examine them, and sedulously denied their existence;—and why? The phenomena were surely startling enough to arouse attention, and (now I bethink me of it) there was a relationship and similarity between them that invited scientific inquiry. But the truth is, such phenomena do not *fit* in to any of our philosophers' systems; and they love their systems, they do. In order to learn some things, we must become as little children. Now respectable philosophers do not like to become as little children. Sages don't admire to wear the juvenile bib and tucker. And so when they have occasionally met full in the face grand facts of this sort, they have turned their backs on them and gone other ways, to potter among little things.

And the theologians,—they have devoted too much of their valuable time in mastering the most orthodox expositions of dead and accomplished prophecies and the significations of old miracles, to afford attention to new prophecies or new wonders. And so the pious and the wise ones unite in stoning all who are "sent unto" them with things or thoughts too new or strange. How miserably would Christ and his apostles have fared in their hands!

Verily, verily, when I remember how the unlearned have in every age received the wise ones whom the learned have rejected, my respect increases for "the intelligence of the masses."



There she sits—that woman of the far vision!—without respectability in the world, following a calling that is contemned;—a fortune-teller;—one of those whom common consent has hitherto placed in the pillory of contempt, to be pelted with the brick-bats of unbelief, the stale cabbages of ridicule, and the dead kittens of persecution. There she is, cooped in a glass case in the upper chamber of a museum, to be shown like those wax-figures—*exhibited*, in company with stuffed bears and hyenas, with defunct alligators and living monkeys, with three-headed calves, giants, and dwarfs, and all manner of nature's short-comings and over-doings. God help her! God does help her.

There she patiently sits, enduring all those things where-with the exercise of her supernal calling is recompensed by a hard-hearted world. Patiently and meekly, day by day, she carries on her business there, and does her best to satisfy the "customers" who call. Meekly she seeks to appease their anger when dissatisfied with the portion of good things to come conscientiously meted out to them, and bears with patience their real or pretended doubts or disbelief. She is offended at no ridicule, and deprecates no scorn. Seeing and searching into the interiors of all things, she knows how to disregard the flimsiness of exterior covering, and, with the society of the centuries, bygone and to come, she can sustain, unrepining, any present neglect or contumely. There she sits, employing her wondrous power in all such mean or little matters as are required by the motley crowd of visitors. Very well knowing what she is, she yet does well what she does; and the eyes which can look in the face of Heaven, she turns, for a fee, to peer after stolen goods, among pawn-brokers' shelves, or to seek information of the love-destinies of love-sick housemaids.

There she sits, persistently telling to all comers the story of their fate, and, with whatever motives they come, or degree of respect or disrespect they listen, steadily proceeds to the end with what she has to say. She gives no glance at the visitor's expression, to guess if she be on the true scent or not, nor does she turn her eyes to the right or left, but straightforwardly goes on with her search and exposition. She, herself, perfectly well knows if she is what she claims to be, and, whether looking into the questioner's palm, or gazing down at the floor, knows, beyond all doubt, whether it is the page of destiny she is perusing, or merely the creases of the cuticle, or the worn and faded figures of the three-and-sixpenny carpet.

Yes, she has confidence in her own powers, and sincerely



believes in herself, a thing most desirable for all humbugs, if they could only possess it; how much easier in such case, could they humbug the enlightened public, who so readily receive imposters and so ruthlessly slay the prophets! Count Cagliostro, in his day, made some noise in the world, but he suffered a serious inconvenience for want of belief in that of which he persuaded others. No man in the world knows better how to humbug us than our popular friend, P. T. Barnum, but he knows it. Joice Heth, the black old Virginia hag, whom, some years since, he introduced to a patriotic people as the nurse of Washington, and out of whose marrowless bones he made so much excitement and consequent dollars, how much better would *she* have played her part could she have but possessed an abiding faith in her own antiquity! Cagliostro knew he was a cheat, Joice Heth was aware she was telling wicked lies about her former intimate relations with the father of his country—and this, too, at a time of life when she should have been preparing her miserable soul for another world; and that mermaid whom Barnum called into being out of the simple elements of a pickled codfish and an embalmed monkey, must have known all the while it was being exhibited (if it knew anything), that it was, in the language of all the small Irish orators of the day, “a cheat, a delusion, and a snare.” The mermaid, poor thing! must have lost all confidence in itself before being born.

Patiently and persistently this woman follows her calling and does her duty, as she conceives it, by both high and low. Let who will doubt, she believes. Let who will laugh, she is serious. Let who can despise her, she respects herself.

And there she sits, and there for years she has sat, plying her trade, with a serious, simple, honest, and earnest demeanor, that is stamped with truth, and with a real and unpretending dignity which it were shameful not to appreciate and respect.

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#### A NICE LITTLE GIRL.

In the valley of the Farmington river, near the source of that stream, and at the foot of a high hill, we see a brown cottage-built farmhouse. The day is softly sweet, and all those sights, sounds, and breathings, which properly belong to a Connecticut farmhouse and its appurtenances in the summer season of the year and the forenoon of the day, are hovering there—and nothing more. It is a common scene. The cow in the clover-

lot is as sleepy and comfortable, and the bees around her are as busy in securing their share of the honey-rich red blossoms,—the sun-flowers of the garden are as large and yellow, and the morning-glories of the stoop as wilted and drooping,—the dog is as good-natured, and the cat, lying "*perdu*" for birds, beneath the old quince-tree, as seemingly harmless and as innately cruel—the tin pans and pails on the bench shine as brightly—the hens cackle as triumphantly, while the barnyard buildings return the echoes of that peculiar voice of home as loudly and distinctly,—and the atmosphere by which all these are borne to the sense is as pleasant and refreshing—as is usual to the time, place, and circumstances. The sensations of the scene are, to the city wanderer who carries his heart with him on his travels, a rare and exquisite luxury, and to those whose every-day portion they may be, an accustomed but real comfort of home.

In the door of the house there stands a little girl, who, holding back her hair, is looking out and up at the high blue and white curtains of the sky, while her busy brain conjectures what they may be made of. She is the child of the house and of the scene. It all belongs to her, and she to it. She is the monitor of the dog and cat, the pet of the cow, and the almoner of yellow corn to the hens—being in fact the sole proprietress of that large white one which cackles now so clearly. The bees respect her, and she fears them not, for she is innocent of evil intent toward their community. She it is who plants and waters the flowers. She rises with the opening of the morning-glories, and when the sun-flowers bow their heads in obeisance to the sinking orb of their worship, she retires to her rest. And all of these give joy to her glad little heart, and seem to love with an undivided love the only child they know.

It is a beautiful little girl, with very fair face and serene forehead, but yet in no way distinguished from many a beautiful child of that happy region, except that, in spite of the healthy air, her cheeks are slightly pale, and her eyes have a strange expression, which the neighbors sometimes notice in her presence, causing her often to wish that her eyes were not strange-looking, but were like the eyes of the other girls.

It is a good little girl. At morning and evening she says her prayers, without hurry or omission. Through the snows of winter as well as over the green by-ways of summer, she goes punctually to school, where she makes commendable progress in Webster's spelling-book, and eats enormous nut-cakes and red-cheeked apples at the nooning hour,—and where too, be it truly said, her most unhappy hours are endured—thanks to bad



benches, bad air, long sessions, and monotonous occupation (or want of occupation). On Sundays she is never backward with her Sunday-school lesson, and is fast learning the testament by heart—rote, I mean; and during all the long sermons on theological polemics which it is her privilege to hear, she dutifully chews fennel-seed and calamus to keep herself awake; the sleep-moving “tenthly,” however, often overcoming the anti-somnolent aromatics, so that she can only nod a drowsy assent to certain abstruse propositions concerning free will and election, of which none of the congregation have the least doubt—or the most remote comprehension.

It is a happy little girl. All duties faithfully performed, her soul is at peace with God,—cherished with conscientious care, her mind is tranquil and contented, while, with much running and jumping, eating plenty of good bread and sweet butter, and breathing freely the pure air of the hills, her light frame is healthy and strong. Care avoids her little pillow, and no thorns of conscience invade her rest. She can run all day without fatigue, sleep all night without dreams, and eat green apples without sign of indigestion. Is not this happiness?

And here and thus she spends her days, which seem so long that to-morrow is an idea vague and dim, it is so distant, and weeks so interminable that neither her hopes nor schemes extend from one Saturday afternoon unto another. The world she dwells in is little enough; and yet how large and real it is to her! The rim of hills which enclose the valley are its boundaries, and yet beyond those hill-tops neither her curiosity nor her fancy dare to soar. Brothers and sisters she has, but they are not with her. Years ago, and before the separation could be felt, she was adopted by a good childless couple, and removed from a large circle of little ones that surrounded the lap of a newly-widowed mother; and from that time she has known hardly anything of her own family.

Rigidly and dutifully the step-mother performs her trust; and in the strictness of Connecticut education, morality, and piety, Connecticut maxims and habits, in the plenitude of Connecticut comforts and homely kindness, the girl is the recipient of a portion rich beyond the calculations of money.

Her companions are few, but she does not care for company. She loves to be alone, and is noticed for her solitary fancies. The homestead trees, with their benignant branches, the grassy hillsides of the shady glen, the little old brook that dug out the glen and gives life and health to the great tree growing in it, the primeval rocks of the river's bank, on whose rude and moss-

grown breasts her tender bosom often rests, while for hours she looks down into the mysterious silvery chambers of the river's channel, the breeze that comes down the valley to kiss her cheek and play with her curls, the confident birds, that perch close to her ear, and there sing their newest songs, the untterrified squirrels, that in her safe presence frolic with unmolested enjoyment, the skies, in whose face she looks when she wants new thoughts, and from whose light her mind is irradiated with delightful fancies—*these* are her brothers and sisters, her pleasant playmates, and her safe companions.

And within the circumscribed limits of her little-great world, the current of her young life so smoothly and so slowly moves, that, like a hill-encircled lake, wherein the waters of a river repose awhile, it seems as if its home were found.

And thus she is living out her childhood. This sequestered dwelling and these good foresters, these sober occupations and simple but sufficient pleasures, these goodly and godly preachings and teachings, these uncontaminating companionships, these budding moments and flowering hours of sweetened solitude, these long, full years of unimpassioned existence, these scenes of soft beauty and bright healthfulness—*these* redeem from pain or sinful stain her childhood's time.

Meanwhile, on the village clock the fingers of fate are steadily advancing, and long and replete with life as seem the moving hours, the years roll evenly onward.

Look at her, and find her worth contemplating! Look to and fro on the face of the earth—look up and down the scale of time, and round about your circle of acquaintance, and say if you can find any earthly thing more precious than just such a little girl, so reared as this! In the days of human sacrifice, how unblemished and fit a subject for killing and roasting. But does not Moloch yet live and receive presents? What shall we call the proceeding when pure and gentle children having, under such select influences, grown into pure and beautiful maidens, while yet the best innocence of childhood lingers to mingle with the incoming love-power of womanhood, they are delivered over, bound hand and foot in the bonds of matrimony, into the hands of harsh and hard men, vile and brutish men, drunken and drivelling men, to be for life-long their faithful and obedient wives?



## THE FIRST MANIFESTATIONS.

MEANWHILE, and as with increasing years her organization was being duly and gradually developed, there was arising and growing within her spirit the light of a supernatural sense; a sense which, though possibly in some degree existing in all, yet, has hitherto been so slightly manifested, save in rare and exceptional organizations, that the term supernatural may well apply. I mean the sense of spiritual vision of things past, present, and future. But its progress in the life of the little maid was slow, and but slightly indicated, for it awaited the full growth of her physical nature before being called to assume the lead and control of all other senses and faculties, as we shall see afterward to happen. There were, however, some slight indications of the prophetic sense, even at a very early age. The first of these were simple *impressions*, kindred to those presentiments of which very few are entirely devoid, however they may be disregarded. These impressions came without spiritual sign or word, and consisted merely in the *opinion*—how or why arrived at not being known, but none the less distinctly and firmly formed—that such and such events would happen. For instance, she would, when no older than about seven years, say to her foster-mother that on that day, at a certain hour, certain visitors (naming them), would come. When asked how she knew this or why she said so, the only answer would be that she did not know *how* she knew it, but that she *knew it*. And as these little bits of prediction never failed of accomplishment, the good woman finally began to have faith in them.

There was also a strange propensity to know the future, a *desire* foreshowing the *power*, according to a well-known law. It was, as she insists, long before she heard of the mystery of tea-leaves in an inverted teacup, as a means of augury, that she was made to feel many sharp reproofs, and even boxes on the ears, for a trick she had of stealthily going to the cupboard and pouring out tea into a cup, which she would then turn down and steadfastly look in, in vain search, *how* she knew not, for she knew not *what*.

Now it is difficult, even for one who is prepared to assent to all Mrs. B.'s claims, to believe that she can be correct in thinking that when she performed this teacup trick, she was really ignorant that it had ever been practised before. An author disposed to theorize, might here say, that no greater stretch of faith is required to believe that tea-leaves, after having served the purpose for which they have been decocted, become leaves of the



book of fate, than to credit the existence of the sense of supernatural foresight in any degree. He might mention too, that tea itself is a potent means of inspiration, instance the cases of many great geniuses who have written powerfully or spoken eloquently under its effects—and plausibly argue that occult properties may well lie in these leaflets from a celestial land, culled, as they are, at prescribed seasons of the moon, and that in their shapes and marshallings on the sides of a moist cup, a wise import may lie for those wise enough to read it; and so insist that the reader shall swallow the grounds of this belief without further cavil. But it is far from my intent to theorize at all, but only carefully to gather facts on this new subject of human investigation, knowing that theories have, since Bacon's time as well as before, always too rapidly outrun the experiences on which alone they can be properly based. I will, however, here give a simple hint, that though seers may seem to see their sights in tea-leaves, cards, the inwards of animals, or other objects, yet the only office these substances serve is, being fixedly looked at, to *concentrate the mind*, more requisite, probably, in the exercise of spiritual vision than in any other labor imposed on the mind; and this I think the sequel will show.

When about twelve years old, our little girl began to have impressions of a vaguer kind than the others, but of more marked effect on herself. These were intensely painful presentiments of some impending trouble, of the nature of which, however, she would know nothing. Such moods of melancholy were often very violent, and quite disproportionate to the events which they portended. Avoiding all companionship or commiseration, she would all alone, seek that relief for her intense agitation and gloom, which only outbursting sobs and freely flowing tears could give. These paroxysms, sometimes continuing for three or four days, would then subside, and all seem bright again, until the presently coming affliction would verify the foreboding, which had, however, in advance, robbed it of its sting. On the other hand she would, on the eve of some pleasant event, become strangely elated, with as complete a confirmation in the end as the other cases showed. These affections, particularly of the melancholy sort, have continued down to the present time, of late, however, abating in acuteness and frequency.

At other times she would see, as if showing themselves to her natural sight, *signs* and *representations*, such as now compose her visions, but which perhaps, because of themselves vague or incomplete, perhaps because her faculty to read their meaning, though ever so plainly appearing, was yet undeveloped,



perhaps because she had not yet received those instructions and exercises in the mysteries of prophecy, to the recounting of which will be devoted the most important portion of this book—were then as meaningless to her senses as would be a printed page to one never taught to read. These appearances probably represented the story of her future troubles, and were therefore kindly kept dark to the child whom it could not benefit to be prematurely informed of them. It can do no good to the little girl to know of the bride's blighted hopes, the wife's heart-sickening trials, the mother's painful endurings, wasting efforts and rack-ing cares, with all the pains and penalties of a weak woman struggling with a strong and hard world, or of the cruel ways contrived to torture her through the strongest and best affections of her nature.

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#### THE WOMAN.

THE time arrived for her to leave the roof of her secluded childhood, and enter on the thorny path of a woman's real life. Under her foster-mother's close guardianship she had been kept in almost entire seclusion up to the age of eighteen, being continued at school till sixteen, and not allowed for the rest of the time to "see company," as the rustic phrase goes. At eighteen, she bid good-by to her foster father and mother and went to reside with a married brother who offered her a home, and with whom she remained for about a year. Then she removed to Hartford, where, three years later, she was married, and became Mrs. B.

Never mind we the story of the eight following years ;—it is an old and common one, far too common. At the end of that time she was left, "to get along" with three young children on her hands. The orphan asylum took one, while she provided for the other two. She went and lived at the village of Cabotville, near Springfield, Massachusetts, for three years more ; then returned to Hartford, to remain a year longer and until she was, near five years since, appropriated as one of the curiosities of the "American Museum."

