

A SYNOPSIS  
OF  
THE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE  
OF  
JOHN S. WILLIAMS,  
MEDIUM.

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*City, County and State of New York, ss.*—Personally appeared before me, Jacob A. Westervelt, mayor of the city aforesaid; John S. Williams, late of the city of Cincinnati, in the State of Ohio, and after being duly sworn, depose and saith that he the said John S. Williams, is the author and writer of a book, entitled "A Synopsis of the Spiritual Experience of John S. Williams, Medium," to which he intends to prefix a copy of this affidavit, and to append his facsimile signature. And that the things said and narrated in said book, did actually happen and take place as therein stated as nearly as he was enabled to narrate, or state them agreeably to his best capacity, knowledge and belief, and to this he makes solemn declaration before God, the searcher of hearts, and final judge of all men.

JOHN S. WILLIAMS.

Sworn and subscribed to before me, 14th May, 1853.

JACOB A. WESTERVELT, Mayor.

On Saturday 18th of October, 1851, being a guest at the Burnett House, in Cincinnati, Ohio, I, John S. Williams, observed the card of the Misses Fox, hanging in the office with notice that they were holding levees in the house, with tickets for sale at the bar, I turned to Mr. Drake the principal clerk, and said "Are those Rochester-knocking girls here?" He said "Yes!" I purchased a ticket, and proceeded to their room. I was neither a believer nor disbeliever. I had opposed so many things, that I thought impossible, such as, mesmerism, phrenology, magnetic telegraphs, &c, &c., that were true, that I had become ashamed of myself, and determined to investigate, before I would oppose any thing new again. I had found, by much experience, that a man is apt to think and speak none the worse on a subject, by knowing something about it.

I thus approached the table. There were ten in the circle, viz. Benjamin Urner, Mr. and Mrs. Clark-Williams, James and Samuel Goodwin, all persons of high standing in the city, the two mediums,

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their mother, and one person I did not know, besides myself. The rappings instantly commenced, and Mr. Urner said to me, "Now ask if there are any spirits present that will communicate with you." It was so new a position for me, having never so much as seen a circle or medium before, that I felt a great reluctance, and it took some persuasion by my friends present, before I could consent to speak out in that manner, to—apparently nothing! At length I uttered the question distinctly, and the company were surprised at the number and variety of the raps that instantly followed! Those who had before been in circles, all agreed that I was surrounded by a host of spirits, who wished to communicate with me. That matter seemed to be settled.

Margaretta Fox then told me, to write my questions, or if I could concentrate my mind on questions, ask them mentally, informing me what would be *yes*, what *no*, &c. adding, that we do not want to know what you ask. You can "judge if the answers be correct." I liked that movement. I thought it seemed like fair play, I then asked, "Is the spirit of my mother present?" Answer, "Yes." "Is the spirit of my daughter Eliza, present?" "Yes." I also asked mother, several common-place questions, all which were answered as I might have expected. I then said, "Mother, what age was my daughter Eliza, when she died?" The rappings then became regular, so that others present knew they were to be counted, and three persons counted them. I did not, for I knew not what it meant. When the rappings ceased, they said "there were twenty-two raps; what was your question?" I said, I had asked the age of my daughter at her death; "Well," said one of the company, "was twenty-two right?" I said "It was, counting one rap for each year, for she was within a month of twenty-two when she died."

"Mother, what was *your* age when *you* died?" To this she as distinctly and unequivocally gave ninety-seven, which was her age at death, within three months!! I then asked her several more questions, and all the time from the commencement, I felt something striking my knee, as if it were a ball of wool. I thought it queer, but was determined not to let the circle know what was going on. I can hold my face straight amid the most exciting circumstances, and did then I know, but I peeped several times under the table, to see if it could be any person doing it. I found it was not done by mortal hands, but was determined to keep it to myself. The raps on my knee were about a second apart, or sixty per minute. There then came some raps on the table I did not understand, when one of the mediums said, "the alphabet is called for."

They then began, and called over the alphabet, and three wrote down the letters as they were given by the spirit, until letter by letter, this sentence was spelled out; "Why don't you tell?" "Tell what?" said one in the circle, I forget which. The calling of the alphabet proceed as before, until this sentence was given. "The knocking on your knee?"

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I tell you I was astonished, and all the company looked amazed, and stared at me, and some one asked, "Did you feel a knocking on your knee?" I said, "I must confess I did, but intended that you should know nothing of it!" "Which knee?" said one of the circle. The alphabet proceeded, until this sentence was given by the raps. "The right knee!" One of the company asked me "If that was so?" I said, "It was the right knee the knocking was upon." I was tied as to opposition.

