

THE
INDEPENDENT VOICE

—IS—

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.,

—BY—

H. W. BOOZER.



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THE INDEPENDENT VOICE.

“Independent Voice! please explain?”

A voice which claims to be a spirit: one who has once lived on earth, and has passed the change that we call death.

“You mean the utterances of a spiritual medium?”

Not at all! The voice comes, seemingly, out of the air, about fifteen inches from the floor, and in different directions away from the medium.

“The conditions at the time—what are they?”

Total darkness. A party of fifteen or twenty persons sit with joined hands, and the medium is seated alone in the center of the area of the circle thus formed. The time is spent with singing in ordinary strain, which is modulated to a softer tone the moment the voices of the invisibles are heard.

“Voices alike?”

As different as the individualization would be from as many persons. Their perfection, however, varies at times, owing to difference of conditions, favorable or unfavorable. Some are as loud, perfect and distinctly articulated as in life. Others in whisper: some suppressed and evidently made with great difficulty, and others at ease for five, ten or even thirty minutes time.

“What do they say?”

Their stories are about that which is most likely to concern spirits as individuals and embrace a great variety of subjects. The only thing at all in common is the desire for communication with those persons still living, with whom they are nearest connected by ties of affection or interest.

“Do the departed seem different mentally than where in earth life; if so, how?”

As far as they are able to express themselves, they are just the same. They talk as one might if giving a message from a neighboring state to which he had just gone. Yet the subject-matter is more than likely to be a surprise, being quite likely that of which none of us are thinking; and, in fact, is often the last thing in the world we would be likely to think of. So that a seance is apt to be more brilliant than a panorama, and as entertaining as a play.

“Do the same persons always make the circle?”

Very seldom. Always more or less new ones.

“Believers, or unbelievers?”

Both. Each circle contains new inquirers and skeptics.

“Is not the medium a ventriloquist?”

The medium is a lady. It is a curious fact, but I never heard of a woman ventriloquist; and more than this, I have never known any one who has ever met with an instance of that kind. Also, allowing a ventriloquist to be present, the difference in place and position of the voices, being immediately in front and down from some one or more in the circle; their different kind and quality, together with the magnetic life attaching to a true, instead of a pretended utterance, which is generally an impromptu answer to a given question; the readiness of such responses; the sudden announcement of names which exactly fit the communications given; the infinite variety of the subjects thus treated; the peculiar and distinct individuality manifested in the different utterances; the laws that seem to pertain to this phenomena, which common observation cannot fail to recognize—all these reasons, and more, seem

make the theory of ventriloquism a much greater strain on one's credulity than to accept the statements of the spirits themselves, who give their names and tell the facts of their past lives, and so prove their identity beyond any doubt, save that which naturally arises about things we have never previously known.

“Why is darkness a necessity?”

I can only give you the reasons given to us by the invisibles who do this work. First, we will try to give the *modus operandi* of the Independent Voice. To produce the latter, it seems to be necessary to materialize vocal organs, and possibly, hands or other means with which to move the first from place to place in the circle. This one materialization of the vocal organs, while it may be more or less changed to fit the use of different spirits, is employed by all who speak, for many persons may speak through the same trumpet—and to produce this is often the result of the combined efforts of many spirits. It has been stated that it often takes the efforts of a hundred spirits to get together the material of these vocal organs for one evening's use. Now in regard to the phenomenon known as materialization. Darkness is a necessity, owing to the fact that the solar rays disperse the collected material in use, and their absence increases the power over matter. It is a fact in nature that the materialization of all forms of life from its germs, is accomplished in the dark; whether it be the plant from its seed, or the “human form divine” from the united ova and seminal animalcule. In the whole material universe, the entire objective world is first projected into being from a condition of darkness.

Yet, with the investigation of the Independent Voice, we believe darkness to be an advantage, as well as a necessity, in its analyzation and study. The whole power of the mind is directed to the sense of hearing, without diversion through any of the other senses. Says a writer: “Darkness affords no opportunity of concealment, as far as the sense of hearing is con-

cerned. If I desired to understand the true character of a man or woman, I could obtain all the needed information more readily by a conversation with them in a dark room than in a light one. It has, in fact, almost become a fixed conviction in my mind, that you cannot fully appreciate the worth of your friend, until you interview him in a dark circle. Here he betrays the quality of his manhood, not in what he says, so much as in the indescribable manner or tone he employs in speaking. If he affects a virtue, or a style of speaking not natural to him, he might as soon proclaim it in so many words, to escape the harsher criticism his duplicity evokes. It is remarkable how one learns to sense almost the thoughts of the speaker and judge of character, simply by the tone of the voice in the dark.