These events of her outward life are hurried over, because the object of this book is to relate her inner life, and not to claim the reader's time for mere matters of private history, which as yet the public are little or nothing interested in.

Be it sufficient to say that the years so quickly gone over were

all round, solid years, full of suffering, furrowed with cares, and fruitful of those experiences which can only come of much tribulation, but which were most essential fully to form the character of a prophetess.

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#### THE INDIAN DOCTOR.

IN the streets of Hartford the boys are staring and pointing at him, as with negligent and dirty dress, and no single outward sign of the respectable, except a composed and dignified air, he bears his little medicine-chest along, and tramps upon his vagrant circuit;—if it were winter-time, he would be a subject for snow-balls. He is called “The Indian Doctor,” but he belongs to no faculty or medical society, being strictly an “irregular,” and making it his regular business to cure sufferers who have been pronounced incurable by all the rules of regular physic. Nor has he other fellowship or diploma than the blessings of numberless of these cast-off patients of physicians most regular and respectable. His wide range of practice extends through several adjacent states, where there are thousands, knowing him only through his good deeds, who will read with pleasure all that is written here concerning the slovenly, skilful, and most mysterious “Indian doctor.”

He is in the vigor of life, six feet high, and well-proportioned. No half-breed he;—his veins swell with the unadulterated blood of the first lords of the soil. In mental qualities he is a remarkable man. His fine and strong mind is stored with the sciences of civilization, and he brings to bear, in his vocation, all that the latest teachers of anatomy, physiology, and therapeutics, can impart, while to the botany of the books he joins the results of actual research among the unpagged leaves of nature, aided by the unwritten lore of old Indian tradition, and illumined with that instinctive knowledge of the properties of plants which Heaven only accords to wild beasts and wild men. He despises no means of learning, even if it comes from the darkened mind of the white man, for the wilderness of undiscovered nature is still a wide one.

But more than this. The Indian is a prophet and a “*medicine man*,” in the Indian sense. He has that same spiritual vision and prescience, by whose inspiration his forerunners, unaided with any written revelation, gave religious guidance and wise civil polity to the tribes which held the virginal continent



in exclusive dominion, and all quietly among themselves quarrelled for its hunting-grounds, in those far-back days when the white races which plough it now were howling savages in the Scandinavian wilderness. He is of the sacred line of those who, in much later times, when their cotemporary Daniel was having visions concerning the troubles of Pius the Ninth, plainly foresaw and foretold the coming of Columbus, while the confident nations of the Mississippi derided with scorn the prophesy concerning a race of white-skinned men who were to rise from the stormy ocean of the farthest east, and with fire-arrows and fire-water utterly destroy the red people. And the prophets would then, doubtless, wax wroth with the unbelieving scoffers, and for their punishment foretell a famine or a disastrous war.

But not like those of the olden time is this prophet rewarded. They received faith and fear, ceremonious reverence and earthly honor;—*he* wanders here a heteroclit in the land of his inheritance—is ineligible to office, has no vote in town-meeting, and is exempt from military duty. A man, but no citizen—an Indian, without a tribe, he comes to the banks of the Connecticut as a heteroclit and a stranger. O river of Connecticut, that on thy borders the children whose fathers drank thy primeval waters should be gaped at as strangers by the young brood of those whom the salt sea cast up from her bosom, to mar thy green margin with their dirty docks, to chain thy strong current with their dams and locks, and scourge thy freeborn flood with their foaming mill-wheels!

These are not, however, our Indian's reflections. He is a philosopher as well as a prophet—a civilizee as well as a savage, and never disturbs himself with broodings over the red man's wrongs. A priest and minister of destiny himself, he never questions her decrees.

He has entered the dwelling of a decent Indian woman who lives by the trade of fortune-telling (having in a good degree the sense of foresight), and in her neat little parlor is seated, rummaging his medicine-chest. A knock is at the door, and there enters a white woman, with face pale like a corpse, and form thin like a shadow. Suffering is well enstamped on her yet young forehead, and evidently the serious things of the world are upon her. She makes known her desire to consult with the fortune-teller, and is accordingly led into an inner room, fitted up like a chapel, with crucifix and altar (for the squaw is a catholic). The fortune-teller kneels and prays at the altar, then rising, she sets herself to look at the future—in a teacup, in which she has poured a few drops of tea which she has then



poured out again. What the poor inquirer fears, and what her own dim prescience has already boded, is now confirmed by the oracle of the teacup, who declines, however, to tell more than this one and sufficient calamity—and so dismisses her visiter. It is no other than the girl of the farm-cottage.

As she had passed through the parlor where the Indian was, he had not lifted his eyes from the chest in which he seemed intently looking, and yet he had seen and noted her well, and now awaits her return in order to address her; and he, the latest of the aboriginal prophets, recognising in this palest of the pale-faces a sister of light, and the chosen recipient of supernatural knowledge, rises to meet her; his heart goes forth unto her, and from this moment, even to the end of his earthly existence, he devotes himself to her service. As she would go past him, he puts out his hand and takes hers, and with a graceful yet commanding dignity leads her to a seat, saying:—

“Young woman, I have something to say to you.”

She sits down, while he holds her hand, and for some moments looks in her face, and then adds—

“You are ill; I will prescribe for you. Will you take my medicines?”

“Yes, sir.”

“But will you promise me, and not fail?”

“Yes, sir. I am very ill. They fear I have the consumption, but I don’t think so; yet I would be glad if you would try to do something to help me.”

He gives her medicine, with directions for taking it, but refuses the money offered in return, saying:—

“Don’t pay me; I will call at your house to-morrow morning at eight, and you may give me some breakfast.”

She tells him where she lives, and that she will be glad to see him there, provided her husband consents. He says:—

“Very well, I will call at eight.”

The pale woman returned home, full of sad thoughts at the squaw’s prophesy (which was afterward strictly to be fulfilled), mixed with deep wonder at the interview with the strange man. Her husband’s permission having been easily obtained, at eight the Indian called, and was admitted. The subjects of the long conversation he then had with her were merely her health and like matters of common interest, and the result obtained was, to make her feel quite at ease in his presence, as well as very desirous to see and know more of so interesting a companion. On taking leave he promised to call again at the end of two months.



He was punctual even to a day, and at the end of the time, to her great delight, again entered the door. She had much to say. She told him how that, under God, his medicines had quite restored her,—how much her mind had dwelt on him during his absence,—how earnestly she had desired the time to pass by, that she might thank him for his kindness and skill, and how, meanwhile, she had prayed for his welfare. He remained and conversed with her for a long time, the same as at the first visit, and then bid her good-by, telling her to expect him again at the end of two months farther. An oppressive foreboding, however, made this parting bitter to her, and as he went from the door, she turned to her sister and said:—

“He means to disappoint us, for I am sure I shall never see him again.”

She was right, and she was wrong. Nearly a year went by, and he came no more. But one evening, at the end of about that time, Mrs. B.’s servant asked permission to go out, for the purpose, as she said, of calling on an Indian doctor, who was then in town.

“An Indian doctor,” said her mistress; “I wonder if it is *my* Indian doctor? Pray notice him closely, and tell me how he looks.”

As the girl entered the room where the medicine-man received his patients, he quickly remarked:—

“You live with Mrs. B. She wishes very much to see me, but my visits have caused her trouble. Tell her she must not come to see me, and that I will not go to her, but tell her to send me a book which is now on her bureau. I know she prizes it highly, but I must have it, for I wish something to remember her by. Go, now, and bring it.”

This message the girl came back and delivered. The book on the bureau was “Solitude Sweetened,” and was, in truth, greatly valued by its owner; but she did not hesitate to send it, and with it also a more valuable present, which was of silver. The girl had not lived with her long, and in committing the latter article to her hand, a slight suspicion arose that it might not be safely delivered; but the maid faithfully discharged her trust. On receiving the presents the Indian returned the silver article, saying:—

“Tell your mistress I don’t want that; and tell her, too, not to suspect you, for you are honest. The book I will keep. Remember well now the message you are to repeat to Mrs. B. Say to her that she shall not be subjected to any trouble on my

account;—say that I am about going away from here, but will come to her again—that while a great way off, I will still be with her. In four months from to-day she will see me, and we will have a good many long talks together, in which I will instruct her concerning all she wishes to know.”

The bearer of this extraordinary message delivered without comprehending it, while she who received it only vaguely understood that she must wait and watch for some mystical communication, not doubting that the word of the Indian would be fully kept.

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#### THE GHOST OF THE LIVING.

Mrs. B. had, as we have seen, received a very religious education, which had developed, to fully as great a degree as was healthy, the religious sense; but the sense had been stimulated to a morbid action, really dangerous to a true equilibrium of the faculties, by her many troubles, by ill-health, and finally by her habits of solitary meditation. She had brooded despondingly over her sins, and cultivated a desire to be free from all earthly taint. Her prayers became frequent, earnest, and long, while the burden of her entreaty to God was, that she might be “sanctified.” And this mood was rapidly growing upon her, as the day drew near when the Indian was to make good his word.

The day at length arrives. It is in September, 1838. The time has been carefully calculated, and she is sure he will come. She is sitting alone—except that her young infant is sleeping in the cradle by her side—and waiting for him, feeling aware that something supernatural is to happen, but yet, by some supernatural aid, rendered free from fear, and only feels a quiet, strong, and confiding expectation. She sits still, and longingly looks and waits to see.

He is there! Not by opening the door, nor yet through it, does he come, but right out *from* it he steps into the room, and, after taking off his hat, which he flings on the table, he seats himself on a chair right before her. It is the very same Indian as before, with clothes as greasy, shirt as soiled, shoes as dusty, and hat as old and rumpled, and he sits with the same composure, holding his cane in the same manner. And how does the woman endure the presence of this ghost of the living? Her flesh does not freeze, neither does the hair rise on her head:



and though she says no word, yet it is not because her tongue is palsied with terror ; but with hardly a flutter of heart, and filled with a calmness of spirit which is surely of his bestowal, she looks as intently at him as he at her. She does not speak, because she is impelled to silence, and so, keeping silence together, they remain—this woman and this ghost—quietly contemplating each other. Her nerves are made steady and strong by the upholding might of his will, the genial light of his spirit exalts and brightens her own, and a happiness is hers which well recompenses for the long and sad absence of her friend.

Yet it is only an apparition,—the mere *mirage* of a distant man ; and she knows it.

Thus an hour goes by, and another, and a third, when the visiter rises, resumes his hat, turns and gives her another pleasant look, and then goes out ;—remembering himself, however, this time, and sufficiently regardful of appearances to open the door and walk out, like a gentleman of real flesh and cloth. Ghosts can not be too careful to keep up these appearances with us of the earth ; if they would render their visits pleasant, or even tolerable, they should appear as natural as possible.

And in this manner were these two thereafter to communicate. On the next day the same appearance was repeated, and the same silence preserved ; and so, too, it was on the third. He did not speak, because she was not yet ready to hear without terror the sound of his voice, and so he was waiting till these long and renewed interviews should have so accustomed her senses to his sight, as to give her courage to hear his ghostly speech. On the fourth day he broke silence.

It was on that day that, soon after he appeared, she heard, *as with* her natural ears, his voice, saying,

“ My friend, you are praying for sanctification ; but you shall change your prayer and pray with one which I will give you, and which will certainly be granted. Pray only in these words :—

“ ‘ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.’ Now see if you can pray as you have been used to do.”

Instantly she tried, but could not, and could only repeat, with fervent heart and lips, “ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,” and never afterward, while he was by, except in one case, was she able to use other phrase of prayer.

He went on to say : “ The visits I in this way make, will cause you no trouble ; so don’t fear. I come, my child, from a distant place, of which you will not know, and for many moons will visit you almost every day. There is much I must

instruct you in, and much that you must learn. Give me your best attention, and listen and look patiently."

As he was speaking she seemed to be undergoing intense effort, and her frame trembled, while a profuse perspiration started to her forehead. Perceiving this, he remained silent for a considerable time, and until her strength had gradually returned, and then said:—

"Look up, and tell me what you see."

She raised her eyes to the opening door, and beheld the entrance of a female figure, who came slowly forward, stooping greatly with the weight of three large stones piled upon her back, and hobbling along with chained feet. The features were as black as an African's, but, being closely regarded, the startled beholder saw them to be those of her very self! With emotions of deep commiseration, Mrs. B. for some moments looked at her own spectre in this pitiable plight, and then remarked:—

"This must be me, but why the face is so black, or why the stones or chains are there, I am sure I can't tell."

The figure went out.

"Look again," said the Indian.

She saw the same figure again enter, but now one of the stones had fallen off, and lay at her feet, while her posture had become more erect.

"What does this mean?" said the spectre showman.

"I don't know."

"This," said he, "represents you as being relieved of the burden of one of your three children (represented by the three stones), who will be taken off your hands."

The apparition went out again, and returned with another stone falling off.

"And what does this mean?"

"That another of my children is to leave me, I suppose."

"Very good."

She with the black face again exits and re-enters,—and now the last burden has fallen, and she has ceased to stoop. This is explained as before. It then goes, and returns with its face half white.

"Tell me how you understand this," says he.

"I can not tell."

"This shows that your husband is to go away."

Then there appeared in the air a hand, holding a brush, which it passed across the other side of the face, making now the whole of it white, while at the same instant the chains dropped from



the feet, and the appearance stood before its own reality, erect, and fair.

"Can you explain this?"

"No, sir; it is very strange."

"You are to be a single woman again, and become your own mistress."

During this representation there were long pauses, and three hours elapsed before the whole was ended. He then left her greatly exhausted, with her clothing saturated in perspiration, for the listening to his voice, and responding to it (with spiritual speech), was attended with every sensation and result of intense muscular effort. For this reason, during his visits of the first six weeks which followed, the intervals in the conversation were long and frequent, and during them she perceived that the spell of his will was powerfully at work to restore her exhausted strength. In the course of these six weeks she gradually became inured to the effort, so as at the end of that time, to be able to endure, unfatigued, a much more continuous dialogue, though it has never been without considerable exertion.

At his coming on the following day, she was on her knees at prayer. As she repeated again and over again the short formula she had received, she became possessed with a desire to see heaven, by representation similar to that of the day before, and while, with growing intensity of feeling, she went on, and felt all of that wrapt and exalted enjoyment which gratifies the exercise of religious sense, the words "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done," seemed only to mean the letting down of the kingdom of heaven for the satisfaction of her immediate wish. While still the prayer proceeds, and while beneath the closed lids the straining eyeballs are yearning for a vision, the darkness vanishes, and a clear, warm sunlight shines around, revealing a beautiful landscape, with blue sky and rosy clouds, with hills and trees, lanes and houses, and all the features of a village like that near her own early home. The suddenness and real seeming of the sight strike her with terror, and she springs to her feet. She thinks her call is answered, but a second glance reveals that the scene is of the earth and not of heaven,—which only frightens her more. A pleasant laugh is heard behind, and, startled again, she turns to meet the smiling face of the Indian ghost, who greets her with—

"Why do you shake so?—it is only me. Did you think it was heaven I was showing you? No, no; you will see heaven, my good child, all in due time."

"I do believe you are a devil," she exclaimed.

"Do you, indeed!—ha! ha! I know you are a godly woman, and that you think me not good. The prayers of such as you can drive away devils. Then pray your own prayer, and not mine, and see if you can pray me away."

She does so, but the visiter will not budge.

"Throw salt on the fire; they say no devil can stand *that*."

She actually fetches the salt and tries the experiment, but still he holds his ground.

Then for a good while she stands, with trembling limbs and flushed face, all streaming with sweat, looking earnestly and somewhat doubtfully at him, while he keeps his position, and leaning on his cane, with hat in hand, meets her gaze with a calming and sustaining look, which at length works its effect in fully reassuring and restoring her.

Finally, in a deep, serious voice, he continues:—

"No, I am not a devil, but your good friend. The power which enables me thus to communicate with you, is from above, and not beneath, and can be used only for your good. There are some things you have allowed your mind to dwell too intently on. My endeavor for a while must be to divert it from them. Good-by."

The mild dignity with which this was said, sunk into her soul, and thenceforth she deemed the Indian rather angelic than diabolical, and good proof against muttered exorcisms and burnt salt.

During the six weeks which followed, he occupied the time in calling up the events of her life, devoting half the time to the past and half to the future. While doing this it was his custom not to show himself when speaking, but to appear again after he had finished. During these six weeks, as has before been observed, he was most of the time silent, but apparent. Afterward he was seldom seen, except at the beginning of each visit, when he would introduce himself, as it were, through the organs of vision, to vanish again as soon as he began to converse.