There was much more given me very conclusive of the presence of invisible intelligences during that evening, and Monday evening following, among which was, *I was slipped or shoved, I presume a dozen times distinctly upon the floor with the chair upon which I was sitting, without the touch of any visible agency!!* I became convinced of the reality of the manifestation of spirits, for I thought then, and still think, no sensible man could avoid conviction amid proof so conclusive.

I attended none of their circles after that, for being a civil engineer by profession, and having several public works under my charge in course of construction, I could not attend to their circles, nor to the general subject, for several months. I finished off several of the works I had in charge during the fall, and remained at Cincinnati most of the winter following. On January 23rd, 1852, I felt a great anxiety to see Miss Wells, a writing medium, perform at a circle to be held at O. Lovels, in Sixth-street that evening. I attended without the least expectation of getting a manifestation. I did not expect to ask for one. My attention was drawn to Miss Wells' writing in the magnetic state, when all of a sudden Mrs. Eliza Lovel, with her face toward me, (she having gone into the clairvoyant state unobserved by me, which state I had never witnessed) exclaimed, "O, if there aint Eliza? It has been so long since I saw her! how pretty she looks! O, I am so glad to see her!" The two Eliza's were intimate on earth. I was surprised, but asked "Is it my daughter Eliza, you speak of?" "Yes; she is very near you, and another of your daughters." "Is it Mary Louisa?" "Yes. Eliza says she wishes to communicate with you, but would rather not to a circle. It is about family matters; she is so near you, she must be your guardian spirit."

From that moment I felt great anxiety that my lovely angel daughter, should have the desired opportunity of communicating with me; she was counted an angel on earth! I tried many mediums and circles, but without effect, until on Saturday afternoon, February 14th, passing down the east side of Vine, near Sixth-street, very pensively as usual then, when all of a sudden I was impelled to go into the house of Wm. N. Cammack, whose lady I had seen but twice. She came into the parlor on the ringing of the bell, and we commenced conversation. I felt as if I wished to tell her my anxiety to give my daughter a chance of communicating. I had no thought that she was a medium, and commenced to tell her that a daughter of mine wished

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to communicate with me, when the lady, who had just two or three days before become a medium, was instantly agitated and jumped up and ran to a table on which lay a pencil and paper, and wrote,

"I am here, dear father."

I was again astonished, not only at the providence that brought me there, but at Mrs. Cammack being a medium. I asked, "Does my daughter wish to communicate through you?" "She says, she does."

I took paper and pencil, and wrote a question, or rather a short address, to Eliza, which the medium refused to see, but suddenly turned the paper over, and wrote Eliza's answer on the back! She had never known my daughter. When she had done the answer, she said to me, "Your daughter tells me to sign her name, Eliza Williams. Was that her name?"

"No!" I answered; "her name was Eliza W. Ayres."

"Well," she says, "I must write it, Eliza Williams."

Said I, "That was her maiden name; but she was married to John W. Ayres."

I afterwards took the paper, and wrote, "Dear daughter, why do you sign your name, Eliza Williams?"

The medium wrote, "My name is Eliza Williams, here."

I then wrote, "Were not you and William conjugially united?"

The medium wrote, "No, no, we were not." She died, Oct. 21st, 1846; and he, Oct. 6th, 1847!

The fact of the questions being written on one side of the paper, and the medium writing on the other, without very attentively looking at what she had written, being likely to create difficulty in copying, I took a separate piece of paper and table, on which to write questions, so that she might proceed regularly with the answers. These communications proceeded several days, about an hour each day, and were of the most satisfactory kind.

At the same time, Eliza began at night to talk to me, to touch me, &c. ! to manifest herself on my hands, lips, &c. ! and would confirm me that it was she, through the medium, next day!! She told me to take a book I had, and copy in it all the communications with pen and ink.

It was but a few days before she began to write through me, herself. This faculty increased. We could hold conversations. I would speak as from my head down; and she, as if from my breast up! I have heard her audibly speak in my chest, and thousands of times have I felt her manifesting herself there, by rappings and movements of different kinds!

She told me, among the first things, that she could not teach me all I wished to know, but others would. She afterwards, through the medium, communicated with me, and signed the piece thus: "Eliza, and many others you shall know in time." This has all been verified. There is a society of angels that communicates with us, several of whom I have seen.

On the first day, she told me I would be a writing-medium—and so she made me one. I had seen her before she manifested herself on the 23d of January, through Mrs. E. Lovel, but did not know it was she, having no thought of her, and the appearance being momentary. I have seen her six or eight times since!!