Many a one at these seances has said to himself or herself: "That voice! it has been silent many years, and I never expected to hear it again. Yet here it is, awaking strange echoes in my soul; I had thought it asleep forever! Ventriloquism does not disclose the secrets of the heart. No mortal could disclose to me what my ears have heard."

"I never hear of mediums but that somewhere there is an Indian in the case. How is this?"

It is a recognized fact with all investigators, that the Indian race here in America, are the keepers of the portals of the other life, and the natural guardians of the mediums, whose office it is to open and shut the gates of communication. First the Indian comes and prepares the way for other spirits to communicate, or for the occurrence of the phenomena; and, after all is done, he bids us good night with his final care of the instrument used. The reasons of this seems to be, that by a natural law of adaptation, the aborigine belongs to the soil on which we are comparative aliens, and his natural methods of earth-life have fitted him for a spirit existence where life-force and not wealth is the capital of the individual. He has a strength and vigor which the white race enjoys only exceptionally.

presence carries with it a healing and soothing influence which seems to replace waste of mediumistic forces expended, and keep in good repair the vital force needed. To this race we are largely indebted for the power and completeness of the phenomena, much more than we can realize, even by the closest study and recognition. The broken English the Indian speaks is too often lightly received by the thoughtless, but is chosen next to his own tongue only because its use involves less waste of mediumistic power. I have often found the Indian guide the master of many languages, and in many ways profoundly learned and accomplished. In fact many kinds of spiritual phenomena can only be produced by the most skillful master mind, requiring a depth of character, a force of trained will and an amount of knowledge, which we, at first investigation, will be unlikely to ascribe to one who expresses himself in English-Indian idiom. Yet the same spirit who thus talks to us is very often the real operator of the most delicate methods of communication and manifestation.

“Is the medium conscious?”

Entirely so; yet she is so affected, that, after the occasion she remembers all rather vaguely. At the time there is no sensation, save that of a bearing down upon her shoulders, or like a heavy mantle thrown round and resting on them.

“You have stated the law connected with materialization. Are there any other laws you have observed in this matter?”

We have learned many of these. One of the most conspicuous is, that every spirit, when it comes back to earth the first time, whether through this or other forms of mediumship, has to go through the experience of the return of those physical weaknesses or sufferings that it endured just preceding the exit from the body. This is most marked on the first occasion of return, and is lessened by subsequent visits. A change in the kind of mediumship, or to the personality of another medium, seems to bring this experience in a greater or less degree, until, by frequent return, the disturbance ceases.

To ensure success a condition of mental passivity is required. Belief or skepticism, *per se*, have nothing to do with the result ; but over-anxiety on the part of the believer, and antagonistic feeling on the part of the skeptic, are equally detrimental. In either case, a positiveness is engendered which is the antipodes of that negativeness required. It seems that the disturbance is in opposing magnetic lines or waves of vital or mental force, which fill the space or occasion, so that those of the spirit operators cannot be projected on the medium, or on the elements which are obtained through his or her use or agency. The conditions needed are, the absence of all unrest, disquiet and antagonism or the negativity which makes *rapport* with the positive action of the operating spirit. So that if you in any way disturb the passivity of the medium, you will certainly mar the excellence of the manifestation.

“Pshaw ! I don’t want to hear from *you* ; I want to hear from my dear James.”

This cool reception of a spirit who, perhaps, was at that time but preparing the conditions for “James” to write, spoiled the whole arrangement, and the petulant speaker gets nothing.

The proper way is to give all welcome and encouragement, and if need be, counsel. Give the operators every chance for their best work, reserving your own right of judgment on the result. You will find that the phenomena will present its claims in about five classes, as follows : the positive, the probable, the undeterminable, the possible, and the counterfeit, if it is right to include the latter, which, if the public shows as advertised in printer’s ink and immense promises are avoided, need seldom be encountered.