These communications did not necessarily interrupt Mrs. B.'s household duties, but while going about the house and performing them she would still keep up the conversation and see the sights, except only when engaged in something requiring the whole attention. When she spoke to him, it was not with a voice audible to material senses, any more than his presence was perceptible to those who might be by, but she spoke with a spiritual voice, audible to herself as well as him to whom it was addressed.

The generals of these occurrences she remembers with her



natural memory, but the particulars are mostly recalled by aid of her spiritual perceptions, in the same manner as she would call up the past occurrences of any other person's life. For this reason the interviews with the Indian spectre, endeavored in this book to be particularly related, may be sometimes partly imperfect, though always correct so far as they go. Some of the most striking occurrences of this long and interesting spiritual intercourse will be given as minutely as Mrs. B. has been able to recall them, and will suffice as illustrations of the mode pursued by her mysterious instructor. This, with some remarks applying to the subject of his lectures in their general scope, will be a sufficient draught upon the reader's time, as the communications occupied about three hours each day for nearly three years, during which time he faithfully labored to accomplish his mission to the neophyte, and to fulfil the promise he had given, that from a distance he would come to her and instruct her concerning all she wished to know. The chief object of these long lectures was, doubtless, so far to inform her mind with the sciences relating to man as to render it a fit receptacle of important revelations to be thereafter and *hereafter* made, as well as to exercise and familiarize her with that correspondential language—the language of spirits—by which spiritual communications were afterward to be made to her.

Any further explanations on these points would only forestal what will sufficiently appear as the narrative proceeds. We will now return to the visit that followed the one last detailed.

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#### EXERCISES IN FORTUNE-TELLING.

ON making his appearance next morning, the Indian anticipated Mrs. B.'s desire, by saying, "I am aware of your wish to see me in my natural body, but that can not be. Would you not like something to remember me by?"

"Yes I would, indeed," she answered.

"I will give you a keepsake," he replied. "What I am about to bestow will last you all your days. The book you gave me is not true, I will give you one that is true; it shall be the book of your life, containing your past and future history. Three weeks time I will devote to the past, and then three weeks to the future.

Accordingly, for such portion of their interviews during the

three following weeks as her strength allowed her to see spectral objects, her teacher was occupied in calling up from the grave of things done, but not ended, the representations of her past existence. Not a single day of the whole time seemed to be omitted, and occurrences so trivial and minute as to have been long gone from memory, were summoned to appear, and made to pass in measured march before the eye. Of course a detail of the whole would be too long, if not too tedious, but the following are a few of the scenes.

*The Birthplace.*—Close by a small stream is a well-remembered dwelling, with its curtilage complete. There are the yard and garden, the first of earth whereon her toddling feet first balanced her tiny form, the grassplat, spangled with earth stars, the first golden dandelions that gladdened her eyes in this world of bright things, the stone-fences and the picket-fences, the shrubbery and trees, coops and sheds, the old gray well-curb, with its huge mossy bucket; the familiar surroundings all, which greeted her opening faculties in the freshness of their first impressions, when her new soul, just come to itself after an eternity before birth, stood staring with bewildered wonder on the threshold of being and first knew that it lived and had a world given it to live in.

“This shows where you were born; now we will see the hour of your birth,” said the Indian.

At a window is seen the face of a very handsome woman. Over her shoulder is the dial of a clock, whose hands point to a quarter before five, and the sun in the horizon indicates the same hour in the afternoon.

*A new Eve in her Eden.*—On a steep hillside, where grows an orchard of plum-trees, a fair-faced, white-haired little girl of three years is climbing and clambering, and freely appropriating the ripe fruit within reach. Now she is gleefully rolling down the grassbank, and now climbing up again, with a paradisaical laugh, renews the hearty sport. Now reposing on her back, she looks up to the blue unclouded heavens, and with widely opened lids shows to the skies orbs as blue and unblemished as themselves. The child is not idle, but busy with taking cognizance of things and becoming acquainted with the visions of earth, their names and significations. Though her features are a trifle begrimed with kissing mother earth's dirty face, rendering them less pretty, but more piquant and picturesque, the beholder easily recognises the image of herself at the furthest point where the memory can reach.

“You were stealing fruit, you little thief,” said the Indian.



*A Hard Death on a Hard Bed.*—In the depth of night, lying on the ground, a strong man is struggling with mortal agony. No din of battle or martial music is there to glorify the death of the camp distemper's victim. Not in the heat of active fight is the soldier's blood boiling forth to dye with ruby flowers the carpet of fame, but in the still and cold night, beneath an unpitying sky, cankering disease slowly gnaws at his vitals, and the creeping hand of death gradually chills the current within the veins. Near by they are digging a grave, but no coffin is seen. He is dying for his country, leaving to its Congress the safer task of disputing whether she is in the right or wrong. The sight of the sufferer's face recalls a past vision, and the words of the Indian are heard—"You have wanted to see your father—here he is."

*A Common Domestic Spectacle.*—A weeping mother sits in a widowed home, surrounded by six children who are weeping too. Grief is deepened and stained by sordid cares. In some way, the Lord knows how (yes he does), she is to provide for all these, during a long childhood, bread and raiment, fuel and bedding, shelter and health. Truly her trouble will not be aggravated by ennui, nor her energies lag for need of stimulus to exertion. Six children and two hands, a half dozen healthy stomachs and a couple of organs of prehension, with a weary world to work in, and a hard world to deal with! But rouse thee, woman, and take cheer! Those young ones who now hang about thy neck, are a necklace of jewels—veritable Yankee Gracchi. Thy long task, tedious and anxious though it must be, and exhausting, not wasting, the prime of existence, shall not be without reward. The babies of the rich, mumbling the golden spoons of prosperity shall rot away without usefulness, while thy little trencher-scrappers, hardened and strengthened in the school of circumstance, cultivated in morals and informed in mind by thy teachings, aided by that grace and guidance that comes for a widow's prayers, and linked in concentrating love to their mother will form a diadem of honor for thy later life, and enrich a country in whose soil they have no heritage.

"A widow and orphans," said the Indian.

*The Given Away.*—At the door of a smaller house than the former one, stands a horse and wagon, wherein are seated a middle-aged couple, the woman holding in her lap the child of the apple-orchard, whose eyes are pouring plentiful tears. A little family crowd is gathered round, amid which stands a mother, who with kisses, sobs, and tears, is giving away her child to new parents. It is noticeable that when childless people select



for adoption, one from a large family of children, they do not usually choose the least intelligent or lovely. And the mother, who is bargaining to secure her child's welfare in exchange for a parent's rights, is throwing into the scale a liberal amount of parental pride; and the lifting a burden from her hands hangs a heavy weight on her heart.

The vehicle drives away and pursues its homeward course at such moderate pace as befits the steady paced beast of a steady old farmer's horse, while in dimming distance and blinding tears the sight of home is gradually lost. And now the perfect panorama of that ten-mile ride recurs in regular order, presenting each house and field and flock, each turn of the road, each passing vehicle and wayside traveller, all in the fresh aspect of their original reality, and the particular mood of the sky and the signs of the season indicating the very year, month, day, and hour of the hegira of our infant prophetess, are vividly renewed to the sense. At length, passing the house of the nearest neighbor, in the yard of which is seen a sturdy little lad, the destined playfellow and protector of the girl, the new home is reached. It is the cottage of the Farmington valley.

*Going to School.*—Along the sidepath of the road to the village school, the boy of the last scene is leading the girl, who, holding in one hand a basket, the lid of which swells with bread and butter, cakes and apples, for three city-bred urchins, closely grips with the other the fist of her little knight, whose duty as well as pleasure it is to scare away the troops of hissing geese, and save her harmless from the threatening horns of mischievous cows, those common dangers besetting the juvenile pilgrims' progress to the halls of learning. Well, well, knowledge *is* power, and must be had at considerable sacrifice. Children are troublesome, and at school, if not out of harm's way, are at least out of their mother's way, yet the benevolent lungs must sometimes perform a sigh as the benevolent heart considers how much is endured and how little learned by the rows of small galley slaves chained to backless benches, while vivid and painful memories of the hated schoolroom, awaken pity for the millions of little wretches so easily made happy with proper care, and so easily rendered wretched by incompetence and harshness.

*"Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child."*—It is several years later, and the girl is seen at school. The tedious morning session is drawing its slow length to a close; the minutes seem hours, and the jaded faculties are acting on the nerves with intolerable ennui. The monotonous task has become thoroughly hated, in its generals as well as in all its details, while the im-



prisoned energies are nigh collapsing the little bosom wherein they are pent. The growing organs and muscles are groaning for that exercise which their due development so often and urgently demands, being unfortunately constituted, you see, according to natural laws prior in date to the rules and regulations of Miss ——'s select school. No doubt, had Nature known of those rules and regulations before she enacted her own, she would have made them conformable. "O dear! how wearily the time lags on!" is plainly stamped on the contracted forehead of the spectre child, who sits there. Finally, for a moment revolting from control, the subvertive impulses break out in a whisper, or some other forbidden demonstration of that particular manifestation of original sin, termed mischief, and the frightened offender is called up to stand before the enraged school-mistress.

"What shall be done with her?" Whipping has been two or three times tried that day, and still offences *will* come. Besides this, the mistress is just now in an ill humor, and with good cause, having conceived a well-founded jealousy of her beau's attentions to the village mantuamaker. Among all their many vexations and trials, school-teachers have at least this one satisfaction, of being always quit and square with the world, for whoever offends against them, the offence is sure to be visited upon the head or ears, back or breast, legs or hips, or palms of *somebody's* children. And now the poor little prophetess is about to play the part of scapegoat for the sins of the mantuamaker. A box that serves for a bench is lifted, and the child being forced underneath, it is closed down and sat upon. Plainly now this principal of the select school is ignorant of the simplest laws of respiration, or else very angry with the mantuamaker, for otherwise she would not thus encoffin a living child with fully developed lungs. And the beholder of the vision trembles and sweats with sympathy for the poor imprisoned little phantom of herself, for the scene has never been forgotten. At length deliverance comes, but almost too late. O how long it seemed in coming! "Almost too late," says the Indian, "death would have had you in a few moments more. Sparing the rod almost spoilt the child *that* time."

On the bench being lifted the girl does not rise, and being raised up, falls down again, pale as a corpse, while, almost as pale with terror, the school ma'am sinks down, too, and strives to restore the little corpse-like thing. O Miss Mantuamaker! had you known the consequences you would hardly have bitten your lips at the schoolma'am's beau, and you, my mistress, had



you know how much fresh air a pair of lungs consume per minute, you would hardly have ventured to try such a punishment, even upon your rival herself. "Had she known?" ay, had she known! What fearful ignorance prevails in the halls of learning? and all of it is not confined to juvenile schools either.

*Sleeping in Church.*—She is trying very hard indeed—yes with all her might and main—to keep awake, but the weather is warm and the sermon long. The voice of the preacher is droning and monotonous, and he is, in some of his points, a trifle incomprehensible to a child of such an age; so while resolution opens one eye, dullness closes the other. Fennel seed has been tried to satiety, but there is a stage of drowsiness where even fennel seed fails to arouse. The day has been without amusement, and seems already to have been a week long, and seven bedtimes seem to her, to have come and passed since the morning. She has called to mind all the merry doings of yesterday afternoon, till the subject is fairly exhausted; and she has conjured up the sensations of boxed ears, which after meeting will be the certain punishment for the sins of the eyes, until even tingling ears have no terrors to revive a drooping soul, and visibly and contumaciously she falls asleep, and dreams of secular things.

*Botanizing.*—A wild scene in the depth of a wood, where the woodchuck and adder, worst terrors of a Connecticut forest, make their abodes. Out from beneath the tangled undergrowths, that crackles with the struggle, comes creeping the same girl, now seven years old. Her face is not pale, being flushed with excitement and exertion, rendering her rather a pretty sight, and, in that wild wood, a strange one, as she stands up and brushes away her yellow-white hair with one hand, while with the other closely clutching the corners of her apron, containing a full load of all manner of intermixed roots and herbs, leaves, stalks, and flowers, evidently the accumulation of much labor, in a wide excursion through the forest. What does she there, among the old trees, with their gloomy aspects and threatening out-shooting arms, and rugged bark, whose grotesque lines seem to make faces to frighten her away?—trampling over dead leaves and dead limbs, and through lacerating thorns, breathing the damp chill air of this sepulchre of the vegetable kingdom. What does she there, far away, miles distant from the school-children, who are playing upon the green and having a happy Saturday afternoon of it? She does not know, herself. Botany is not taught in the school. She has never heard the



word; yet so eager is she in her researches among the plants, that at this point of her life it is a customary mode of spending the weekly half-holyday to ramble in such places, and, with an eagerness that brooks no impediment and fears no danger, plucking and digging, dirtying her nails, scratching her arms, and tangling her hair, to make a most miscellaneous collection, which none in the village can either name or classify. Now, returned home, she appears exhibiting her spoils to her foster-mother, and seems to ask their names, and what they are respectively good for; and when the latter turns impatiently away, and motions to throw the whole collective botanical treasure on the muck-heap, the child's countenance falls, and expresses no little impatience at such unpardonable ignorance in a woman of her mother's age and size. Here the Indian remarked:—

“I will gratify your desire for this kind of knowledge, before I have done. We will explore the woods and meadows together, where you will learn all about these roots and herbs, and become your own doctor.”

*A Vision of Prayer.*—One year later. Beneath a tree in the orchard the girl is kneeling at prayer, with an earnest devotion glowing in her features, and her little hands clutched convulsively in the strife of supplication. Suddenly on the kneeler's view there shines an appearance of the sun, moon, and stars, clustered in the over-head heavens. Then below these, in the clouds, there stands the unclad and radiant form of a perfected spirit, whom she knows for an angel near to God. The splendor of the orbs is outshone by the glory of the spirit, which, during a space of time marked only by immeasurable emotions, fills her with rapt delight;—and then all fades away, and the trembler falls prone to the earth.

“You were not deceived,” said the Indian; “it was indeed a vision of God, showing himself in his works. At the time this happened you were under a high excitement, and you called it ‘experiencing religion;’ but why did you not do as you resolved to do, when you rose up, and go and tell your mother of all you had seen? Were you guilty of backsliding, being tempted by the devil? or were you afraid she would whip you for lying? Perhaps she would.”

With similar scenes to these, the story was from day to day continued, till the girl had grown to be no longer a child. Now she would appear learning her prayers at the rudimental “Now I lay me down to sleep;”—now, at her spinning task, which is gone through with at furious speed, and the rest of the time devoted to a solitary ramble on the river's side;—now, in the

fields, orchard, or barnyard, she is disporting like other children, and making friends of all the domestic animals;—now, bitterly weeping over the prospect of an approaching calamity, and now wildly galloping over the lots on the bare back of an unbridled colt, who, passing under an apple-tree, leaves his rider in precisely the same lurch as Absalom was left in;—now, at her little chamber-window, she is reaching forth to follow with straining and streaming eyes the receding form of her *own* mother, who has just been to pay her a visit, and the tears copiously come which the little Spartan has, during the interview, had the discretion and heroism to withhold, lest they should cause useless pangs to both foster and real parent. And now, again, there appears passing before her view, as she sits in the doorway, strange landscapes and villages, large cities, with wharves and shipping, the surging ocean, and distant countries, with palaces and castles, and she, in contemplating them, appears struggling with an almost uncontrollable desire to travel and see the great world beyond the hills of Farmington, and the river of Connecticut. At this scene the Indian says: “You *shall* see it all, one day.”

*The Parting again.*—The vehicle is at the door of the brown cottage, and where also the foster-parents are standing, to say a difficult good-by to the daughter of their adoption, and the light-framed child, whom years ago they received within their threshold, now passes forth over that threshold a full-grown woman. She is comely to look upon. Her physical development has in good degree overpowered the spirituality that shone out in her younger years, and the vigor of maturity and the bloom of health have for the present nearly effaced all indications of the incipient prophetess. Her glimmerings of prevision have almost entirely faded away, and she is nearer to being an ordinary mortal than ever before or after. The pleasant, lively spring-time of life has not commonly been the harvest-time of the mystical gift, and, whatever history may say, I am inclined to think that the maid of Orleans, of glorious memory, was an old maid and not a young one.