On going to bed on Feb. 22d, I asked her for a manifestation that night, and she promised to give me one. During the night, she awoke me, by saying, as loud as common conversation, "This is the only kind of manifestation I can give you this evening;" when lo! before my eyes, in the darkness of night, was written, in plain white writing, many lines! I commenced to read it, which I did very easily; but I had forgot all but the last paragraph, before I recorded it. The last paragraph was this:—

"Dear Father—You have resisted the influences of the world, well; but there is more caution necessary when you are in company with others.

Your Eliza."

I saw the last written as I read it; and, what seemed remarkable, "Eliza" was written before "your," in time, but after it in position; and "your" was written after, in time, and first in position, as it stands. I have seen spiritual writings hundreds of times since, but have not been able to read much of them. I was sure Eliza had made a mistake in saying "this evening," as she had done not more than fifteen or twenty minutes before, for I believed it was after midnight. I got out of bed, struck a light, and, sure enough, it was twenty minutes past one in the morning! This excessively bothered or perplexed me, until Eliza, I presume, thought I had been enough perplexed with it, when she said, "In *this* world, all night is called *evening*, and all day, *morning*—so that an evening and a morning make a whole day;" and I joyfully accepted the explanation.

The above was written in milk-white letters, in the blackness of darkness. During the same morning, I saw twenty lines of most beautiful poetry, spaced into four-line stanzas, written in black and beautiful letters, upon a ground of pale orange-colored light. I did not read this then, but have since been told what they were. All the spiritual manuscript and printing I have seen since, have, I believe, been black, on white, blue, or red ground.\*

I afterwards read the account of these visions, to the medium, merely as a matter of information to her, when Eliza had her to write as I read, confirming my account of it, and telling how it was. I was glad of this, although I did not anticipate it.

On March 7th, I visited Mrs. Poor, a clairvoyant, at Utopia, forty-three miles above Cincinnati. She saw Eliza, and described her well, though she had never seen nor heard of her before! Eliza commu-

\* May 13th, 1853.—12, M.—Thirty minutes ago, when reading the account of my daughter's first writing, "I am here, dear father," through Mrs. Cammuck, to point the manuscript, I burst into tears, which I almost always do, in reading that account. I covered my eyes, and saw bright silver writing on a blue and purple ground!

nicated but little through her, except to send me back to Mrs. Cammack, for more confirming communications.

One peculiarity in these incipient manifestations, as confirmation, was, that Eliza had me to write from her with red ink, and from myself with black, through about 600 pages! I kept two pens and inks constantly on hand. I could not touch to the paper a pen with the wrong ink in it, without great effort! This may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, and was very useful before I was fully habituated to the condition of a medium. It was a physical proof to me of what was from her, and what from myself; and was very serviceable, as much of what I wrote, was dialogue between her and myself, as it is now between other monitors and myself. After I became better established in my mediumship, she told me to dispense with the trouble of using red ink, excepting when I might be impressed to transcribe portions from the Word of the Lord; in which case, I still am impressed to use red ink! My monitors are great lovers of the Lord and His Word, and wish to do Him honor.

During the fore-part of my mediumship, I received many letters written through other mediums, from the spirits of deceased acquaintances, confirming my condition, and congratulatory of my becoming a medium. Two of these deceased acquaintances were the Revs. Alexander Kinmont and James H. Perkins, for whom I entertained the highest respect during their useful lives. The style, diction, language, matter, and manner of these letters, were almost as much like them, as they could have written while in the body. Their earthly acquaintances will have each an opportunity of judging of this, if what I have written should be published while they live on earth. I have not even a guess at the time of their publication.

The next confirming fact (among many others of almost every day's occurrence,) I shall mention, is as follows:—On the 28th. of March, 1852—it being Sunday—Eliza impressed me to write out a monition concerning manifestations and the condition of mediums—in length, five pages—and to take it with me to Maj. Daniel Gano's.

In that communication she mentioned distinctly the existence of a society for whom she communicated. Mr. Gano I knew intimately, to be a man of wealth and standing, and always as clerk of court. Being much away professionally engaged, I was scarcely aware of his being a spiritualist; but was determined to obey the monition. On my way to his house, I was told that a circle met there, the first I knew of that, on my arrival the circle was sitting, and Mr. Gano asked, as he told me, if the manifestation of my daughter I had brought with me, should be read to the circle, response in the affirmative. I was introduced into the room, and began to read. Nearly opposite to me sat an elderly lady, apparently asleep. When I began to read, she began to affirm to the truth of what I read. I was surprised at this, when Major Gano said she was in the *elevated* state. I was so green then, as not to understand the term, for I knew not that she was a medium. I had seen her once, and but

once in my life to know it. It was a Mrs. Price, a clairvoyant medium, from sixty to seventy years of age, I suppose.