While cheerfulness is very essential to harmony in a circle, frivolity is a very disintegrating element. I have seen circles broken up by the action of frivolous persons in continued conversation and joke, who mistake the purpose of the occasion which is to furnish to the invisible ones as our guests the best

conditions which we, as their hosts, can give for voiced communication—to mistake this for an evening of pastime and entertainment, where the only object to be compassed is the transient diversion and recreation of those here who attend it. Such persons always bring with them some one to whom constant explanation is made, and so monopolize the time with noise and laughter, as to more or less drown all else. This performance, to the student of the phenomena or the lover of their “sacred dead,” whose purposes are so much at variance, is shocking in its effect, producing inharmony and antagonism in the circle, and destroying the conditions absolutely necessary for the occurrence of the phenomena.

Many spirits are very sensitive to gross habits and ways of living; and persons who visit mediums filled with grossness from wrong personal habits, generally need expect very little satisfaction from investigation. The spirit of Empress Josephine says :

“There are people who come to our circles saturated with whiskey and tobacco. These agents generate a bad magnetism, and an odor so unpleasant, that the most disagreeable effluvia of earth could scarcely be more obnoxious to our senses. We try to approach them, but the stench causes us to retire, sick and disgusted. That men should think they must brutalize themselves in this way before they can listen to the voices of those who were dear to them in life, is a dismal pity and a humiliating infatuation. O men! why will you make devils of yourselves? We have too many such in the spirit world; send us no more! Arouse from this unnatural condition, and aspire to a higher and better life. Do not insult and grieve your friends who have left their pleasant abodes, and come trying to make clear to your understanding the reality of the after-life. You all need the assurance we bring of a higher life. Then for the sake of all concerned, debase yourselves no more. If you could see the hosts of spirits chained to earth by these degrading vices, wandering

year after year about the haunts of their defilement, you would in preference to being such, beg for annihilation."

"Cannot the voice be had without the medium?"

As we understand it, never! The invisible operator can do nothing without human magnetism, and the elements of life obtained through its agency. They cannot form a hand without this supply, which must always come from a medium.

Now, kind reader, we have answered as best we know that which you would naturally ask in announcing the phenomenon of the Independent Voice in Grand Rapids, Mich. We will next give you a brief history of the lady medium, withholding her name at her request, from motives of personal delicacy, and follow this with a description of several seances, from which you will learn more about the phenomenon than in any other way without personal investigation.

THE MEDIUM.

The medium is a person below middle age, and of fine physical health and development. The lady and her husband have been living in Grand Rapids quite a long term of years, and are both highly respected. The gentleman is a good business man. They are in excellent circumstances, and much esteemed by the many who know them, not only for their integrity of character, but for their traits of natural frankness, habitual cheerfulness and affability. The medium is of ordinary size and height, with a full figure, inclined to plumpness, and is of sanguine nervous temperament. They are not connected with any church, though in years past they have been regular attendants; and in regard to the subject of spiritualism, they were both very skeptically inclined. The lady has been a medium two years, and one year only for the phenomenon of the Independent Voice.

Her mediumship was discovered in sitting with friends for the amusement and pastime of table turning and moving and raps. It transpired that when she was absent, there were

manifestations. Soon after this discovery, at the residence of Mr. Beamer, the company having removed their hands from the table, the latter followed the medium about the room in any direction she went, her hand lightly touching it. The party then formed a dark circle, with the medium and a Mrs. Cool in the center. A fan was taken up, and it struck the head of the latter, frightening her some. Then the fans kept moving about, the moonlight from the windows allowing all to see their motion. One of these hit the lamp. Stephen Cool, husband of the above mentioned lady, also saw from the position in which he sat, hands and arms.

At the next sitting, with no hands on the table, and the medium's stretched out toward it but not touching it, it would follow her in any direction about the room. The method of communication was by tipping the table or by raps through the tedious spelling of the alphabet.

The interest was now greatly increased. These circles were held at the residence of the medium, the last one on the 21st of April, 1884, containing fifty-two persons. On this occasion, freshly picked flowers being in the room, these were successively moved around the dark circles, so that each in turn smelled their perfume, under circumstances precluding any possible collusion.

The agitation and disturbance became such through the drain on their time, the keeping of late hours, and the constant importunity of friends for circles, that, to the medium and her husband, that which began as a pastime became a source of much annoyance; and, as a means of breaking it up they left the city for a visit east, and were gone four months. While there a few sittings were had, in which the phenomena occurred with usual power.

On their return they went into a small house, in which no room was large enough for circle purposes, hoping not to resume them again. Friends, however, insisted on the presence of the medium in their own homes with their respective gather-

ings of friends, and to these the lady responded, and so has been kept more or less irregularly, at mediumistic work ever since. Much of the time, however, the demand for her presence has been far in excess of her time and ability to respond.