*Love, Courtship, and Marriage.*—Some years have gone by, and the scene lies in a city. Late in the evening the young woman is seen entering her chamber, after dismissing a visiter from his second call. But he is a widower, and a widower's second call means as much as fifty from any other beau. She seems alone in her chamber, as, closing the door, she sits on the edge of the bed and appears to think with an anxious and disturbed mind. She seems alone, but there is there an invisible



one who has always been, on earth, her close companion. It is her guardian spirit, who, from deep within the interior spheres, has been appointed and sent to guide, guard, and provide, for a daughter of the flesh. As the maiden sits thus musing, a distinct toll of a bell is heard, sounding from within herself, and repeated till its reality and meaning have become fully comprehended, and she cries out with affright, "My God, that man is to be my husband."

Then, in a church, a marriage scene is shown; and afterward, in crowding representations of painful memories, come cares and troubles, toil and distress, children and illness—and a plenty of them

Three weeks of such visions brought the neophyte's biography down to that point of eternity without length, breadth, depth, or thickness, which men term time present, but which, ere its name can be pronounced, becomes time past; and then, by similar imagery, the future was represented to her. Of the appearances for this purpose called up, some explained themselves, some were explained by the Indian at the time, and others came and went without interpretation, it being reserved for their fulfilment to make their meanings clear. The following are a few of the glimpses of the future:—

*The Medicine-Woman.*—A large table appears, covered with various medicinal plants, thousands of them yet unknown in their curative qualities,—specifics for old and well-established incurable complaints, and remedies for dire diseases yet to be let loose upon earth. Another table similarly laden is added to this, and then another; and afterward all three are, one by one, removed.

"You will heal the sick," said the Indian.

*The Congress of the Curses.*—Ah! and bah!—how heart and stomach nauseate as she is held to the horrid vision! Every disease permitted to roam up and down in the earth, sends along the scene a selected specimen of its handiwork,—measles, mumps, and hooping-cough; plague, small-pox, and cholera; ghastly consumption, coughing, expectorating, and hoping still; bloated dropsy, swelling, and desponding; melancholy jaundice, and distressed dyspepsia; hydra scrofula, with its thousand manifestations of torment; torturing rheumatism and twinging gout, fruit of original sin as well as of actual transgression; excruciating neuralgia and tic, cheek by jowl with the jumping toothache; scaling leprosy and gnawing *noli me tangere*; drivelling, mumbling idiocy and yelling mania;—these were among the rest.

"The blessings of civilization," said the facetious Indian.

*The Fortune-teller's Levee.*—The spectator of these spectacles is next shown her own image grown a few years older than at the time in question, and seated and consulting with different persons who come and depart singly.

She holds the hand of a young girl who looks intently and anxiously in her face, and seems listening with believing ears to words which cause the color to flutter, sink, and rise again, like Hope's struggling standard, on the field of her fair cheek. No sign of doubt contracts the maiden's open forehead, and the very breath of her existence seems depending on the revelation being made. The revelation relates to the precise state and mood of the fanciful and fleeting affections of some silly, sleek Adonis, whom her true heart glorifies and adores.

An elderly, conservative-looking man professes entire unbelief, and demands a sign before he will yield his faith. The sign he seeks is a lottery prize, or a pot of treasure trove; the sign of the prophet Jonas will *not* answer his purpose.

A victim to the evil eye—of green, next comes and asks to exchange his torturing doubts for damning certainty, being willing to throw in a half-eagle into the bargain, but he gets no satisfaction from one whose sight has too well explored the extent of human frailty to allow her to aid in laying bare the wife's transgressions to a husband whose place would hardly be number one in the front rank of throwers of stones.

An unfortunate widow comes and receives from a sister in affliction much counsel and comfort respecting her hard trials and many troubles.

One bereft of his watch is inquiring for its whereabouts, and taking a memorandum of the thief's name and place of abode, pays his fee, but reserves his faith to abide the event.

A bold operator in stocks wants to learn the future prices of "fancies," and from past experience, perhaps, in the oracle's infallibility, seems confident of his profits, and makes liberal remuneration.

An anxious sailor's wife is requiring diligent search to be made throughout the ocean—perchance in its depths—for the joy of her heart, whom she describes as wearing a red shirt, chewing much tobacco, swearing occasionally, and answering to the name of "Bill."

A young heir wants to know the tenor of an aged relative's will, and if it contains a trust clause, and when that long phthisic that has been twenty years in stifling the life of a weak old man, will finally end its work, and give relief to both testator and legatee.



A politician would be taught what opinions and sentiments he should declare in order to insure the shuffling chances of the ballot-box.

A lawyer takes council concerning a pending suit, and asks how the jury will view the law, and what the judges will think of the facts.

A thief wants to learn his luck.

A gambler is in search of a rich young flat ;—*he* will take care of the chances if he can find a customer.

A delicate young wife, well shawled, asks to be told the gender of a prospective individual.

And thus every grade of society, and all sorts of people, represented by their proper apparitions, came to consult the shade of the wise woman ; and as they came, the Indian would announce the character and errand of each.

"It is only in this way," said he, "that you can learn what it is very requisite you should know. You must see all kinds of people, from the highest to the lowest, observe all their thoughts and motives, cares and griefs, and consult and sympathize with them all, if you would be wise ; and I know you desire wisdom. A long, thorough, and somewhat painful experience is before you, and will qualify you to fulfil your destiny.

*The Lily of the Valley stands before the Popular Blast.*—In a large public hall there is assembled a full auditory, and from an elevated desk Mrs. B—— is addressing them. She appears a little older than before, and has a wiser and more assured aspect. She seems to be speaking as if her words were of importance, and her hearers to listen as if there was something to be heard. Who they are and why assembled ?—why she is there and what she is discoursing about ?—how so timid a person as she has acquired the resolution and nerve to speak in public ?—none of these questions were answered by the Indian, and none have yet been solved.

*Another unexplained Vision.*—A gorgeously-decorated room. In the middle a crowned king sits on a throne, surrounded by a respectful assemblage, among whom herself appears. And this is all ; nothing more is given to explain what is meant, or who the king is ; the Indian only saying,—“ You see yourself among the royal family.”

*The Writer of this Book.*—He is plainly represented (so plainly as to be afterward at first sight recognised), and he holds a book. Taking it from his hand, the Indian opens and shows it to the spectator. The binding is black, and the frontispiece

is her own likeness. "Why, it is my own life," she exclaimed. "Yes," says the Indian, "and our friend here is the author."

*Wealth.*—Much gold appears, and by various representations she is shown to possess riches. Some of it is promised to come suddenly, and to be acquired by her genius.

*A Home.*—In the distance, and apparently southerly and westerly, is a beautiful dwelling in the midst of highly-cultivated grounds. In one of the rooms are herself and her daughter and one son, in another room is the other son. Her daughter is shown as a full-grown woman, and is elegantly attired in white; the others are also elegantly dressed; and each one is attended by a black servant. Everything indicates comfort and elegance. A strange prospect for *her*, and somewhat difficult to realize, yet, with faith sufficient to believe the promise, she is gladdened with the view of her children's happy home.

The future closes with a tableau of her deathbed. But did he not reveal the matters and things to come after death?—the joys and sorrows of the second life, the stirring business of the busy spiritual spheres, the scientifics of the heavenly kingdom? No, nothing of these showed he. But on the verge of that spirit-realm there will meet certain good ministers, whose business it will be to instruct her in heavenly knowledge; and perhaps among them will stand—as clean as the best of them—the good Indian doctor.

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#### SCIENTIFIC LECTURES.

THE day that followed the last scene, the Indian made Mrs. B. a short morning call. On retiring he told her to sweep and dust her house, for she might expect visitors in the afternoon.

At about three in the afternoon he again appeared, and found her in the kitchen. "Your company has come," said he, "go into the front room and receive them." She went, and on opening the door, started back, and with dismay, mixed with no little vexation, asked why he had called her to such a sight. And well might she do so, for there, what think you she saw in her best parlor? A man in the garb of Adam, except the fig-leaves!—naked, but by no means ashamed, for he stood in presence of the lady of the house, in all the native dignity of our unfallen leafless first ancestor!

"Go in," says the Indian; "dont be foolish; you must see more than this."



Without power to resist the command, she obeys, and lo! on the other side of the room, a sight to behold! It was a group of nude figures of every stage in life's series, from the unswaddled infant to decaying old age, all of whom she contemplated with an interest absorbing every other feeling, and while doing it observes there has been added to them, the dead body of the first man, stiffened and ghastly, lying in a coffin.

They vanished, and gave place to the view of a road, bordered with all of nature that represents earthly natural beauty, and all of art with which man has improved its face. Different paths intersected it, tending to lead astray the numerous travellers seen moving there, which travellers representing every grade of society, are all making what haste they can to reach the end of their journey. Plod on, ye plodders; trudge on, ye sturdy ones; limp on, ye cripples of life's warfare; dance on, ye gay ones, as wise as the wisest are ye; hurry on, ye eager ones; shamble on, ye slipshod never-readies; roll on, ye nabobs, in your down-stuffed chariots; lounge along, ye easy ones; push along, ye go-aheads; some way and somehow ye will all get to your graves in good season for the resurrection. "This is the beginning of your studies concerning man and his life," said the Indian. "You shall learn his whole nature, how he is created, how he lives and how dies, his organization, his members and their functions, his diseases and the means of cure, his thoughts and motives, his actions, and finally his fate. The road you see shows the space of his life and is the scale by which you shall learn to measure human destiny."

What a syllabus was this for a short course of lectures? Here is a labor and a task for you, my fair neophyte. But the copper-hued professor had the art, which our white-skinned ones seldom possess, of exciting his pupil's curiosity to desire earnestly to know at each step of instruction, precisely the thing about to be taught her, and so attracting her to the study, as to bring into the briskest as well as happiest activity, every faculty that learns, and every sense that can taste of knowledge.

In the course of instruction thus entered upon, the Indian fell a little short of, and went a trifle beyond, what is taught in the colleges, introducing into the lessons, it must be confessed, many things which no college would allow to be promulgated in its precincts; but then what are colleges, that their dogmas should reign over poor outcast truth, as they do, with a rod of iron? Colleges! unquestionable authorities in indisputable mathematics—excellent at a post-mortem examination of deceased languages, but for our poor and blind science, our lame



and limping philosophy, what have they done? Colleges, outside of whose precincts all new things have to be learned, and within whose ancient quiet shades, old learning reposes and sleeps snoringly, while orthodoxy and conservatism guard her slumbers. Colleges, whose thick walls of conceit, with draw-bridge and portcullis of censorship, defend the entrance of every original idea, while their tall and "antique towers" cast long, darkening shades far into society! Cowardly colleges, whose safe maxim is, that it were better a thousand truths, however honest, plump, and fair, should go unexpounded, and like exposed infants, die in the outer blast, than that one single bastard error should be laid at your doors! Cruel colleges, what single truth have you ever adopted or patronized, until after it had, in spite of your buffets and scorning, grown from precarious infancy into hearty manhood? But spite of your conceit, the round world wags on without your aid, light from without is breaking in surprisingly through the chinks of your crumbling walls, and teachers of men are rising in the world, *not* by degrees.

He laughed at colleges, this copper-faced professor did. All quietly to himself, with his simple-minded pupil he cachinated over the pride and weakness of their learning, while he opened to her greedy understanding the sufficient pages of nature's authentic encyclopedia, and discoursed concerning man and his organs, life, health, and disease, motives, conduct, and destiny, without once pronouncing anthropology, anatomy, physiology, pathology, materia-medica, phrenology, psychology, theology, or other terms of heathen and Greek derivation. He dealt in science and not in scientifics.

After showing the laws of man's coming into the world, he proceeded to explain minutely every organ, element, and member, of the body, with their formation, uses, and operations, beginning with the brain and ending with the bones. Here he possessed an advantage over other dissectors which would have made Broussais and that other Frenchman—Magendie, I think his name was, who damned the soul whose existence he denied, by torturing so many dogs to death—die of envy,—for instead of dead subjects, he had the use of living ones, and made plain the whole arcana of the physical man, by elaborate examinations of every part while actually performing the functions of life. Visibly the favored student saw the lungs dilate, the black and red blood flow and return, the gastric juice doing its work, the chyle being formed, and taken up and assimilated, the bile going its rounds, and all the process of nutrition and waste performed; and dull indeed would she have been, had



she not rapidly acquired the knowledge so plainly and pleasantly taught.

Then in the same order was shown each part, under every disease to which it is subject, the way of its originating, and its complete progress till reaching its natural limits, or terminating in cure or death. And the same minuteness was observed in exhibiting the symptoms of disease as well as in indicating the *process* of cure. He also taught how hereditary diseases are introduced and transmitted, with the laws which govern their developments and limit their course. Here the fallacies of the faculty came in for many a savage jest; but what cared the faculty for the irregular practitioner, who had little access to the bedsides of the rich and well-paying patients languishing and dying all for their profit and glory?

After teaching how health should be preserved and life prolonged, he entered upon the science of Medicine.

He conducted her into the woods and meadows, and caused her to examine and gather each curative plant, while he would explain their virtues. These she must carry home, to prepare and compound according to his prescriptions, and then—O inexorable Indian!—by way of learning how to administer them, she must take them all herself! but manfully the trusting disciple swallowed the doses of syrups, teas, tinctures, powders, and pills, and by living through the harsh ordeal, became a living proof that the Indian's medicines were of a different quality from those of the drug-seller's jars, for such a comprehensive course of *those*, who could have taken and lived?

The test he gave by which she was to know the particular medicinal property of a plant, was its taste, or, rather, the *sensation* it produced, when tasted, upon the tongue; and by these rules she readily learned to detect each class of remedies, whether tonic or laxative, &c., with all their subdivisions. But numerous plants were found to have the same properties, and in this connection he instructed her that some of them would often be found to produce, on certain constitutions, a more specific effect than others of the same class; this he said was the result of the influence of the stars upon both the vegetable and animal kingdoms, adapting one to the other by their mysterious presidency;—but further than this he did not in this place explain.

These botanical researches were extensive, and continued, from time to time, for nearly the whole of two summers, during which she might often be seen tramping through all the woods around Hartford, and enduring extraordinary fatigue in plucking, digging,



and tasting, at the behest of her invisible companion. Then she would seat herself on some prostrate log to rest, and to converse with the pleasant mentor, who often interspersed his lectures with jokes fully as brilliant as those wherewith Professor Silliman, of Yale college, spices his own, and which caused the merry laugh of the pupil to resound through the forest. To see her there, heated and excited with her occupation, listening most attentively, as if to a voice at her side,—now gravely considering the unheard saying,—now smiling with pleased interest, and now again shouting with unrestrained laughter,—who, having common sense (and having nothing else), would not have known the poor woman was crazy as a March hare.

While thus studying medicine, she had an opportunity to gain experience and test the Indian doctor's skill upon cases arising in her own family. For several weeks she was possessed with forebodings of approaching illness, which, acting strongly on sensibilities acute in all things, wrung her with the intensest grief. Often at midnight would she steal from her husband's side, and go into another part of the house, there to weep and sob till her whole frame was convulsed. These premonitions were followed by a dangerous and peculiarly-distressing illness which continued for four months. Under the Indian's directions she all this while prescribed for herself, and took no other prescription, although several doctors of the botanical school, who had learned to respect her for her medical skill, and who called occasionally out of friendship and regard as well as curiosity, would sometimes make suggestions and offer advice on the course of treatment; all of which were subjected to the ghostly doctor's criticism. There are those now of this school, in and near Hartford, who remember her, and will know how to respect her medical skill, having often confessed it to be great, while always denying that it came from the source which she frankly disclosed. It is true, that having early conceived a taste for medical knowledge, she had obtained and carefully read the best books of the authors upon Thomson's system, but the new teacher, in order to give her singleness of mind, had begun by wiping away such teachings entirely from her memory, and taught her contempt for the blind guides whom civilized man was compelled to follow in the deprivation of that instinct which directs the researches of the medicine-man of the tribes. He mentioned that the high cheek-bones of his race showed more prominently than any the *medicine-mark*, and remarked, that in her face the indication was peculiarly strong.

He explained the general principles of bone-setting, without,



however, enlarging upon it, but she has never put it in practice. She has had occasion to observe that it is by reason of a partial and modified endowment of "spiritual vision" that the celebrated Sweets possess such skill, and which, by revealing the precise position of an unset joint, enables them easily to readjust it, so that they are, according to Mrs. B., in truth what they profess to be, "natural bone-setters," and, in the words of the paid-for editorials, she "commends them to the confidence of the public."