I kept reading and she confirming the truth of what was said, until I closed, when she immediately said, "I see your daughter, she is near you, and at a little distance stands a company of spirits, the society she mentions, from whom she communicates. In that society I see Swedenborg, Perkins and Kinmont. There are many others that I do not know. They stand together enveloped in a sphere of light. That sphere of light converges towards Eliza, and becomes a stream of light proceeding to her. From her to you proceeds a stream of light, to show how the communication is effected. That light flowing from her, envelopes you, and crowns your head with brightness. She is very pure and very near you. She is impressing you now, what does she say?"

I felt the impression forcibly, and these words flowed, as from an elevated pressure, water flows. "She impresses me to say, this is the beginning of the complete and universal fulfilment of the prophecy, when it will be no more necessary for a man to say to his neighbor, 'know the Lord,' for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest."

"What is her personal appearance?" "She is a small, spare, delicate woman, clothed in a cloud of light clear blue. Her forehead finely developed; her eye brows distinct and finely arched. They are black, as is her hair which flows in curled ringlets down over her shoulders; she has a bright smiling countenance, and beautiful blue eyes. She says she is the only one that impresses you. That she is taught what to say by that society. That she is not capable of teaching you herself. That she is always with you, day and night, and watches you while you sleep."

As to her vesture and personal appearance, so I have seen her myself, and as to what she told the clairvoyant, she has told to myself often. How unwise it would be for two persons as old as Mrs. Price and I both, to tell as true what we had not good evidence was true? We were then both over sixty years of age, and very near our final reckoning according to the course of nature. What is remarkable, Mrs. Price neither saw me, nor knew who I was, that I knew of when these things took place. Are they not very remarkable as proof?

I feel very little like censuring others, who after proper care in investigations, cannot believe fully in spiritual manifestations, because I was and still am one of those hard ones. As O. S. Fowler, who examined my head, said of me, it really seems that I cannot believe any thing short of positive demonstration. I was soon convinced of the truth of the general subject, and never since doubted that, for my spiritual friends, knowing I presume, what a hard one they had to deal with, took firm holds and gave me no chance of dodging, as has before been stated. But to believe that I was a medium was quite another affair. I could not at times believe I was worthy to be so

used. I have often been ashamed of my doubts in this matter, and have much supplicated the Lord for relief, have often felt sure that if I were a medium, I was losing it. O shame!

My spirit friends, when I would get to doubting and desponding, would tell me to go to some medium, they would tell me of, saying, "We will communicate to you through them, as you seem not to believe what comes through yourself." When so sent, they never failed to manifest to my entire satisfaction for me, and for a while, I would go on well, but other doubting and desponding states would come on. I have been communicated with by my spiritual monitors, by means of at least fifteen living mediums! every one of whom confirmed the truth of my condition. Among these were especially Mrs. Fuller, clairvoyant, and Mrs. Addleman, then Miss Jones.

One way they took to confirm me through myself, was to tell me how many pages I would receive impressions to write that day, or some future day, which never failed! Another was, to tell me that my monitions should nearly always end at the bottom of the pages, and of hundreds of monitions, not one in a hundred end any where else! Once I was sent forward to put addresses and pieces of lines, in places where I was told or impressed to put them, and what to say! I afterwards received both the subject and the matter which just filled up the spaces, so that the scraps written came in rightly!!!

Once (on Saturday August 6th), I was writing a long monition. I observed in the progress of it, that I was writing two paragraphs on every page! I wondered at this, when I was told I should write the rest of the manifestations in the same way, which turned out to be true! I was then told, to turn over twelve blank pages for Monday's work, and mark on each of them, as impressed, the ends of twenty-four paragraphs. I did so, and wrote at the bottom of the twelfth page by impression. "End of Monday's work." I wondered so light a day's work was laid out for Monday. I was then told to turn forward twenty pages of blank paper, and on them mark the endings of sixty paragraphs, to be filled up on Tuesday! I did so, and was just about to write at the bottom of the twentieth page, "end of Tuesday's work," when I was astonished to find I could not touch the pen to the paper!! I inquired the cause, and was told I would write four more pages on Tuesday, but was not to mark the paragraphs on any more!!