The medium has been tested by having the hands of some one standing back of her, held on both sides of her face, while the voices came with usual power and variety. She has also sat many times with some one in company within the area of the circle, holding her hands.

It is much to be regretted, that so many circles of the most thrilling interest have been held, without any report being made of them. These live always in the memory of those present, in a greater or less degree, but their record would be invaluable. We will, however, be able to present enough here to give a definite idea of the phenomena to the reader and investigator, which we relate with the assurance that this is but a fraction, and that "the half has not been told."

A REMARKABLE SEANCE.

A circle was held on the second of February, 1884, which was of a very remarkable character, from the fact of conditions being so excellent that there seemed to be no singing required, while in its absence the voices talked at great length, and so loud as to be distinctly heard by all present. The gathering was arranged by a Mr. Wheeler, mainly on account of his friend Woodward, a farmer and a confirmed skeptic, who had previously said he would believe if he should obtain that which was "on his mind." After sitting ten minutes, he received an unmistakable tap on the head, and asked, "Who is it?" The voice answered: "Bridget King."

Bridget King was the name of an Irish girl whose family lived two miles west of Woodward's. The family were all confirmed Catholics. Says Woodward: "If I ever heard her speak, that was surely her voice." He asked,

"Are you happy?"

"Too much Catholic! We don't have any here: there's no Catholic; no Methodist; no Baptist."

"What shall I do with my Methodist belief? abandon it?"

"Yes!"

"What then?"

"Return to nature; be true to yourself. Ernest is here!"

"Ernest who?"

"Ernest Miller!"

This was the name of a young man who had lived half a mile west of Woodward. The voice said:

"Erysipelas set in my head and took me off."

As this was said, a hand touched the spot on Woodward's head which he knew corresponded to the place where a bunch or tumor had grown on Miller's head. This bunch had been amputated, and erysipelas being developed, the operation thus resulted in the young man's death.

At this circle, a stand was moved accompanied by loud raps. When interrogated as to who the spirit operating was, a voice said,

"Dr. Allen!"

This spirit was a well-known physician of this city, who passed over in May, 1883. He called for the singing of "The Sweet Bye and Bye," and the song was accompanied by his recognized voice, plainly heard, word for word, from the beginning to the end.

A spirit by the name of Campbell came, a friend of Mr. Wheeler's, who asked him to come to that side of the circle and give him the masonic grip. This was given, and when ended, the hand was not disengaged, but melted away within the closed fingers.

A Mr. Dishman present asked the controlling intelligences if they could bring a Mrs. L——, and place her on his lap. Almost quicker than the question was asked, the lady mentioned was lifted and gently seated on his and the lap of Mrs. Wheeler, who sat next to him. In a few minutes the lady

was suddenly and unexpectedly taken up and carried back to her seat.

A long conversation here ensued with a negro spirit about some stolen money, in which a gentleman present was personally interested. This was succeeded by the singing of the melody "Nellie Gray," when the same negro's voice was plainly heard accompanying every line to its close.

CIRCLE AT WM. K. WHEELER'S, 21 TURNER ST.

At this circle there was present a young man in the family who had, not long before, been greatly frightened by an apparition. The young man had been acting in a certain matter in direct violation of his mother's well-known wishes; and he connected the appearance of the spirit with this action, on account of the very strong resemblance of the spirit to his mother, in the expression of the face.

A voice came which purported to be that of the grandmother of the young man, who told him it was herself and none other that had then and there appeared to him, and wished him to speak to her next time when she would try to communicate. Of his grandmother he had no recollection whatever, as her death occurred when he was but a babe. This unexpected explanation was a surprise to all concerned. The young man said the apparition looked at him as though she would look him through. While she talked in a rather low tone of voice, a lady present was straining to catch the words as spoken. The voice abruptly turned from the young man, as she talked, and requested her not to listen.

A voice in very loud tone bade them good evening.

"Who are you?" some one asked.

"If I should tell you, you would all want me to leave at once."

"It will make no difference who you are. You are welcome here, and we want to talk with you."

"Well, then! my name is Guiteau, the assassin."

It was the best thing that could be—that is, the best for parties now living. The deed was done at the instigation of others. I was promised a high place and influence.”

“Is your wife with you?”