Two years' time was thus occupied, and the learner was rapidly becoming a proficient. Meanwhile, the prophecy of the stones and chains was in due course of fulfilment. But those two years were full of events, full of troubles, and marked with illness, destitution, and other earthly tribulation, sufficient to embitter even the reflections of a Job. Her outer circumstances were indeed dark enough, and to the eye of flesh, the long lane of misfortune was without prospect of a turn, and her dark night of sorrow far enough from the morning. Her case, indeed, had every feature of a very bad and a very hard case; but it was only a case, an outside case, after all, and the commiseration of her friends, freely and kindly tendered, was wholly wasted, and would have been better bestowed upon some woman whose exterior circumstance were made of velvet and satin, stuffed with swan's down, and bordered with finest lace.

Mrs. B. was a happy woman,—*"happy as a lord,"* as the proverb goes, and far happier as the reality is. She soon learned, by frequent experiences similar to those of Elijah in the wilderness, that her Indian had power to make good his words in the promise he gave that she should not want; and so *care for the morrow* was dismissed from her heart and door. O most happy riddance!—how few of us can boast of it in this anxious, careful world! What a mountain would be lifted from the breast of groaning society were *"care for the morrow"* only removed from it! One of the means of the Indian's providence was her own strict economy, easily exercised, however, by one whose enjoyments in the inner life left her nothing to desire from the good things of the outward world. In her illness and that of her children he would cheer her believing mind with the certain promise of a recovery, while her faculties were all engrossingly interested with the ministration of the means of cure, and with watching the progress of the remedies. And in various ways he would alleviate all her other griefs.

But her positive happiness was found in the daily communion of that unseen visitant, and in the words he uttered in her ear,



discoursing of the science of matter, of spirit and of mystery. In the morning anticipation of his coming, in the midday light and joy of his presence, and in the evening's sweet meditations on his teachings, she found a pure and most exquisite enjoyment. Professor Dick, I think it is, who theorizes, concerning the joys of heaven, that they consist in the continual development and progressive study of the science of God's infinite works. Without believing in the Christian philosopher's theory, it is easily conceivable that the acquisition of learning in the manner vouchsafed to Mrs B., unclouded as it was by any of the fogs wherein experiment gropes her way, and undisturbed by the wisp-light wherewith false theory leads astray, could afford an intellectual happiness sufficient to neutralize a large mass of material ills. Nor was the unhappy exterior lot of her widow-wife unenlivened by consolations of light mirth. We contemplate the world of spirits through the gates of death, whose aspect on *this* side is full of awfulness to all, and to most of us replete with bare horror, even as the intercepting clouds frown gloomily upon man, and chill his soul with their descending damps, while on their heavenward surfaces the sunlight plays in gladness, and adorns them with crimson and purple, and silver and gold. Hence our conceptions of the spirit-land (being thus burthened and shadowed with awe) are divested of all ideas of the common-place, the familiar, the mirthful, or the funny. Yet analogy will teach the reflecting mind that without these, heaven itself would be too unlike the earth for our happiness, since it would be unadapted to man's fundamental organization. The angelic race are created through the human, but such angels as could exist in the state commonly imagined for them, would call for a new creation of men for their germination. It is the lower and not the higher order of animals that can not laugh.

Now our spirit-Indian was as dignified as a Choctaw chief, and that is more dignified than any Roman Cæsar ever was, yet he would often amuse himself and his neophyte with funny stories and most laughable jests. He taught her music by what seemed to her a new method; it was by means of two ladders on which the notes were represented, one for the ascending and the other for the descending scale. When sufficiently instructed for the purpose, she was made to learn and sing for their joint amusement, songs quite different from those her austere education had permitted; and the house resounded with those compounds of Yankee words and German music, known as Ethiopian glees.

Many an interview was occupied in relating stories of the ro-



mantic sort, of heroes and battles, heroines and castles, fairies and wizards, which he seemed to draw at will from a fancy whose redundance rivalled even the Arabian Nights.

He talked freely upon the household occupations in which she would happen to be engaged and gave valuable practical advice upon many matters of common moment. She had accumulated in trunks quite a number of old calico dresses. One day he reproved her for this, and told her she must put them to some use. Obeying his directions, she took them out and commenced making them up into patchwork quilts. For four weeks, during such time as the care of a young infant and other duties would allow, she labored at the work prescribed by her spectral task-master. The strength of his spirit was upon her, energizing every movement—scissors and needle flew like lightning—she cut and tore, stitched and quilted, like one possessed ;—and so she was, with the will of the Indian. It imparted a quickness to her mind similar to that prevailing in the spiritual state in which he then was, where moments bring the events of common hours, and rapidly as the weird sisters of poetical fable wove their web of fate, or as the workmen worked upon Aladdin's palace, she urged her labor of love. She lost no time in those nice questions of taste concerning the shapes and arrangement of the parti-colored blocks and triangles, that so greatly perplex the housewife in this most fanciful of household employments, for the true arrangement came to her in a twinkling, and quicker than the physical fingers could move, the mind contrived their task. Seven quilts of fine patchwork, nicely finished in all respects, with an arrangement of colors that drew the unbounded admiration of all the neighbors, were the results of six weeks scraps of time and the two trunkfuls of scraps of calico. The quilts when done, were not needed, but the making them had been very pleasant. Her expertness was praised by him who prompted it, and she was repaid.

At another time he showed her how to braid herself a bonnet. The grass was gathered, prepared, gauged, and plaited, and soon she produced a large roll of braid equal to fine leghorn, to which it was similar. On producing a roll of it to her sister, one day, the latter, though greatly struck at the remarkable skill displayed, became fearful that it would injure her eyes to labor on such fine work, and by the present of a new bonnet, persuaded Mrs. B. to relinquish it.

With many similar bits of bye-play were the serious instructions of the Indian interspersed.

## RELIGION AND POLITICS.

IN the higher portions of his lectures, as he approached toward God, the all-causing, the red man would occasionally give glimpses of his own belief, though carefully avoiding to interfere with hers. He would speak of the Great Spirit according to the simple faith of the North American tribes, as being ONE, and seemed to have pride in the simple, single, and exalted faith of his race, whose privileged access to the spiritual world enjoyed by them, in right of their savagism, to a like degree with that of our own race in its Edenic state, had from the first, and without the need of written revelation, lifted its possessors above the paganism of the more civilized red, black, yellow, or brown people—above the idolatry of the cross and virgin worshippers, into the single and fixed faith of the GREAT SPIRIT, and through that faith into the recipiency of the very best religion of which their intrinsic organizations are capable, and from which a million of missionaries can never allure them, until civilization with its *exterior* lights shall have first destroyed all their instinctual perceptions; and then they will hardly be worth Christianizing. How far down the scale of history do we come, before we find a better faith than theirs? The Indian had never seen reason in his observation of our Christian societies, or in his spiritual experiences, to induce any fundamental departure from the religion of his fathers. He would say, "*God is everywhere and in every thing; and we are God.*"

He believed in phrenology, physiognomy, and mesmerism, in sorcery and witchcraft, in astrology and palmistry—and in the potency of prayer.

Not being a voter, he had probably formed no opinions on the bank, tariff, or internal improvement, questions. But for the comfort of the "national reformers," and other people of agrarian or *quasi* agrarian tendencies, be it known that he occasionally affirmed the fundamental principle that the earth and all its good things are the common estate of all, in proportion to their *needs*, and not rightly distributable according to capacities for *acquisition* merely. And be it furthermore known to all people, and to the despair of many, that he unhesitatingly and positively declared it to be his confident expectation and belief, founded as well on his acquired knowledge as derived from his spiritual vision, that for this sinful and suffering world, this world full of crying evils and crying babies, for this world wearied with constant and painful toil, for this big-bellied world groaning with long labor and little bringing's forth—tired with turning and turning, only



to turn up dismal days, and turn down wretched nights for the afflicted sons of Eve—there was, and is, “A GOOD TIME COMING;” a consummation that would fill with grief the hearts of many well-meaning persons, who insist upon it, as the result of *their* experience, that there is *not* any “good time coming.”

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#### THE UNKNOWN TONGUE.

Two years having thus gone by since the Indian's first coming in spiritual form, Mrs. B. removed from Hartford to the village of Cabotville, where she made her home for three years further.

Soon after this removal another task was set for her, concerning the signification of which she has never been informed. The young woman who was her chamber companion awoke at midnight, and found Mrs. B. still up and at her table, writing as if for a wager, from which occupation no urging could make her desist until late in the night. The next night she was at the same work; and so it continued for several successive ones. She would first cover the paper with characters in horizontal lines, then in lines running from top to bottom of the page, and then cornerwise across the whole; and this she did, as was the case in all these mystical labors, with wonderful rapidity and facility. The result was a MS. covering with triple lines more than a quire of foolscap, equal to three hundred pages. The characters, though regular after their own manner, were wholly unknown to her, and so they still remain; she thinks, however, they resembled the Hebrew. Her pen, while flying over the page in performing the mysterious chirography, was not guided by her own mind, but by that of HIM who was at her side, and who seemed to know no pause from want of ideas. The strangest of all was that, when with such hard midnight work the book had been written, he directed her to burn it. On her looking for the sheets, in her trunk where she had locked them, two of them were missing. The room-mate was charged with the theft, and confessed it, but refused to make restitution, so those two sheets escaped the burning; and although, by spiritual seeing, she has since learned where they went, yet she has never succeeded in recovering them.

Now what must we think it was that this uninformed scribe was thus made to write down on those sheets of foolscap, crosswise, crist-cross, and cornerwise, with such paper-saving com-



plexity of lines and time-saving swiftness of hand, and then afterward to destroy? Was it the ghost's last will and testament? Was it some prophecy of grand portent, concerning the doings of the great nations, which the European world is now sweating blood and water to fulfil? Was it of the interior arcana, too sacred to be whispered in ears of flesh, or muttered by lips of clay? Was it a stray chapter in the new world's history done into black and white for a specimen—for the author's private satisfaction—of that simple and unitary language which is destined in due time to prevail and to dis-babel-ize this many-tongued, wrangling, babbling, gabbling world, and become, through all its quarters, the all-expressive and sole medium of thought? If done for any of these purposes, or for any other conceivable object, why destroy the whole as soon as finished? Or did the Indian himself cause the abstraction of the two missing sheets, and direct their disposal and preservation?—and have they become like the one volume of the Sybil's book, which remained after she had burned the others, more valuable than the whole together? Who knows? I don't know;—she don't know;—nobody knows.

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#### HE IS CHANGED.

THIS was the last work of the kind he set her to do. After it his visits became gradually shorter and less frequent, until the end of about six months more, when they ceased altogether. It was meanwhile his endeavor—probably to cause her to feel less severely these absences and his final separation—to interest her in the study of mental philosophy. He caused her to procure the best authors, foreign and American, upon phrenology, and carefully to peruse them, and also to make practical observation and experiment on all fitting occasions. She applied herself so assiduously to this that she soon became well versed in theoretical phrenology, and a no mean expert in its practical application, even before she became sensible of her higher and far more certain means of exploration by spiritual vision, which avoids all objections raised against the practical application of its principles, based on the difficulty of measuring the size of the organs through their bony covering. In these studies, as well as in her inquiries into the nature of “human nature” in general, she found an absorbing and highly pleasing interest which had much of the desired effect.



But it needed all this, added to the positive exercise of his will, all-powerful as it had become in controlling her every emotion and thought, in order to prepare her for so severe a severance as was coming. The wise and good ghost had become a very part of that new and vivid life which had been hers during the three years of his companionship. His hand had opened to her the book of the new lore she was absorbed in learning, his finger had guided her eye along its teeming pages, and his full mind supplied the elucidating note and comment. Withdrawn as she had been from close association with people of this flesh, and in spiritual abstraction lifted above this earthly sphere, he had still been by her with his will for her safe reliance in encountering the elements of the upper world. Uncalled he had come from a distant pilgrimage to relieve her temporal troubles, to supply her wants with unknown spells, to guide her with his counsel, inform her with his wisdom, strengthen her with his strength, and charm her with his kindness. While sitting in outer darkness, she had been cheered with interior light of his lending. For three years he had held himself constantly ready at the call of her reveries, and had proved himself a comforter indeed. And having by this communion attained an exaltation of spirit that had caused earth and the things of earth to grow less and less beneath her feet, by his withdrawal she was to be made to feel anew their reality and roughness. Well, it was right she should descend to earth, for there her duty, her journey, and her labor lay.

In all material respects he was leaving her far happier than he had found her; and this through his efforts and advice. He had brought her spiritual faculties out of chaos into order, and unfolded, practised, and strengthened them, to a point where they had acquired the power of progression by themselves. And the new and abundant resources growing within her, had enabled her to be not only wise and happy, but also useful to her kind.

In his later visits his appearance had become brighter and his carriage more erect, while instead of the slovenly garb in which he had formerly come, his apparel was new, neat, and handsome. She well knew that a change was soon to happen.

And he, too, in departing from her, had his journey to go. His mission to the white woman was accomplished. His task in the body finished, and the hard labor of his earthly day done, a change was at hand which his informed mind knew to be only a change; and with a foreknowledge which dispensed with fortitude, he was preparing to overstep the verge of time—



to put off the shell of matter—and stand again free in the substance of ever-enduring spirit.

For some good reason, he had never told where his bodily existence was while his spirit was with her, nor what part he was acting in material nature during that long spiritual intercourse; nor does she yet know. Was he, during those years, still, with medicine-chest in hand, tramping the country in the character of "Indian doctor?" Had he retired to the comforts of a civilized home—which his earnings must have easily enabled him to do—to smoke his latter pipes under his own quiet porch, whence, while to the passing neighbors seeming to be only lazily puffing out the smoke-clouds and contemplating their curlings, he was, in truth, energetically projecting forth his spirit to the side of his far distant, faithful, young disciple? Or had he, at life's close, reverting to the instincts and habitudes which had ruled its dawning, withdrawn to his native prairie, and there, lying in his lodge on the broad Missouri's shore, dozing among his harmonious squaws, made daily journeys in the spirit, over the high Alleghanies to continue his communion with her beyond the mountains? She would very much like to know.

At length she saw him die. With chilled heart and burning eyes, she saw right before her the powerful and manly form of her friend shaking in the convulsions of transitions—painfully casting his slough—dying—and dead.

Black was the pall that closed on the vision, and for ever from her eye and ear removed the familiar voice and form of the prophet-brother, whom as a prophet and a brother she had so respected and loved. Since that day no token of him has ever reached her. Others from the world of spirits have come to her, and thither she has herself gone, to pass up and down through the throngs of the dead who live again, but never there, nor here, in substance or shade, has she ever again seen "the Indian doctor."

Long and deeply she grieved for him. As the death-scene closed, desolation descended on her soul, englacing it like a snow-sheet, that seemed to render life a blank waste. And yet beneath that snow there was already upspringing the green blades of consolation. Rapidly in her inner existence, a self-consciousness and self-reliance were developing, that were rendering her a companion unto herself—a lamp to her own feet, and a guide to her own path. Not until *his* light was removed could she perceive the brightness of her own, nor until his upholding arm was withdrawn, could she feel her own ability to stand and walk alone. The time had duly come, and all had



been fitly done. And while, like the servant of that other prophet, she stood with outstretched arms and upturned eyes on the spot whence he had been lifted, his mantle, descending, invested her with the prophetic office.

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#### THE IDOL OF STONE.

WE now go back to about a year before Mrs. B. left Hartford. One day a child brought in a collection of pebbles which he had for some reason been making, among which was a light-colored agate in the rough, round and flat in shape, and nearly as large as a man's fist. No sooner did Mrs. B. see this pebble, than she fell in love with it;—not with that evanescent affection wherewith ladies sometimes love “precious” stones set in gold, or “dear” shawls in the shops, but with a real, heart-warming, and adhesive devotion. She begged it of the child, and went and treasured it up in a drawer, whence, from time to time, she would often take it to delight her eyes with the little, cold, rough, unprepossessing thing, which did not by word or sign in the least reciprocate her love;—not for a long time, but finally it *did* give signs that rewarded her devotion and justified it, and through it there came to her a *word* well worth the knowing—blessings beyond the measure of any ever before bestowed on its votary by idol of stone, or clay, or wood. Her feelings for the pebble were a constant cause of wonder to herself. But since then she has been made to know that the agate is ruled by the star which governs the Indian's fate, and that by *his* will it was made so strongly to attract her.