When Monday came, I had neither a subject nor impression to write till 1 p. m. ! at which hour I first could write a line! The twenty-four paragraphs as marked were filled to a nicety, and the impressions closed! On Tuesday the impressions began early, and I filled every one of the sixty marked paragraphs exactly, but could not stop till the twenty-four pages were filled!!! These things are all now to be seen among the near three thousand cap size pages, I have written under day and date, even to hours and minutes, by spiritual monition, which when published will be opened to public inspection. My spirit friends told me that such things were intended to convince me of my

condition, and of the power they had in subjects and language, that I could not have myself done these things unaided by them. These things certainly tended much to confirm me that I really was a medium. I do sometimes wonder my monitor did not leave me as too hard a case when I doubted my mediumship as I did. O. S. Fowler says, I "lack brass." Can that be the difficulty?

My impressions went on clearly, and rapidly at the rate of ten, twenty, and even thirty to thirty-six pages per day, until May 27th, when after writing thirteen pages clearly and beautifully, matter that I never before thought of, I broke out in a request to my daughter to favor me with physical manifestations, and especially with her personal appearance. Nearly two pages were occupied by me in inforcing the necessity of more physical manifestations to keep and to regulate my states. At the close of my requests she said to me this at the foot of the 680 page of my spiritual writings, and near 8 P.M., she broke forth thus:—

"O my dear and precious father, I will not impress you to write another line after this, until your reasonable and necessary requests be granted. Be easy: I think all will be right sooner than you may apprehend. I know your position, and pray for you.—Your Eliza."

This was the last I wrote of her monitions, in red ink, by impression.

Next day, Friday, 28th, had no impressions to write. At night, of Saturday, 29th, had a vision during sleep, and very significant. No impressions to write, from Eliza. Sunday, no impression to write. Monday, same. Tuesday, June 1st, had another very significant vision, during repose, last night. At noon, had a vision of writing, when awake, with my eyes covered closely! Wednesday, another. Another, on Thursday; still, no impressions to write, from Eliza, my monitor; but she gave me particular directions to record, explicitly, most of my visions for a time—which I did, to the number of one hundred and four! which, with monitions received, ran to the 784th page, or just averaging one page per vision.

Very few of these visions did I understand the meaning of, at the time, and very imperfectly yet; but I was told that I should understand them all, in the right time. This I believe to be true, for I now see much more into them, than I did when I first received and wrote them down. I can remember every one distinctly now, as I read the descriptions, although eleven months have passed, and I have not looked into them nor studied them since! My monitions are to look forward for something coming, and eternal—not backward, to things past and finite.

The twentieth vision was the appearance of Eliza herself, on Sunday, June 6th, at 8 A.M. She was veiled—I having been told that I was not prepared for distinct, open sight of her, without damage. She stood on a pillar of light; afterwards she turned, and lay, as it were, in open air above the pillar. She disappeared, and then reappeared on the left of my vision—to show, as I am told, that her

representations would be to my left, and mine to the right; and so we are yet represented every day, and at all times when I desire to see our representations in spiritual light!! This was at 8 A. M. In half an hour I had another, representing the activity of love. Another, of the Saviour's cross, with the sun in the centre; with a star like Venus in her brightness, on the left hand lower quarter of the cross; and the moon to the right, on the cross, about where we might suppose the Saviour's left hand to be.

The next vision was within the next half-hour, for they succeeded each other as rapidly as I could record them with the necessary descriptions. This vision was of the Saviour on the cross, with the sun in his left hand, and a ship's anchor, with a short piece of cable—both as bright as burnished silver—below his right hand, as if suspended from it.

The next vision was at 9 o'clock. It was of two dark-looking crosses, a pair of silver balances, and a silver square. Also, of the sun and moon, at the foot of the lower crosses. Then the star appeared again. I was in a succession of visions for two hours this morning, and was told to go to a place of worship that was hard by.

During the devotions, I had several visions, one of which I will abstract in the words of the description as I wrote it on my return from church, and as I distinctly remember it now; but, before this vision, during the devotions, I saw my Saviour's ascension represented plainly before my eyes! His ascent was towards the right hand, and upward, until veiled by a bright cloud.

Vision 29th. "Eliza told me to close my eyes for another vision. "A spot of blue light appeared above the centre of my vision, and over "it. I was presently attracted by the blowing of a beautiful flower of "white light, near the right boundary of my vision, and a little lower "than the centre. This flower had four beautiful and double petals, "that seemed to grow out from the centre. On the left of it, was a "perpendicular mark of white light, the same color as the flower, and "about as long as the flower was wide. Presently the flower and line "both changed to a most beautiful crimson—the first of this color I "have seen. It and the line then changed to the most bright and beautiful burnished gold-color I ever saw. The flower seemed alive, and "to flow out from the centre, and to spread. As it spread, it began to "rise, and turn white, the line keeping its relative position and sameness of color with the flower. It rose to the left, so as to join the "white spot above the centre of vision. It stopped adjoining the right "side of that spot, and instantly became the head of a lamb! It was "then, taking bright spot and all, a beautiful well-fleeced lamb, legs "and all! Its eyes and nostrils, black. It looked obliquely to my "right, and the line of light became a beautiful sceptre, and stood "plainly in the same position in respect to the head, as it had done to "the flower, and between me and the body of the lamb. The head "and sceptre afterwards became black as jet, while the body remained "white. They afterwards became natural in color, and all vanished!"