“Which one?”

“I didn’t know you had but one.”

“I had more than ten of them!”

This dialogue seemed to result in such agitation of the elements or forces, that no further manifestations were had on this occasion.

SEANCE AT HON. L. V. MOULTON’S.

We had buried the form of our only child in the early summer of 1884. Some time the fall following, at the residence of Hon. L. V. Moulton, we were present at the first circle for the Independent Voice that we ever attended with this medium. There were about two dozen persons present. At this circle, our daughter’s voice was heard by us for the first time after she passed, the description of which I will give in her mother’s own words as copied from a letter to a friend:

Circle opened in the usual manner, and several voices were directly heard, of which none were recognized save one, “Alice,” which I now think was intended for me, and was probably Alice Eaton, of Lowell, Mich. It said “Alice!” then, “sister!” which might have been sister Sallie, who passed over six months ago or less. No one claimed it, and it came so near a young man present, he supposed it for him, but said, “I never had a sister by that name.”

While the singing was in full progress, a voice near my left knee commenced:

“It is Gracie—hark!”

I thought I heard Gracie Clark; and so repeated it. It then said again:

“Gracie—Mamma!” and I asked,

“Gracie?”

“ Yes ! ”

I then expressed my great delight, and she whispered in her own unmistakable voice.

“ I’m not dead. Don’t cry ; don’t feel bad ! ”

I could not help shedding tears, although I tried hard to restrain them ; and I replied,

“ There are some things I want very much to know ; first, are you with grandma ? ”

She did not answer ; and I was fearful that my question had destroyed her power ; when mother *in her own voice* answered.”

“ Yes ! I’ve got her here in my arms.”

“ Could she have been saved by any other treatment than that we employed ? ” I inquired.

“ No ! she could not ; there was no help for her,” mother declared.

I waited a moment overcome with astonishment and the strange fatality of events, when mother’s voice, just as natural as if she had left us but yesterday and been gone a day only, explained that we were all wrong : that it was her heart, which was imperfectly developed. Gracie used to tell me that her heart beat too fast ; and again, that it was weak, but I hoped she would outgrow it.

Gracie again said,

“ Don’t feel bad, mamma. We will not be separated long ; and I will bring you some of *my* flowers and put them in your hand before spring.”

She was a great lover of flowers ; and I asked,

“ Do you wish flowers put on your grave ? ”

“ No ! ” she replied in her own emphatic manner. She then called,

“ Papa ! ”

He did not hear her, owing to the confusion of voices or the singing, and I told him she had spoken to him. I assured her he was in the circle ; but she replied that she could not go to

him—she could not control him. Her voice was faint, and sounded precisely as it did the last day she was with us in the form.

But I wanted to know more, and inquired if her early departure in any way made her unhappy.

"Only as you are unhappy, mamma. It is well!"

"Did you feel very sorrowful when you became aware of the change?"

"I only felt bad for you. I do not suffer any more."

The singing was introduced, and Mrs. Squiers announced herself to me. Mrs. Squiers was a well-known Grand Rapids medium, who had passed over during the last year, from cancer.

"My stomach does not hurt me now," she said.

I had relieved her magnetically while in her last illness, at which time she was suffering dreadfully with her stomach.

"I want to see the children!" she said, and ceased speaking. Her voice was fine and very soft.

Gracie then said,

"Mamma!" aloud, in her own sweet tone, and ceased to manifest her presence.

I was too full for utterance, and the forbidden tears would come, notwithstanding her caution. I cried now for joy, for my lost was indeed found; and, hard as the separation is, I can now bear it patiently since she has bridged the chasm, death.

Other voices came to friends in the circle, of which Wilder D. Foster and Mrs. Judge Prindle were very clear, and expressed their wishes in excellent language.

A SEANCE AT HOME.

The second circle was held some weeks later at our own residence, and, as with the preceding one, I will quote in part Mrs. B.'s description:

Twenty persons present. Emily* was the first one spoken

to, and heard the name "Alice" spoken three times; but, owing to her excitability, she threw up her hands, and thus breaking the circle, there was nothing more for some time; nor did she receive anything more through the seance. The breaking of the circle injures the medium, and also the spirit operator.

After some waiting and considerable singing, the voices came again with fair power, the majority of them speaking in tones as loud and distinct as our own. A voice said,

"Dear sister."

Mrs. Stephen Cool, who was present, asked,

"Who is it?"