Don't laugh at this, but remember how, in both the near and distant past, wise men have attributed occult properties to stones, and how the vulgar have, in consequence, invested each of the precious gems with some talismanic power, from which several of them are even now named; and, while considering that these notions are not yet wholly exploded, though without believing that an amethyst will prevent drunkenness,—respect the past, and moderate your mirth. Remember how in metals, seemingly as dead and powerless as stone, tardy discovery has found the chosen abode of that subtle fluid which gives as well as takes life,—and respect infantile science enough to believe that in the common or precious stones forming the bulk of earth, and out of which we and all below us have gradually grown, there may yet be found wonders as far beyond electricity as lightning is



beyond fire. Consider how few have been the steps of our painful progress from cause to cause, and how many are yet to be accomplished ere destiny shall have brought us up to the One Cause which is First,—and respect the future—with humility be willing to hear a “sermon from stones,” and so shall you find “good in everything.”

It was two years after the death-transition of her Indian friend, and while still living at Cabotville, that Mrs. B. was led to visit a woman at Springfield whose considerable skill in seeing had given her a reputation through all that region. Since that death-view, and down to this time, there had been but little manifestation of spiritual phenomena, though her time had been interestingly spent in studying phrenology and human nature. The time had now come, however, when her characteristic gifts which had been during childhood steadily growing, in womanhood almost latent, but living, and lately educated and exercised by spectral instructions and intercourse—were to burst forth in full and brilliant manifestation, and she to take her place among the prophets of the new series.

She found that the fortune-teller looked for her visions in a dark agate-stone, and it at once occurred to her that she herself might see things her own dear little agate, still preciously preserved. Hurrying home from the interview, she flew to the solitude of her own chamber, and, all trembling with excitement, brought forth the stone, looked upon it, and wished—intensely wished. O glory of glories!—they are there,—at her call they come,—uppermost in mind, they rise first to sight—her own three round, red-cheeked, blue-eyed, absent children. The stone vanishes, and they appear and shine full in her eyes and into her heart, as real as the little flesh and blood ones so far away—and *now* she sees at will! The crowding emotions made her head whirl, while the back-rushing blood nearly stifled her life, and it was some time before she gained sense or courage to realize the richness of her new-found treasure or further to test its virtues. She had seen visions before, but they had come uncalled and seldom; never till this time had she been able to see them at will.

On recovering strength, she looked and wished again; it was to see her father. She did see him. Dead and faded from the earth as was his form, he came, through that opaque stone he came up, in the fresh hues of health and youth, to the daughter he had never seen, lived in her gaze till she had well considered his lineaments, and then sank down again.

Now, these first wishes having been answered, her early love



for travel is renewed, and, agate in hand, she traversed the sea and land, and under its spell, the plain chair she sat on forthwith became a ship without its bilge-water or sea-sickness—a steamboat without danger of explosion or odor of burnt grease,—a rail-car without dust, or possibility of running off the track,—and all without the trouble and expense of paying fare. She visited the countries of Europe, traversed their beautiful parks and even fields, and passing over mountain and valley, viewed their wild and tame landscapes by the dozen at a glance. She went through their cities and saw their opulence and poverty, their palaces and pageantry, and always had the best stands to view the processions when they went by. With the stone for a knocker, all doors flew open, and no castle or dungeon, or exclusive parlor, was private against her *open sesame*.—Or, rather, instead of her visiting *them*, they came to *her*, and countries, cities, and people—among whom was the little lady of England, with a few of her children—all, at the call of that single Yankee woman, in her solitary chamber, came over the Atlantic and remained while she looked her fill; all came as fast as they were summoned, and none disobeyed the summons that required their attendance at shortest notice.

Without knowing the extent of her possession, any more than did Columbus when he found Hispaniola, she was as happy as he, and as rich; for no royal diamond in the treasury of kings would have purchased that little old stone. After the long, sad absence of the one who was dead, her consolation had come at last,—had come, but come without *him*, for while she looked and wished, and looked and wished, and waited for his appearance, the stone grew dark to the view, and as opaque as agate could be. For weeks she neglected everything to commune with this stone of life alone, save with the company it brought. And she did not doubt that this newly-perceived power, which was, in fact, the result of her peculiar and favored organization, was a virtue inhering in the stone alone. With difficulty and self-striving it was that she at length brought herself back to the village called Cabotville, on the Connecticut banks, where she had so suddenly lost herself on first finding the treasure. After that she was content to see her sights in intervals of time, and so continued to do for the six months of her remaining stay in the village. But as yet, and for some time further, her vision was confined to material objects existent in the present or past, but mostly in the present.

It was at the end of those six months, and while visiting her relatives at Hartford, that she heard of the young girl who, as



is well known there, was then exciting considerable attention by her precocious powers of spiritual vision. Mrs. B. lost no time in calling on the girl to observe her process, which she found, as was the case with the other, to consist in looking in an agate. On trying herself to see in this stone, Mrs. B. found that the visions it gave were very dim, and so it was with those the girl saw when looking in Mrs. B.'s stone, whereupon the child observed that her stone was best for her, and Mrs. B.'s best for *her*. The girl's agate was even darker than that of the Springfield woman.

In the course of the conversation, the father of the girl, who was present, produced the map of a field, and requested Mrs. B.—whom he had soon learned to be a seer of great power—to look upon it for buried treasure. She did so, and easily saw the treasure, which she indicated to be concealed in a certain portion of the field, the same as that the child had previously pointed out. The old man then told Mrs. B. that his daughter had been engaged to look for the treasure by a Mr. C., who had, on the faith of her revelations, already procured from the owners of the ground the right to dig for what he could find; that they were soon all to go to the place, about thirty miles distant, to secure the treasure. In fine, at his solicitations, joined to those of Mr. C., Mrs. B. was induced to join the party, to aid in the search. A few days found them all at the town of N., and the two females were conducted to the ground, each in the absence of the other, to designate the spot where the workmen should dig. The marks they respectively made were not a yard apart. The men then set to work to lift the gold. They dug, and dug, *and* dug, but no gold turned up;—not even silver or copper, or current bank bills, rewarded their sweat. After consuming a whole night in displacing much earth and exuding much sweat, all returned to the tavern to consult the seeresses anew. Meanwhile, all night Mrs. B.'s brain had been laboring, and she gave Mr. C. her conclusion, which was, that though the money was there, yet he would never be permitted to find it, for that it was in the keeping of a spirit, who would make it his (the spirit's) business to see that Mr. C. should not reach it. And having expressed this opinion, she desired at once to return to Hartford. But notwithstanding this adverse augury, they continued their excavations during two days (or nights) farther, with a barren result, and then desisted, leaving the owner of the soil, if he received anything for the right to dig, a clear gainer by the trade of precisely the sum so received,—and so the “treasure” was *not* “trove.”



Since then, Mrs. B. has well-considered the subject of treasure-hunting, and has arrived, as she thinks, at a solution of the mystery; and it may as well be given here for the saving of time to those who are given to that so unprofitable pursuit. Perhaps it may save the character, too, of the late searchers after Kidd's money.

The earth is full of gold, and silver, and precious stones, which in the turbulent times of the past, rife with wars and persecutions, have been secreted by those who never lived to reclaim them. The timid, too, and the prudent, the miser and the miserable Jew, the thief and the murderer, have all contributed to stuff the earth's bowels with countless wealth. In future ages this will all come to light, and the time is near at hand when all the remaining undiscovered treasure will make its appearance in an era of general earth delivery; but that this will not happen until mankind shall be better disposed than now to make good use of what they find—till which time, the valuables are well enough where they are.

Generally, hidden treasures are watched and guarded by the spirits of the persons who concealed them, or of those to whom they properly belonged; for which purpose they are allowed the power, in various ways, to secure the safety of their charge, which they do by misleading the searchers—by frightening them from their object—or finally, if need be, by actually removing the property, or forcibly resisting the attempt to take it. Hence it follows, that it is seldom worth while to dig for buried treasure, without first having the consent of the spirits who keep it. Very often, such a custodian spirit has a desire that some particular one of the living—usually a descendant—shall have what itself has been deprived of enjoying, and for that purpose seeks to reveal it to the favored mortal. Sometimes this is done by dreams, and sometimes by daylight apparitions. But such well-meaning efforts are most commonly unsuccessful, especially in the present times, so characterized by a want of faith. The dreams, twice and thrice repeated, are disregarded; and as for the apparitions, those who view them, being the more easily terrified because of their skepticism, are so palsied with fear as seldom to be fit to receive the communication or comprehend it. Spirits will not, on such occasions, speak to the tremblers, lest the superadded horror of a supernatural voice should destroy them quite; and it is for this reason that these visitants are so proverbially taciturn, and that it is generally understood that they require to be first addressed by us before they will make known their errand.—See the story of Hamlet's



ghost, embodying all former traditions on this point; and see also the relation, in a former part of this book, of Mrs. B.'s first interviews with the Indian ghost, who, though calling by previous appointment—though divested of the horrors that associate with death—and though coming to one familiar with the supernatural, would not speak till after three long interviews. Really our ghostly visitants have great reason to complain of their receptions from this world's people.

The above theory of Mrs. B.'s is confirmed as well as illustrated by some striking occurrences, of which she has since been informed by actors in them; among which are the two following:—

*First.* In a certain town, in the state of New York, there lived, a few years ago, a lady who had the faculty of "seeing,"—in the exercise of which she used a large crystal to look in. One day, at the request of an intimate friend of her husband, and who was one of the very few allowed to know of her gift, she looked for a hoard of money which old tradition declared had been buried in that neighborhood by a soldier in the revolution, who was afterward (if Mrs. B. remembers rightly) killed in battle. The lady found the money and its location, and saw that it was buried in a keg; but she also perceived that the soldier's spirit still guarded it, and intended it for some of his distant kindred living in the town, and who were poor: all which she made known to the friend, and advised him at the same time not to attempt to obtain the money against the wishes of its dead owner. Impelled, however, as well by the love of gain as by curiosity, it was resolved by the friend to go and dig where she had pointed out; and for that purpose, himself, with the seer, her husband, and another person, went and commenced operations. Presently they did come to the head of a keg; with eager, trembling hands, the earth was cleared away and a crowbar brought to bear. As the crowbar was struck down upon the head, the indisputable clink of those round pieces of current metal, whose dye-stamped images are the idols of our latter-day idolatry, was clearly heard by all; at which material and substantial verification of what had before only rested in the impalpable visions of the crystal-seer, pallor, weakness at the joints, quick perspiration, heart-knockings at the ribs, and all the diagnoses of great alarm, were exhibited in each one of the company—all without the least interference with their movements on the part of anybody or any spirit. Their first emotions, however, passing off, they set to work to raise the keg;—they raised something else!—the soldier came up and



stood beside the pit—plainly stood there, in the old continental uniform, and with a bandage around his wounded head, and regarded them fixedly, while at the bottom of the hole a rumbling noise was heard, and the keg moved out of sight. Enough said, good ghost—or, rather, enough done: the presumptuous mortals turned and fled as fast as fright would allow them, and sought no more to finger dead men's gold. And while standing on the field of his easy victory, and contemplating their timorous flight, ere returning again to the sphere where his business lay, how ineffable must have been his disgust at the mortal meanness which could seek to appropriate the property of another, merely because its owner happened to be absent from the world! Politically speaking, they were the agrarians, and the ghost the conservative.

*Second.* A man, living on Long Island, called one day on Mrs. B. and asked her to look in a certain place for buried money. She did so, and saw it. He then said that he supposed she was right, and told the following story:

Some years before, he had been told by a mesmerized person that this deposite existed, but was *enchanted*; that, in order to get it, he must go in company with another person, and, while engaged in digging, both must preserve strict silence, and in case they should *see anything*, must fall on their backs and remain so till it should pass away. He determined to attempt the enterprise; and having engaged the aid of a negro, to whom he imparted the instructions of the clairvoyant, set to work with his sable assistant, and with a heart braced up to meet all the powers of darkness who might oppose. These, like the others, easily came to the vessel containing the money; it was a stone jar, just such as had been described. Up from the jar then instantly there came a large white dog, whereat both easily followed the instructions and fell speechless on their backs. The dog ran round to the opposite side of the hole and stood there, without bark or bite. Gradually coming to his powers of motion, and encouraged perhaps by the quietness of the "*Tyke*," the negro rashly seized a brickbat lying near, and threw it at the spectre, which, without seeming much impressed by the weapon of clay flung by a hand of flesh, at once vanished, while to its place there sprung a large horse, and at the same time the hole filled with water. \* \* \* They fled, leaving the horse there.

Encouraged still, however, by the hope of overcoming the "enchantment," the white man subsequently returned to the place, and found the spectre-beasts were gone, but the water



still there. He commenced bailing it out ; but his most laborious efforts were fruitless, the water rising as fast as he could dip. Finally, by under-drainage (Mrs. B. thinks he used quicksilver for the purpose), the hole was made dry—but the jar was gone. The spirit who kept it, finding his means of intimidation to fail, had in fact resorted to material force, and conveyed his charge to another spot.

The negro, who had hurled the sacrilegious brickbat at the white dog of hades, became from that time imbecile in mind, and so still remained ; whether as punishment for his temerity, or as the consequence of the shock his nerves had sustained, can not be known.

Mrs. B. always avoids, as far as possible, this kind of exploration, for it usually leads her to see spirits, not always of agreeable aspect ; and she strongly discourages attempts to acquire wealth by any digging that goes further down into the earth than the husbandman's honest spade or plough can reach.

It was perhaps through her caution to Mr. C., that his operations did not progress sufficiently far to call for any supernatural means to defend the object of his search. Notwithstanding his ill success in that enterprise, he had learned to entertain great faith in the modestly-asserted claims of our seeress, and become much interested in her welfare. At his request, she soon after this visited his family at ———, and prescribed for one of his children, whom she cured of an obstinate illness of long-standing. Mr. C. then benevolently cast about for some way whereby our seeress' talent might be made pecuniarily available to her, and induced her to accompany him to New York for that purpose. After considering various projects, her judgment dictated the acceptance of the terms offered by Mr. Barnum's Museum ; and as soon as a room could be fitted for her, she entered on her engagement, in November, 1844, and has remained in the Museum ever since.

Though, as we have seen, visions disclosing her own future had often, with more or less distinctness, *come to* her, yet, hitherto, she had remained quite unconscious of any ability to look into the future *at will*, whether for things relating to herself or others. It was when, on her application at the Museum, Mr. Hitchcock, then the manager, asked for a specimen of her skill, that the past, present, and future life of that gentleman appeared in the magic stone. From that time she has exercised the functions of a prophetess, a fortune-teller, a witch, or what you will.

And thus, at the last, we see the spirit of prophecy fully



developed in and fully possessing her, and the science of prophecy completely achieved. The progress has not been rapid or easy. With long, gradual, and toilsome ascending, the summit has been gained. Though with little resting by the way, the journey has been a long one. A born seeress as she was, and from nativity destined thitherward, the ascent had required careful teaching and training, much study and exertion, with some painful discipline. But at length the end is reached, and it is a high one. She stands on the zion of prophecy, and the broad domain of the future land, reaching dimly away to the purple hills of unsurveyed eternity, lies before and beneath her view—just where, of old, the scriptural wizards stood when they beheld whirlwind, deluge, and fire, battle, pestilence, and famine, devastation and captivity, sweep with swift destruction over the scene, and then turned to denounce the coming calamities to their rigid-necked cotemporaries.

For what special end she has been born and bred a prophetess, she does not know. That she has been specially selected to communicate to the world any Divine revelation, or even to foresee and foretell grand events of mere earthly consequence, she is very far from claiming. It may be that this peculiar organization and supernatural teaching have been lent for no remarkable purpose, and it may be that it has been in order, some day, to serve, in some way, some purpose of importance to somebody. Time will tell. There is time enough to tell; let it tell.

But, with whatever high or whatever lowly calling—or whether with any calling at all—summoned to that zion, she has *come*, and here she is, occupying the same high ground with Samuel and Baalam, and those of Delphos;—as truly a prophet she—as really a recipient of prophetic light—as any of them; and if not commissioned to denounce Heaven's wrath against the offending nations of modern times, yet it is not because those same nations have not richly deserved it, nor because she has not been ready and willing to do so. A prophetess she is, and would not be properly entitled with any other appellation. The spirit of prophecy is upon her, rests with her, and will not depart; and she lives and breathes in that high spiritual atmosphere, through whose rare medium the light of God in old times shone, and the word of the future vibrated to the most gifted of the great prophets, bearing to Moses the wisdom of the law, and to Zoroaster's ears the far-off music of the moving spheres.

She tells fortunes—"cheap."