I cannot think of giving the reader of this sketch even an outline of the heavenly visions I have had, either as to variety, diversity, or brilliancy. They were all, or mostly, representatives; so they continue to this day, now nearly twelve months! About a month after these visions commenced, the power of perpetual spiritual vision was given to me, so that I could, and still can, see those spiritual representations at any time I look for them, and often when I do not. When I write, very frequently, the silvery and golden sparks will apparently dance around my pen, in confirmation of what I write! I know then my impressions are right and bright. If silvery sparks appear, truth predominates over love; but, if golden, the love principle is superior to the truth, or instructive. I can often see visions in open daylight, with my eyes open, even when the sun of our earth shines in its strength. I have seen showers, as of gold dust, in daylight.

I have seen, to appearance, myriads of spirits, at once, but not to know any of them. I have seen about twelve at a time, properly personified. I have seen my beloved daughter nine times, counting from six times that she told me, through Mrs. Fuller, the clairvoyant, that she had previously appeared to me. I have twice seen a beloved son in the spiritual world, and, say six or seven times, the most beautiful and benignant countenance of my present principal monitor, who was a man of piety, learning, and eminence, when he lived on earth.

In the direction of seeing the personal countenances of spiritual existences, I can see that I progress slowly; but, most of my visions are representations, in which I can often see the evolutions of my own thoughts and feelings, plainly figured forth before my eyes. Many of them are the signals of my different spirit-friends. I am not a clairvoyant, nor becoming one.

On the 3d of June last, I enquired of my daughter, thus:

"Eliza, why can you not appear to me?"

She answered: "You are not fully prepared for that open communication promised you. Everything to be of real use, must be permanent; and everything to be permanently useful, must pass through a state of infancy to mature growth, as I have told you. The vision of common clairvoyants, is as a meteor or *ignis fatuus*. That would not satisfy you, nor be of as much service as that which is intended for you. Be satisfied. You had a sensible manifestation through the sense of touch, before you laid down. Now you know you can feel me as a real being, if you did not before."

On June 23d, a dialogue took place, of which the following is the conclusion:

"But, Eliza, might I not see you so as to know your personal appearance? You know what I wish that for so much. Is not that object laudable?"

"It is, dear father; but then the granting of it would be dangerous to your best progress, and by no means as useful as you might sup-

“pose. You know that you have often wished (until I would check such a mischievous desire), that you had known, during my life on earth, that we would be together as we now are, so that you would have taken more notice of my appearance, and thought more of me, than you did.

“Father, you know how near such wishes are coming out, every day of your life; and I have to check them and reason with you, to convince you, that to have had such knowledge about me, then, would have entirely prevented the preparation necessary to our present happiness. You know I have over and over convinced you, that such a knowledge of the future, to have been ours then, would have overpowered any will of good either of us had, and caused us to think of and about each other, continually. We would have worshipped each other, ruined each other, and have inevitably sunk to the lowest of the lowest, together! The poet wrote wisdom:

“O, blindness to the future, kindly given,  
“That each may fill the circle marked by Heaven.”

“My dear father, you think enough of me personally, now, to take some of your attention off better things; for which I had to reprove you so severely, that you were near sinking into a state of despondency, when you got leave to love me as much as you please; but especial care has to be taken, to let you see, feel, or hear nothing calculated to draw your mind from better things, except so far as is necessary for the health of both mind and body.”

Eliza, I know you are right, I will do my best to be perfectly contented under the assurance that I will have blessings showered on me as fast as I can appreciate them. Indeed that is the case now.

“Yes, dear father, you know this well. If ever mortal man had cause to be, not only contented but thankful, you have. You know there is a continual and perceptible progress of blessings higher and higher. They must not be given out too fast, lest you be cloyed like a surcharged stomach. It will seem short as to time, when you will be prepared to receive blessings higher than you can ask for, or even imagine possible now! But how much better it will be for you to grow into good states permanently, and to keep them when you get them, than to have a transient sight of them, and only a memory of them afterwards.”