"John Colville."

John Colville was the name of the brother of Mrs. Cool's first husband. Astonished beyond words to express it, she said,

"Why, I did not know you in this life."

"No! I saw *you* once, though, when you passed my store front with brother William, the time of your marriage trip to New York City."

With her husband, William Colville, she had made her wedding trip as above stated; had passed by the rich merchant's store on that occasion, but was unaware of his having then seen her.

"There was too much 'blue blood' in me—too much! I could never forgive William for marrying you, a poor girl."

These words told the whole character of the man. Proud beyond description, he could not brook the idea of his brother marrying the daughter of a mechanic; and the offense to his ideas of rank and caste was one not to be forgiven in this life at least. He discarded his brother and never spoke to him afterward. Mrs. Cool had not heard of him for years, and she asked,

"How long since you went over?"

*Mrs. Richards, of Lowell, Mich.

"Two years and a half ago!"

After a time she again asked,

"We never did anything to disgrace you, did we?"

There was no reply.

Jacob D. Crouch, one of the victims of the Jackson tragedy, came. Some one said,

"I think Mr. Crouch comes more than anybody else."

Says the voice, almost choking with sorrow and emotion,

"I have more need to come than anyone else!"

He talked a long time, answering all kinds of questions and giving details of the affair. As he has also come at other times, and much has been given, we deem it best to afterward present all together and not here report the facts of this particular interview.

The father of one of our city editors conversed with his son for half an hour, giving details connected with his past life, with requests in regard to his surviving wife, and very many other interesting details.

Sojourner Truth came, with her broad clear voice. She asked us to sing "Nellie Gray." While nearing its close, her voice, so powerful as to be clearly distinguished from all the other voices in the room, joined in and kept with us to the end.

The voices of prominent Grand Rapids citizens came to us on this occasion, among whom were Warren Mills to a friend, John Claney to a press representative present, and C. Kusterer, who went down with the fated Alpena. He said the steamer went down about thirty miles off Benton Harbor, about three o'clock in the morning, with the moon just above the horizon.

"Mrs. Berry was a great sufferer," he said.

So many spirits came to this circle that if their voiced communications were reported, they would make a book of themselves. Nearly all got something, except the fraud-hunters, were left severely alone. I again quote Mrs. B.'s words:

Gracie came first to Mr. and Mrs. Barrows, and said, "I've a heavy heart to-night, because mamma feels so bad."

I assured her that I was much happier since she had come to me; that a great burden had been rolled away, and I could be cheerful without making it. She then came to me and said,

"Mamma!"

I answered back. She was silent for a short time. The singing was resumed, when I felt something prick my hand, and she whispered,

"I've brought you flowers!"

The flowers were *in my hand*, but how they were put there I can never tell, as my hand was partly closed and the fingers were not moved. I expressed my delight and remembered her promise at the former circle, which, strangely enough, I did not think of until that moment.

"They will keep!" she said.

"Remember you have papa to live for!"

Emily and I had been talking that day that now the children were gone, we had nothing to live for.

During the flower manifestation the medium's hands were held by Mr. Barrows and Mr. Hinckley, at her request previously made, she feeling nervous and restless at the time. The circle was joined entire, the door of the room locked, and every window nailed over with quilts.

Gracie came for the last time and whispered plainly, so that all heard,

"Excuse the grass!"

When the seance was over and the light brought, we found a tiny bouquet *tied with grass*. It consisted of a rosebud, red, three white syringas and a geranium leaf. It was very fragrant, and each one smelled it. Of course we have it still. The language is, rosebud, young girl; syringas, memory;

So you see we have treasures not of earth, and one can go hungry and poorly clad, and yet be richer than many who occupy high places in the eyes of mankind.

A SPIRIT HARP.

On the evening of March 26th, 1885, there met a circle, in which occurred the unusual phenomenon of musical sounds, without any material instrument from which they could be made being present in the room ; so that the sounds were produced by some unknown means in a manner we can scarcely conceive of. There were twenty persons present.

The first voice was that of Willie W——, who twice announced his name to his mamma, who was present.

A well known clergyman of this city who passed on during the last year, also announced his name.

A sweetly familiar voice says,

"Mamma !"

"What is it, Gracie ?"

"I can play on the harp ?"

"Can you, darling ?"

"Yes, and I will bring it and play now. All sing a little."