## MUSEUM LIFE.

DURING the fortnight occupied in fitting up a cell for her at the Museum, Mrs. B. was bracing her resolution to meet the obvious unpleasantnesses of the new calling on which she was to enter—and it was a fortnight of sobs and tears. No wonder at it, poor thing!—and all who have noticed her slight organization and retiring demeanor, so directly opposed to the character required in a woman whose vocation is to look the great public in the face and speak to it, will readily join in the exclamation—“They do not raise prophetesses for exhibition, in the quiet Farmington valley.” With her one smooth pebble, and not three, she was to meet the Goliath of the million, and, only by hard smiting against his causality bump, break through his skull of prejudice, and reach his fore-brain.

She was not long in drawing visitors. At first her attention was largely devoted to diseases and their cure, in which, by aid of the experience she had already acquired, as we have before seen, she was brilliantly successful. But after a year's time she had to abandon it, except in rare cases, for the reason that her health suffered too much in enduring the various maladies of her patients, which, to a certain degree, and temporarily, were communicated, through sympathy, to her own system. Searching for lost or stolen goods has engaged and severely taxed a good share of her energies. Common “fortune-telling” has constituted the remainder of her business, and was the last branch in which she succeeded in commanding confidence; for the public had been prepared by the clairvoyance of mesmerizees to credit the existence of the two former faculties, but not for the third. In fine, she has not, since she first opened her cell, wanted for work; and hard work it has been too. At first, and for many months, the nervous effort of “seeing” was so great that most of her clothing, even in winter, and with no fire in the room, would continue through the day quite saturated with sweat; and this is partially the case still.

One feature of her practice as a fortune-teller should be noticed, to meet in advance the common opinion (derived from the cases of imperfect seers or mere impostors) that all fortune-tellers are sustained by the calls of the idly curious, of silly women and ignorant men, and that is, that her labors are by far the greater part confined to matters of business, and that full two thirds of her visitors are *men*, many of whom are in the habit of making repeated calls at her cell, and of planning their business operations upon the advice they there receive. And,



true is it, though these would be loth to publicly confess it, that by repeated experience they find her to be quite an expert at lawsuits, an infallible future price-current of stocks and merchandise, and a safe counsellor in all the practical affairs of life.

No important event has occurred to mark her Museum life. The painful excitement arising from cases of sad fate brought before her, and the pleasant interest from those fewer ones of happy promise, have alike gradually lost their first intensity, which was great, and, falling into the daily routine of an arduous vocation, she has become indurated at least, if not suited to her condition.

The welfare of her children requires that they should be at a distance. The change in her name and her long residence away from her relations, have very much served to disconnect her from all her former friends and circumstances. Everything in her spiritual experience tends to destroy interest in those extrinsic nothings for which so many of us almost wholly live, and her worldly regards are confined to and concentered in her few and absent children.

What notoriety or fame she has acquired, if known to, is not perceived by her, and she neither enjoys, nor is annoyed by it, for she never goes where it is bruited. From morning till late in the evening, her seat is in that cell at the Museum. If it is a pleasant place, she is used to it, and if it is not pleasant she is used to it. She hardly knows whether she likes or dislikes her mode of life, for she has followed it long enough to have got accustomed to any occupation. Her (natural) life is confined within the close walls of that cell, and beyond these she can not be said to have any existence. She is a kind of hermit there. The nook is as small as any hermit would think comfortable for meditation or respiration, and without having the musical neighborhood of brook, the shade of vine, or the aspect of the clear or clouded heavens. Her cave is built of clumsy lath and plaster, its moss banks are chair, table, and stool, and its outer prospects only brick, and brick, and brick, piled so high as to leave no glimpse of sky. Yet a hermit she is, and solitary in a wilderness—in the drear wilderness of a stranger crowd and the dismal solitude of a great city. These are the exterior remains of the little girl of the brown farmhouse of the Farmington valley.



## A GLIMPSE THROUGH THE GLASS.

Now turn we to interior things. It was natural for our seeress to connect her gift of vision with the stone, since it was only when looking upon it that her voluntary sights had hitherto come to her, and since she had seen others using similar stones for the same purpose. Just before leaving Hartford to come to New York, she had been curious enough to try the experiment of looking in other stones, and had found that crystal gave a clearer vision than agate, and spar a better one than either; spar being, as she learns, governed by the same planet with herself. Following up the experiments after coming to the Museum, she continued for a whole year to try the effect of the different kinds of mineral substance, and many a time had the naturalist of the establishment to unlock the cabinet cases, in order that some new rock might have its vision-showing qualities tested. With all of them she had some degree of sight, but none answered so well as the spar, and with it in hand she received her visitors during that year. When that time had elapsed, she conceived the idea that the faculty lay wholly in her own mind, and, on discarding the pebble and strongly abstracting her thoughts, found she could see as well as before. After this, in order to aid in this mental abstraction, she used to practise with blindfolded eyes. Finally, after doing this for six months more, she discarded the veil, and found herself fully able to see without any such artificial mediums of stone or beirage. And thus was her education conducted. First she was familiarized to the presence of a spectre, and enabled to converse with him. Then her own past life was shown by *representations* and *signs*, which, being the easiest lesson for a beginner to comprehend, she was directed to read as far as she was able, while what she failed in was afterward explained to her. Then followed her future life, and other events resting in the future. Then the teacher of all this was entirely withdrawn from her, so that she might gain self-reliance. After two years longer, during which all these seeds of instruction were germinating, she was caused to abstract her mind by closely fixing her eyes on a stone, being made to think that by such means alone could anything be seen. At first the stone used was one having affinity with the Indian, but that was afterward changed for one ruled by her own peculiar planet. After over a year's close practice, she was taught to rely on her power of mental abstraction, with the simple aid of a blindfold which excluded exterior sight from disturbing her mind;—and at length, when with all this discipline her educa-



tion had been completed, all these adjuncts were discarded, and her visions shone in immediately, directly, and clearly, to her unaided mind.

Mrs. B.'s manner in interviews with those who consult her is, at first to take the hand and concentrate her eyes for a while in the centre of the palm, but soon letting it fall, she looks with a fixed and peculiar expression downward and forward, or, sometimes, upon the face of her watch, occasionally fetching a deep sigh. Sometime she examines the whole palm, and will remark on the indications that the theory of palmistry, which she has studied, teaches her to find there, but her revelations are never based on palmistry, but solely upon her "sight." She will speak respectfully of astrology too, on which subject she has read several works, and entertains more respect for the early astronomers than do we, who call those deep students fools; but inasmuch as astrology, for the correctness of its results, depends upon the medium of the human science of figures, human accuracy of calculation, and human systems of interpretation, all finite in their nature, and inasmuch as we remain still in considerable ignorance respecting the map of the starry heavens, which must be the very foundation of the science, its meagre fruits are well accounted for. Yet it is surprising to learn how many persons have come to her, who, even in this utilitarian region, have spent ten, twenty, thirty years, or whole lives, in poring over old tomes devoted to this occult science which we have generally considered to be long ago consigned to the grave of lost labors—to the grand *salle des pas perdus*, among the many chambers in the tomb of the past. O we are all finite creatures! our sight hardly outruns the length of our noses, our noses are very short, and it is presumption to turn them up at anything.

Now how does this woman see?—and *what* is it she sees, from which she infers the revelations made by her? The literature of this young world, even now at its infant school, learning only by dint of much persuasion and punishment, is already extensive enough to require many lives to explore it;—what must be then the extent of simply the alphabet and spelling-book, to the universal spiritual language whereby she reads such portion as is permitted of the broad pages in the library of fate? So far as may be done, she will one day in a suitable mode make known to all as much of this as we can comprehend. For the present we must be content with a sketch merely of the mode by which she is enabled to prophesy.

Upon looking for the life of a person, she calls up in her mind



a scale of measurement, by which to mark the time, which she divides, at first, into years. Then, from the beginning she looks along the scale to observe the circumstances and events which appear each in the year of its occurrence, and so passes over the whole scale till the *end* is reached; the whole coming up to sight without distinction of past, or present, or future; so that another effort is needed to separate them. This is done by *wishing* for the circumstance that marks the present to appear, which is instantly shown, in its proper position on the scale. When any striking circumstance rises to view, and it is desired to know the time with particularity, she again subdivides that portion of the scale on which it is represented into months,—these again into weeks, and so into days or hours if needed. Suppose that in passing her thought along the scale, one of the year-spaces is obscured by a cloud, which denotes misfortune, she will fix her mind on the cloud and desire to see what it portends, which will appear, perhaps in the shape of a sick-bed, on which the subject of the story is seen lying ill. To know the disease in such case, she closely regards the body, which is thereby made to appear more distinctly, and all its organs are shown, by the appearances of which, of course, the disease is made manifest. To know the duration of the illness, the year-space is subdivided as mentioned above, and if it results in death, the scale is cut short at the illness. In the next place, it may be, a young lady is seen, with certain adjuncts indicating courtship or marriage. Perhaps it is a courtship being carried on in the present, and on describing the appearance of the fair one, the visiter, with some natural solicitude, asks if she loves him. To answer this question the seeress wishes a closer interview with the object of his flame, and on her coming quite near, mentally asks her how she likes the young man, to which the fair spectre replies in voice, seemingly sounding in the natural ears of the seeress, either that she loves John dearly, or that she cares little for him, but is only holding on to him for a *pis aller*, in case the other youth, whom she *does* affect, should fail to propose,—or else that she does not love him, but “perfectly hates the sight of him” (young ladies never hate imperfectly). But either way it may be, the real truth is told, no deceit being permitted in such interrogatories. Possibly the disposition or intellectual qualities of the subject of the vision is asked for; in which case, the whole cranium comes up plainly, and the sizes and relations of all the organs tell the story.

Here I will remark, that Mrs. B.’s skill and facility in phrenology, which she exerts without even looking at the head (with



exterior eyes), is not the least wonderful or useful of her gifts. Let any one produce to her a chart marked by one of the Fowlers, and with the greatest rapidity, and while his hat is on his head, she will go over the phrenological scale, giving the number proper to each organ as she goes; and when done, the coincidence between her numbers and those of the phrenologist will be close enough to fully justify the eminent reputation of the latter, while the discrepancies will, upon reference to the experience of those who know the person, be found clearly to establish her supremacy over all manipulators. Besides using the chart, she also explains the head with untechnical language, giving as rapidly as she can speak each one of the characteristics as well as the relations of the whole.

Now,—the *scale* that has been described, is an arbitrary mental creation of her own, similar to what we all are constantly using in our ordinary operations of thought. The person on the sick-bed, the organs of his body, the young lady, her brain, and her voice, are all of them *simple appearances*, which any one may easily understand, and which, in the spiritual communications made to mortals, are used whenever they can be rendered expressive of the intended meaning, but where they would fail of this, *signs* are used. The *cloud* was a sign of calamity, as the coffin would be of death. The full sun is with Mrs. B. a sign of certainty, while the sun with an eclipse signifies doubt,—yes, strange as it may seem, the decrees of fate do in some instances come to her darkened by doubt—positively doubtful,—but let this be considered elsewhere than in this book. The lessons she received from the Indian were written in signs appropriate to him, but after he left her, and she began to see independently, a new set of signs were used, which were appropriate to *her*.

It was by signs that the great visions of the Jewish prophets were mostly if not wholly shown. Generally, those prophets gave to the world the interpretations of what they saw, without describing the signs themselves, while at other times they merely transmitted to posterity the uninterpreted manuscript of heavenly hieroglyphics, with no hint of their meaning. Now, inasmuch as different prophets see by different systems of signs (so Mrs. B. says), and we are taught that the science of interpretation is a lore as rare perhaps as the power of prophecy itself, we must not be surprised that these grand mysteries of olden prophecy, which the seers who saw them concealed from the people, have met with no very clear or unanimous interpretation, from those numerous modest expositors who have pretended to

understand them by unaided exterior wisdom alone. Why those records were written in hidden ciphers,—when they are to be made plain to mortals,—whether by future seers of clearer light than those early ones,—whether, as is most likely, the old prophets perfectly understood their meaning but were forbidden to reveal it,—or whether, again, they were written only to be a record unto themselves, and not to be made plain except by the light of their own fulfilment,—we can not say. But however it may be, of this we should feel sure, that when they *are* interpreted, it will be so clearly done as to leave theologians no pretext for mistake or disputation, for wasted words or misapplied foolscap, or further outpouring of ink or wormwood, vinegar or gall; in those days many pages of commentary will suddenly become waste-paper, and some marginal notes in the received versions of the Bible read silly enough.

Although the *signs* are very numerous—those seen by her being probably over a thousand in number—yet their meanings are rendered to her by an immediate intuition which leaves no room for doubt, or need of hesitation; and her prophecies based on them never fail of the completest fulfilment. In “telling fortunes” in the hurried manner often rendered necessary by a press of visitors,—in unpleasant interviews with repugnant characters,—while forcing herself to see in disregard of her moods of mind or condition of health, she will occasionally neglect to search out and observe, or duly compare and consider all the *representations* requisite to producing a correct result, and so, in some rare cases, may fail of perfect accuracy, or even go, in certain respects, wide of the true mark. It is also true, that with some very few persons of controlling will, she finds it impossible to see clearly. But except under such disturbing influences, “representations” are as sure as signs, and her prophecies absolutely infallible. This is her claim, and before a public who have had and still have abundant opportunity to test her pretensions, she abates not one jot or tittle of that claim.

I have said that her mission has not hitherto been to stand in the high places of the holy prophets, to reveal the Divine purposes to trembling nations. How could it be, as she has been circumstanced? Yet she knows full well that her talent is of the same *kind* as theirs, and her lore learned through the same mystical language; nor have her spiritual eyes been wholly forbidden to dwell on deeper, grander, and holier things, than were contemplated in her engagement with the Museum manager,—but of these more in due time.

This prophetess, whether she be a true or a false one—is it



not known? Her hand is open. She hides no light under any bushel, nor does she take other measures to avoid scrutiny. Not like her sisters of imperfect sight, the Pythonesses, does she speak in riddles, covering with cloudy phrase a back door of escape through after construction, but right out she speaks, in language common enough to be "comprehended by the commonest comprehension." For nearly five years now gone, she has sat in that Museum-box, receiving all comers, and rejecting none, submitting to all tests, using no paraphernalia of mystery to excite curiosity, or theatrical clap-trap to tickle the popular taste therefor. In those years she has been consulted by thousands, and tens of thousands, for whom she has foretold births, marriages, and deaths, disease and recovery, losses and gains, friendships and enmities, journeys and returns, thefts, burglaries, and burnings, affairs of the parlor, affairs of the kitchen, matters of state, fluctuations in trade, common events and remarkable occurrences, with all other of the generals and minutiae of various human circumstance and transaction. And has she not foretold them truly? Let those same tens of thousands be inquired of, and let them answer. There will be found among them the learned, the pious, and the great. You will find them in the grandest saloons of every American city, and you will seldom search for them in vain in the obscurest regions of the land. The sailor on the remotest coast beguiles the long dog-watch with recounting the wonders of his experience with the wise woman of New York, while faithful listeners believe and tremble. No caravan crossing the bare plains which bar us from the western placers of golden harvest, but contains some one who can bear testimony in her favor. In Texan bar-rooms the brawler is bowie-knived pursuant to her prediction, and on the northern meadow or mountain, crops flourish or are blighted, sheep are propagated or smitten with rot—all that it may be fulfilled which was spoken by this prophetess. In Arkansas, Jones is elected over Johnson according to her predication; and when in Maine "democracy is triumphant," she can truly say, "I told you so." The tornado sweeps the ocean to accomplish her decrees; and ships freighted with wealth sail safely into port to establish her fame. For almost five years she has been doing this; for four years and eight months she has continued regularly at her post, dealing out the sweet things of happy promise for a Spanish quarter the dole—pumping the thunders of direful fate at two shillings per clap. All-quietly has she conducted her labor; not roving about, but all the while remaining in the same city and on the same corner, giving time a fair chance to



expose the impostor—time has verified and confirmed the prophetess.

No mode could be better for establishing Mrs. B.'s claims than this one into which she has been by circumstances led. Prophesying during all this long time to as great an average number as a hundred in each week, she has been enabled to sow the seeds of a vigorous public opinion, which finally, notwithstanding the silence of the press, and despite the thousand and one opposing causes, are producing their fruit. The foundations of her fame are now too broad to be shaken. Her disciples have become numerous enough to keep one another in countenance, and though few may yet be bold enough publicly to speak out, there are thousands standing ready to cheer him who will.