No one can tell how many ungratified wishes I have had, so that the idea that spirits always gratify the wishes of mediums, and circles, do not by any means fit my experience. I have had *tenfold* more things to rebuke and to surprise me, than to foster me, and be as I thought or expected! When I sit down to write, I scarcely ever know more than I must write, without knowing a word I shall be impressed to write. When impressed to write I have no peace of mind till I get at it. When not impressed to write, it seems as if it would be as loathsome as death, to get at it, or try to. Such is my every day experience. Remember, I am under oath in these statements, for I do.

So far from the matter given to me being consonant to any train of thought I ever indulged, much of it is directly opposite to all my previous education or views through life! I wrote on one subject that the view expressed was so opposed to my own sentiments upon the same subject, that I thought a demon had dictated it, and was thrown into such a state that I could not write nor touch a pen for thirteen hours! My monitor argued the case with me, and scientifically convinced me, that the monition was right as written, and thus rationally convinced me that my previous confirmations on the same subject were erroneous, and I gave it up. Again:

About the 1st of last November, I had a gentle monition to omit shaving my beard; "that man was created better than he could make himself, and it was a subversion for man to try to make himself over, or alter his structure. That he made himself worse every time he tried." But I was so opposed to long beards, I still shaved on, when on the 23rd, my spirit friends became peremptory in their monition, that I must not shave on pain of their indignation! They and I had it under discussion two days!! I was backed by spirits in a circle I attended, that it was useless to wear the beard, but my own monitors, "after two days of work with me, succeeded in convincing me that they were right, which my experience and that of many others I have since met, has confirmed. Many of my spirit friends' reasons were never heard of on earth before, as any person I have told them to ever knew of, and yet they are confirmed by the experience of those who knew not the cause of the experience. Many have adopted the full beard from rational convincement of utility since they heard those reasons.

But most of the manifestations were on subjects about which I had little clear previous thought or opinion, and many entirely unthought of before—as for instance, the creation of material substances, of the mineral, vegetable, sensitive, inceptive and animal life, and also progressive or rational life, that was breathed into the nostrils of animal man on "the evening or beginning of the seventh day (state) of creation. How all things were made from first to last, about the manner and time of our Savior's conception and birth, all which things are as yet very inceptively, but rationally and scientifically demonstrated to my satisfactory belief. My monitors wish me to believe nothing until I can see a thing to be *rationaly* so. They say to believe what a spirit says merely because it is a spirit that says it, is useless and detrimental, and that spirits ought rationally to demonstrate doctrine they wish men to believe, and my friends are doing this.

They have also instructed me in relation to the modes and manner of spiritual existences, and spiritual appearances, and say, that the more fully we can believe that they exist, act, and progress, as we do on earth, the more nearly we can appreciate the true state of the case, or in other words, that the more we can feel and know, that we on earth are spirits, clothed with a dead inert substance called *matter*,

that is as dead while we carry it, as when we shall lay it in the grave, the more easily can we appreciate their mode of existence. "You are," say they, "spirits while you live on earth, and the laying down of the dead material substances of your bodies, is no more comparatively than a snake casting its skin, or shedding, as it is called. It was a snake before, and a snake afterwards, but more free from encumbrance."

There are as many kinds and qualities of spirits as there are of persons on earth, and they are just as finite, and ignorant too, with the exception of what progress they may have made, and that progress is precisely by the same means as we progress on earth. Those means being differently applied according to difference of circumstances. Spirits cannot see each other, or converse together, unless something brings them in contact, any more than we can on earth, but this contact is very different from contact of material things. There being then so many kinds or qualities of spirits, we will do well to beware of deceptions by ignorant, mischievous or bad spirits.

When I wished to communicate with Eliza, through Mrs. Poor, in the clairvoyant state, I asked her if she saw Eliza. She said she did, but "she has to come down, down, down to get where I am, she is so much above me!" At the same time Eliza was perceptibly with me, not more than six feet of space distant! On Friday evening 29th ult., I was at the North American Phalanx in N. J., in presence of Susan Stockwell, a girl of say ten or twelve years of age, in the clairvoyant state. She was amusing herself with her spiritual companions as she frequently does in that state. I said, "Susan, do you see any of my spirit friends?" "No I don't," said she, "see you any where about here?" When as to space both myself spiritually, and my spirit friends were, with her in a small room with several other persons.

Spiritual presence is as to thought and affection, and not as to measurements of spaces. My spiritual friends tell me they can see me as one among themselves when I think of, and converse with them, and when they impress me. When I think intently of them, it seems as if I came to them, but when they converse with me, or impress me, it seems as if they go to me. Sometimes the movement seems to be mutual as two friends meeting in a street or road. This is the general idea, and yet notwithstanding this, there is something analogous to the material in spiritual substances. The terms material and spiritual being in some respects similar, and under similar laws.