The singing proceeded, and was accompanied by a harp-like sound, not so loud at first, but louder at the last, and for some little time, perhaps ten minutes. The sound was unlike anything else in the room, and would admit of no reasonable explanation, other than that given, with the circle perfectly closed. The separate bursts of sound, while they differed some in intensity, were all alike in their peculiar distinctive character, and seemed like the short vibrations of the strings of an instrument, twanged by human fingers.

After the harp manifestation came the voice of the Indian, who, in broken English, wanted a "kenosha," or fiddle, as the instrument of his delight.

After of the venerable W. C. Coffenberry, one of

Grand Rapids' pioneers, and a pioneer spiritualist whom we all love, announced her name and presence to her son.

Jacob D. Crouch then conversed with us at some length.

To a professional gentleman present, given to scientific investigation, and now especially interested in a matter connected with the cause of Spiritualism (for which reasons the details of the lengthy conversation which then followed are not here given), Mr. Crouch announced the presence of a French spirit of talent and ability. He was succeeded by a Lewis Mortimer, M. D., whose replies to questions relating to science and invention were wonderful for their rapidity of utterance, their conciseness and thoroughness, and their seeming perfect mastery of the delicate and profound subject in hand. And thus closed one of the most interesting of these seances.

THE CIRCLE OF APRIL 4TH, 1835.

The last seance which we can report to you in this compilation was held at the same place on the evening of the above date, with fifteen persons present. The usual vocal exercises were supplemented by the instrumental addition of a clarinet and music box.

Pewamee, the Indian spirit, who is with the invisible operators of the phenomenon of the Independent Voice, first called for a schottische, which he accompanied with dancing, the sound of which, in perfect time, was heard plainly by all.

Gracie Boozer called for a change of the seats of two persons in the circle.

"Peep o' Day and I will play on the harp!"

Peep o' Day was the spirit name of a daughter of a lady present, who passed unnamed at the age of six months, and is now a young lady in spirit life.

The singing was resumed, with the twang of the spirit harp strings for an accompaniment, both harps being distinctly heard. Peep o' Day had previously communicated to her

mother that on this occasion she would come with Gracie and play the harp.

"Drive them away! Drive them away!" said the recognized voice of Mr. —, one of Grand Rapids' pioneer men.

He spoke of the Indians, with whom he had traded trinkets for lands, and who now unceasingly and unrelentingly kept him prisoner, with cruelty and insult, in retaliation for their wrongs while in this life.

Says Mrs. B.,

"I've an Indian friend over there whom I will ask to help you."

"It's no use!" he strugglingly said.

While yet speaking, a guttural voice, in harsh, angry tone, showing stern, revengeful will and determination, drowned all else with its Indian dialect, and the spirit spoke to us no more. On a previous occasion he had stated that the Indians kept him close on the banks of Grand River, and that he could not escape from them. We give this without comment, as it came to us at the time.

An Irishman announced himself with heavy groaning, complaining that he could not come. Someone asked,

"What is the matter?"

With another groan, he said that he was crushed by the cars.

"When and where?" asked a lady.

"In this city. My name is John McDermott."

A gentleman present remembered well the accident. He continued to groan, saying,

"I'm covered with blood."

"O, that will leave you. It's only a condition of your past life here, which impresses your consciousness as you return again."

"Well then, where's the priest?"

"There is no priest here."

He groaned his disappointment. Says the lady,

"The priest cannot help you. This is a spiritual circle, and *we* will *all* help you."

"Is it? God bless you!"

"God bless *you*!" said the lady. Immediately his voice changed, under the magic influence of this human sympathy, to a clear tone, and he spoke with ease. Again came back the feelings and wants of the man before he passed.

"Can you give me some whiskey?"

"No, we do not use it here. You cannot drink it; you've no mouth," humorously suggested Mrs. B.

"Well, you drink it then, and I'll get the good of it from you."

Here is a thought for those who would legislate on the appetites, and a lesson for all. We may be influenced for good or for ill, as we are affected by the nearness or the intermingling of the two states of existence.

Here he called for Irish melodies, and was responded to in two songs by ladies present. He grew happier with these, and talked in true Irish brogue at the last.

Dr. Woodruff, formerly of this city, a pioneer spiritualist and medium, next spoke to some one in the circle in a good, clear voice, and inquired why no one was selling his medicines.

"Is there any particular one you are most interested to have in general use?"

"My restorative!" he promptly replied. "It will do great good."