During these same five years in which, with such labor, she has been so slowly and surely coming forward, the atmosphere of opinion has been in other ways preparing to receive her claims. In that space of time common opinion has, with a rapidity past all precedent, progressed in kindred channels of belief in the (so called) supernatural. The faculty of present seeing by mesmerized subjects, has in that time gained so many believers, that to affirm its truth has ceased to be heretical or ridiculous with any but those who live very far from the road and never take the papers. In five years the scientific religion and religious science of the wise Swedenborg has, after so long a lapse since its discoverer's death, lifted high its head among the highest and broadest heads in the land, and is rapidly becoming not only reputable but fashionable. And homeopathy, medicine spiritualized,—most infinitesimal of "humbugs," outraging the plainest principles of common sense, absurd on its face, based upon negation, with theory incomprehensible to its own professors, and so thin and light that logic finds no prying point on which to brace its lever in order to overturn the misty fabric,—impertinent little homeopathy, leaping up and spitting on the gray beard of old and reverend experience, and with its fine mustard shot "pellets" making war against big bomb-boluses—yes, and beating them too, in a fair fight,—is at this day quite another homeopathy from what it was five years ago. Aided simply by the force of facts, it has made good its entrance to the chambers of patients rich enough to afford an illness once a fortnight, and to pay the bills on presentation, and now is driven on its wide circuit in a coach and pair, treads on velvet carpets, and twirls its gold-headed cane, seated in a chair of damask beside a bed of down. Who that can swallow homeopathy will



choke at anything that is well proved? Lastly, dreams and ghost-stories are coming into vogue. The hobgoblins that haunted the poor German seeress, are recalled to frighten fair ladies of a distant land and language. The story of their redoubtable performances, and sketches of the "night side of nature," are read in place of the discarded novel,—old spectres are revived, new vamped and verified again,—interpreters of dreams are called for, and spooks, bogles, and ghosts, dressed in modern habiliments, come with familiar air and knock by daylight at the doors of our belief.

Among the rest, and at the last, comes prophecy also;—not standing on the sacred mountains, or hiding in the caves of holy valleys, not crying in the wilderness—she might cry there for ever before customers would come—but in aspect of a respectable woman, of middle age, clad in dark stuff gown, and wearing a warm shawl not made of camel's hair, "as she knows of," seldom tasting wild honey, and not at all relishing locusts, but eating bread and butter, and drinking strong green tea,—she appears before the public, and speaking truly of simple things, lifts up her slender and clear voice—and is finally heard through all the roar of rushing ideas, the clangor of machinery, and the bruit of business in these practical times. The turn of prophecy has at length arrived;—the hour has come, and the *woman*.

Certainly, the advent of the supernatural is upon us, and the day of mere materialism is dying away. The old laws of nature are being either foully violated or else receiving a new construction that changes their meaning wholly. The solid, the heavy, the fast-fixed, are yielding to the airy, the unsubstantial, the ghostly. The ocean of the unknown rises around, and is invading the dry ground of our ancient reliance, while the vague clouds of mystery descend and drench us where we stand; and a new deluge threatens to drown our old world of opinion for its long sins of unbelief.

There is getting to be no comfort for the unhappy conservatives in these days; they do not even serve the humble purpose of a drag upon the wheels of progress, since we turned loose the poor old tortoise who had carried the world so slowly and quietly on its back in the used-up centuries, and hitched in its harness the locomotive rampant,—it will be the air-horse *volant* soon!

## SPIRITS AND GUARDIAN SPIRITS.

THE people who dwell in the land of spirits, and even the angels of the inner heaven, are no strangers to our prophetess. When it is properly required of her, she can always have sight of them, and, had her vocations permitted it, would gladly have devoted a large portion of her time to contemplating those interior realms where they abide. This kind of spiritual communication, however, which is effected by her visiting them, is very different from that where they come to call on *her*, which last has occurred in comparatively few instances, which I will here relate.

Among the earliest of those who called on the "fortune-teller," at the Museum, was an elderly gentleman now dead, who, being himself, of a highly spiritual organization, and much versed in spiritual phenomena, became at once greatly interested in her. To him she communicated the history of her supernatural experience, and from him she received much valuable advice. On being told of the interviews she had had with the Indian doctor, he conceived the idea of attempting the same thing, and partially succeeded in it; and it was also found that she too could make herself apparent to him from a distance, and in this manner they would afterward often hold converse in the spirit, while being separated in the body. After enjoying his friendship for a few years, she saw that his end was approaching, and, for an important reason warned him of it. He died according to the prediction.

Not long after his death, he came to her one day, as plainly visible as in life, and wearing the same aspect, to tell her how to proceed in relation to one of her children, who was not then situated just as she wished; and pursuant to his counsel, she at once set off on a long journey and placed the child in excellent keeping. In this interview he showed her a book, which, on opening was found to contain four portraits, being those of herself and her three children, and to be written in a strange language—the Hebrew, as she fancied. His last visit was quite lately, and while this present book has been in progress.

It was in the evening, at about ten o'clock, the hour when her Museum duties ceased, when the noise of the outer orchestra in the music balcony had discontinued its fierce, but desperately hopeless competition with the inharmonious omnibus wheels, and left the public ear free to them alone, when the liberated clerks of the retail trade were seeking the subterranean oyster saloons of Park Row, and through all Broadway and its tributary streets



the business of the day was giving way to the pleasures of the evening, for those whose days, alas, were pleasureless, and the ghosts of St. Paul's churchyard, relieved from the tormenting rays of the Museum windows, could walk in quiet and gossip from grave to grave—that she descended the Museum stairs and bent her way round the corner to her boarding-house. Among the crowd that covered the side-walk, a man in a cloak approached the side of the fortune-teller and moved along with her. She turned to look him in the face and saw it was Mr. ———. They walked in silence till the house door was reached, and passing in with her, he took his seat by her side. Still no word was said, but from beneath his cloak he produced a basket of fruit and handed it to his friend, who, receiving it, found the fruit to be all of gold, and on opening them, that each contained a precious gem in its centre. He departed in silence, as he had come;—and this was all.

Her grandmother frequently calls on her from her upper abode, generally coming at times when her descendant needs counsel, and for the purpose of giving it. Occasionally a visitor who knocks at the door of the fortune-teller's cell, sees it open a little, while her mild voice says, "presently sir," or, "wait a little, I will see you ma'am in fifteen minutes," and then the door is closed again. The visitor strives to beguile the time by looking at the noted and the unknown worthies on the walls of the picture-gallery, whom he did *not* come to see, but, while doing this, little thinks that the visitor within the cell, for whom he is postponed, has come from so great a distance as the spirit-land, to see her granddaughter;—if he did, he would doubtless wait a half hour, even for the accommodation of the ancestral spectre, or perhaps, feeling a natural aversion at succeeding her on the only spare seat of the cell which she is occupying without warming, would abandon his call altogether.

It has been made known to Mrs. B. that this is her guardian spirit, or rather, is one of them, for another has her fate in charge.

"I am of thy brethren the prophets."—BIBLE.

Not near, but at a distance, not visiting and conversing with her, but holding himself to view from afar; of high and holy aspect, she is allowed to recognise one, whom she also knows as her guardian through her earthly pilgrimage, and her assistant in her earthly labors. She *thinks* she can name him. He is dressed in the costume of ancient Israel, with robe and sandals, and wears a beard. It is thus that Elijah, or Isaiah, or Ezekiel, or Jeremiah, might appear to a prophet-sister of the later time, in-

heritor of his powers of prescience, and to watch over whom, and all her trials, was his appointed task and pleasant duty. This spirit holds himself aloof, I said. Perhaps he will one day draw near; she hopes for it.

And the Indian, who came to her in her need and was good to her, who found her in darkness and left her in light, who found her in adversity and left her in good estate, who sought her out while feeble and suffering, and brought with him strength and health for her; the Indian, whom the falling curtain of death shut entirely from her view, and whose often looked-for, often longed-for form, comes no more to her aching eyes;—has *he* no longer any agency in her fate?—and is a cloud of darkness always to be the only sign that rises when she would search for him through earth and heaven? It seems so. No clue can she gain of his fate, and even her inquiries for him, instituted in the natural world, have as yet been fruitless. But she knows that when this book shall be published, information of his fate (in this life) will be forthcoming, and the book she gave him, “solitude sweetened,” be restored to her hands.

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#### SPONTANEOUS VISIONS.

SPONTANEOUS visions are those which come without being looked for. They are *sent* to, and not *called up* by her. Of this kind seem to be all the recorded visions of the sacred seers. They are, of course, of far greater importance than are commonly the sights she herself searches for to serve the occasions of some individual mortal. Of these she has been favored with many, they come more frequently of late, than formerly. For instance:—

One day while seated, waiting for visitors, the heavens were shown with the sun, moon, and stars, all clustered together, just as they had appeared in a vision of her childhood, and below them was the surface of the earth, all of it evenly strewn with gold in great abundance. Again—a tree is seen bearing two kinds of fruit, crab-apples below, and oranges above. The crab-apples turn to silver, and the oranges to gold. Again—in the park (opposite the Museum), another tree is standing, and on it are perched three beautiful birds, two of them being together and the other by himself, below them. In the beak of each is a ring, and from each ring there hangs a little gold bell. *She* knows the signification of them all.



SHE STRETCHETH FORTH HER HAND AND PROPHESEIETH CONCERNING GREAT THINGS.

"But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

"And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."—DEUTERONOMY, xviii., 20, 21, 22.

THE reader may now notice that no attempt has been made to engage his faith by any details of "sample instances" showing our prophetess' success in her art. Such a course would have been needless, useless, and improper: needless, because in every circle may be found those of good veracity who are able—and, when this shall have been published, will be willing—to recount their own experience with the fortune-teller of the Museum, and bear witness in her favor;—useless, because such details, coming with the mere sanction of an anonymous pen, would, justly, gain little credit;—improper, because it would tamper with that implied obligation to secrecy under which she feels herself to rest.

She is not unwilling, however, at the close of these pages, to promulgate a few words concerning things of public moment, and which are yet to happen.

By spontaneous vision she has seen a machine flying in the air, and bearing on its swift wings, intelligence, fraternity, and peace, as a belt around the globe. This is not to be until after several failures, but it *is* to be, and that right soon. She has seen and predicted it for three years past.

*Again:* In casting her spirit's glance over the troubled countries of Europe, a field more grand, I think, than has been often unfolded to the prophets' eye, she has plainly seen certain general results, preluding, as is usual, the perception of those more minute occurrences which can only follow a much closer examination, and such an one as her occupations have hitherto prevented her from making with sufficient thoroughness to justify any public prediction concerning them. But she will yet have much to say about the grand movements soon to shake the world. Meantime, and while this book is nearly through the press, *now*, on this sixteenth day of July, A. D. 1849, when the hope of freedom for Europe is sinking and dying within the breast of the most faithful of us here, as we learn how over all

that continent the tide of reaction, reddened and beautiful with patriot blood, is flowing in full flood ;—*now*, while poor, poverty-stricken Ireland, late blustering so promisingly, having found out, what physiology might long ago have taught her, that there is no fighting on an empty stomach, is subjugated by policemen, and surrenders to misery, too weak to groan aloud, and only faintly whining and asking for amnesty and potatoes—of the two being more particular about having the potatoes ;—*now*, while the German people are learning at last, what people of their education should long ago have read in history, that princes are wholly untrustworthy—and the Pharaohs of Germany, having all of them cheerfully submitted to the process of having their hearts hardened by the Lord, refuse to let the people go free, and, fixing their cracked crowns more firmly on their fools'-heads, are bravely breaking oaths and tearing constitutions, and each and all of them forcibly consenting to hold office for yet another term ;—*now*, while "order" is being restored in Baden, and "quiet" established in Bavaria, and United Germany's vagrant parliament stands, by force of bayonet points, adjourned *sine die* ;—*now*, while Hungary alone, in isolated heroism, stands single-handed against the banded bands of an emperor and a czar, girding her with steel and fire, but holding out still, fighting miraculously, and shrieking to the empty echoes for aid, yet growing the while feebler in her war and fainter in her cry, and seemingly without help or hope ;—*now*, while the Russian, being tempted by Metternich and instigated by the devil, is thundering out his decided determination of calling Europe to order with the voice of his guns, and comes marching down on her plains with multitudinous platoons and squadrons, heavy artillery, and plentiful munitions of war, though, to present appearances, only coming in time to be in at the death of liberty ;—*now*, while, in full view of all this, France rests recreant and reactionary within her own borders, save where, with the fury and fatuity of a bull who is frightened at the sight of a red flag, she rushes forth to trample on the new banner of republican Rome ;—*now*, while four several powers—two of them mighty ones—are marching grand armies to reinstate over his rebellious children, the Holy Father, Pius the Ninth, and by the battering of Oudinot's cannon a breach is made in the walls, through which he may re-enter to reign again, by grace of God and gunpowder, as Prince of Rome ;—*now*, while the same Pius, sipping his chocolate at Gaeta, and carefully caring for his health, is patiently waiting for the city to become penitent through loss of blood, and hourly expecting the messenger who shall bring the glad tidings, that



sufficient numbers of the children whom God gave him to love and protect, having fallen with gashed and pierced bodies and died in mortal agony, the remainder are willing to receive him again:—*now*, while thus runs the story in Europe, even now, the humble woman of Connecticut casts her eyes thitherward, and prophesies as follows:—

Not all the force or fraud of Oudinot, nor all the might of those four powers combined, nor the might of the eight powers, nor of all the powers of Europe, nor all the powers of hell, shall succeed in re-establishing Pius the Ninth to be Prince of Rome.

*It is said*, and Oudinot can not gainsay it. And now let the bombs burst, and the bullets whistle, tearing tapestry and flesh, ripping bowels and canvasses, shattering bones and spattering brains, and crushing column and capitol, while the ghosts of those who fell in Vandal days, roused with the shrieks of the butchered ones, come forth and howl in sympathy through the streets of Rome: yet shall these vile doings all be done in vain. Even though the red arm of conquest should beckon back the prince and priest to his bombarded city and fusiladed flock, while carnage smooths his way to the throne, and rapine offers the bloody crown to his anointed head—yet he shall not be suffered to rule in Rome. The immortal children of the Eternal city, whose dying deeds outglow the glories of her dawning-time, have not fallen in vain. Not one bone has been broken, nor one drop of blood blotted the pavement, without a most fit use and end, which will gladden their liberated souls as, rising above the din of conflict and beyond the range of bombs, they enter those spheres where princes may torment them no longer.

*Again*: Victoria, by the grace of God, queen, and so forth, will one day, by the blessing of God, be no longer queen: all this through the disloyal behavior of her own subjects. *And Queen Victoria's time is now nearly due.* At the end of twelve years from her coronation, her troubles will begin;—in about another year her troubles of state will end, for she will then be no longer a queen.

This has only very lately been thus plainly shown to the prophetess. It came in a spontaneous vision, by which were also represented certain circumstances connected with the catastrophe, which, however, she feels at liberty to withhold. Though this vision is of late occurrence, she has for nearly five years foreseen and frequently foretold that such an end would at some time happen to Victoria's reign. May the prediction, piercing the barriers of ministerial misrepresentation and courtly flattery, find its way to the ears of her whom it most concerns, and be

the means of timely inducing a prudent investment of a portion of her royal income in those highly villified "American securities," so that in her retirement she may have ease, and be enabled to educate her interesting family to grace such spheres of usefulness as they shall be called to, and to deport themselves with credit to the respectable family of Guelphs. Poor thing! it was not her fault that made her queen, but merely the accidents of the generative process.

*Again:* Pius and Victoria will not be without commiseration, for the time is at hand when every sovereign in Christian Europe, save one, shall cease to reign, and ten years longer shall see that one, the czar of Russia, succumb to that "spirit of the age" and "want of faith" which even now, as he snuffs them from afar, he instinctively knows to be his mortal enemies, and arms himself against.

The times are ripe and rotten for these consummations.

*It is said.* And now let the kings and queens avoid, if they can, this decree of the quiet Yankee fortune-teller. And let them know—but they won't—that the Lord is only hardening their hearts and softening their heads, in order to ensure for them a surer and swifter doom from the hands of their enraged peoples.

*It is spoken,* and it is written. God is great, and his prophets still live. The bloody book of kings is closed. The destiny of monarchs is done. The curse of crowns is accomplished. What is next to follow?—by what easy or difficult transitions will the nations enter upon the new order (or disorder) of things?—how rapidly or slowly will be solved the crooked questions which will thereupon arise and demand solution?—ah, these things remain yet to be in due time told. But come what may, kings must go. Upon such an assurance hope *must* await, clad in her garments of gladness.

It is spoken and written. God is great and can perform it. He is wise, and will well order it. He is good, and the earth may hope.

"IT IS WRITTEN."



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