"There are," say they, "seven kinds of substances of different fineness that can all exist in the same part of space, and all have plenty of room. Material substances are the most coarse or outermost, within which exist six others, all within each other, like a nest of different sized tubs or buckets. We make things in the same way, imitating our Creator. To make a good wall for instance, we take large stones, and between them we insert smaller stones. Between these we place mortar, just to fill the vacancies. That mortar to be

good, should be composed, first of coarse sand, then just lime enough to fill the spaces among the sand. Water has room between the particles of lime, and heat between the particles of water, and each of these six ingredients have as much room as the larger stones, which is plenty.

"Glass to appearance is as solid, or fills all its space as completely as any substance we have, yet, paste a piece of paper with a small hole in it, on a plate of transparent glass or crystal, and set a hundred candles behind it, and the light of every candle will pass through that small hole and through the glass at the same time and in the same space, and all these different streams of light will have room enough, so that not a candle will be dimmed or obscured! This may show how spirits can exist in and go through material substances. Of a portion of the finer substances spiritual bodies consist. From these finer substances all power, even in your own muscles, comes, for the material substances have no power excepting weight or gravity and cohesion.

"Even so heat," say they, "which is much coarser than spiritual substance, has more power by far than material substances, as we see every day; because heat in great quantities can separate the particles of wood, iron, or any material substance—thus overcoming the cohesion of material substances, which is a much greater power than gravity or weight, which are all the powers that the coarsest material has of itself. So it is easy to see that all power, except weight and cohesion, is in and with substances finer than material substances, of which your bodies are composed." They have also taught me, very plainly and rationally, the uses that these inert material bodies are to men. Why it is better to live on earth, under favorable circumstances, than to die in infancy. Also, what is the states of those infants which die before birth; and a thousand things I cannot even mention here!

They have told me also, explicitly, that among spiritual states, there are, as we might say, seven spheres in general; and in each sphere, seven circles; and in each circle, seven sub-circles; and so on, until every thought, word, or action may be represented. These spheres or circles are spiral from bottom to top, so that every thought, word, or action, in which the will and the understanding, or intention and knowledge, are both united, moves the soul either up or down this "spiral stairway of progress," as they call the whole sphere of spiritual existences.

They have also taught me in respect to the different kinds of manifestations, and, at the same time, the different states of mediumship—which I will barely mention. The rappings and tipplings, they say, are principally intended to give short communications. In these the mediums have very little to do, excepting to be there. Nothing at all in rappings, as the spirits make use of that which flows out from their persons. To this effluvia, if too material, inert, and dead, spirits are not enough akin, to like or to use. If the effluvia has too much of the

spiritual substance in it, it is too active for spirits to make physical manifestations with; and hence there are few can be used as rapping mediums. More can be used as tipping mediums, for here the bodily life-powers are principally used.

Very deep and extended subjects cannot be conveniently treated of by these; yet those short, loving communications from departed loved ones, are those that do the most general good to mankind, and will, take them altogether, be the great means of reformation on earth—as the sands of the sea, take them altogether, are more valuable than the diamonds found here and there among them.

There are several kinds of writing and-speaking mediums, through whom more extended subjects can be taught and illustrated. To be either of these, is not a privilege for a class of persons, but is according to classes of states and capabilities; so that any persons may be writing or speaking mediums, if they are properly passive, agreeably to qualifications. They illustrate this part of the subject thus:

“Suppose a merchant to have several clerks of different endowments. One is master of clerkship, and can do business in the best style. The merchant puts a letter in his hands, and tells him to answer it. He does so. The merchant thus has little concern but to see that the clerk has understood the subject. Another clerk, not so expert, requires the merchant’s constant attention—perhaps to dictate sentence after sentence for him to write. While a third is so poor a scholar, that the merchant has to spell most if not all the words for him, or to take hold of his hand, to form the letters!”

I am not bound to my monitors otherwise than a good wife is bound to her husband, whom she sincerely believes more capable of conducting her through life, and is desirous of continually benefiting her; or, as a good husband to such a wife, setting aside all legal bonds; yet I try to obey my monitors, who, for good, sound, and convincing reasons, prevent me from attending many circles, and the reading of all writings coming from other spirits through other mediums of which I am almost wholly ignorant. Whatever agreement there may be, must be credited to spirits—the discrepancies to whom you think best.

I am truly your friend,

*John Williams*

Better known by the following signature, now laid aside,

*Geo. S. Williams.*

NEW YORK, MAY 14TH, 1853.

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J. P. JONES & Co., STEREO-TYPERS, 183 William-street, N. York.

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