"Shall we communicate your wishes to your wife?"

"Yes!" and afterwards, "I am glad to meet you all."

"And we are very glad to have you come to us!" responded many of his acquaintances present.

Hattie and Nellie, cousin and aunt to two young ladies present with their brother, gave their names—followed by instructions for home sittings for the purpose of direct family communication.

A clergyman from this city announced himself to a friend present, in a message which contained earnest love of the new found truth in a communication of some length. He said he wanted to tell her something before he passed, but could not for lack of opportunity. She asked him if he could not now say it. He replied, that it was of this very thing—Spiritualism; that he had then studied it enough to be satisfied there was truth in it. He also sent a tender message of love and condolence to his wife.

Lamont, an inventor, next gave a startling statement of facts connected with the investigations of an absent, scientific gentleman, who, under spirit direction, was then constructing apparatus for the anticipated production of the Independent Voice. His researches pointed to the doing away with the human medium. In regard to this, Lamont denounced the idea as utterly impracticable, and went on to state that the spirit who gave these directions and instructions to the scientific man lost his life from an explosion of a machine for the production of artificial light in a coal mine. His mind from overstrain was unbalanced at the time of the tragic conclusion of this fatal experiment, and his entrance into spirit life was with the belief that the machine had been the means of connecting him with the spirit world while he was yet alive. In fact, to this hour the man does not know that he has passed on; while the gentleman of science is working with the idea that he is aided by a master scientific mind on the other side of life in the invention of a machine which will talk in the light, aided, at the most, only by the silent presence of a medium. Lamont was earnest in his explanations, as human life, as well as effort and expense, were at stake in connection with experiments then in progress; for the conclusion of these experiments must result in an explosion similar to the first, and as fatal to all concerned.

A lady received a message from her uncle, who, in answer to a question about the production of fine small raps often

heard in her room, said that he had made them by the slight motion of papers there.

We had been singing "Nellie Gray" for some time, when a vigorous guffah! followed by the words,

"You done well!" almost startled us.

"Who are you?" some one asked.

"I should think you would know me by my mouth!" said Sojourner Truth.

All expressed joy at her coming. One lady told her she had heard her lecture. A gentleman said he had seen her on the cars—to all of which she gave hearty recognition, and talked with us in her usual vigorous Africanized English.

Thus closed a seance which contained more lessons of instruction in things spiritual, than is often found in very pretentious efforts of speakers and writers on the great truth of the immortal life, here seen in the light of modern facts.

JACOB D. CROUCH.

Among the many spirits who have voiced their communications in these circles, no one deserves more special mention than Jacob D. Crouch. Without any knowledge of the man in life, and not having read any details of the tragedy at the time, nor of the trial since, we will endeavor to present him to our readers as he has uniformly manifested himself to us through these utterances. He is a very strongly marked character. With perfect self poise, he always comes strong and self reliant. Unlike many other voices, his is always clear, full and firm—almost a bass, and seemingly from a man powerfully built and in perfect physical condition. Straight-forward and unvarying in relation, perspicuous in his ideas, and with a purpose in what he says, his coming is not on his part for a pastime, but a matter of business, of which previous thought and determination obviously make the occasion of the seance the focal point of his action. As many, many times as he has told us his story in the excellent language in

which he always clothes his ideas, never has any one been able to find the slightest contradiction; but, on the contrary, a single unvarying statement on his part, especially as connected with his "untimely taking off," which he has emphasized with argument and proof, yet which cannot as yet be proven on this external plane of life. The latter has had little chance of having been developed, for the reason that the prosecution of the case has confined itself to the working of theories on the cause of the crime and the identity of its perpetrators, entirely at variance with his statements, and as yet without gaining anything thereby, the motive of the detective being generally to display his own shrewdness and cunning, and in doing so, to make all the facts in the case conform to a self-invented theory, valued because it is his own. In place of first discovering the facts on which to afterwards form the theory.

Mr. Crouch first came to these circles some time in October, 1884. He almost always precedes his voiced communication by three heavy raps or thumps on the floor. His talk is as natural and unaffected in tone and manner as any person's can be in life, and no one, even the most skeptically inclined, can do else than listen with the most intense interest from the moment he first speaks till he has finished. In dialogue he is prompt, and his replies are as perfect in answer as though previously studied at length.

For a long time before the trial of Dan Holcomb he came and voiced his anxiety and interest in the progress of the case. This was manifested at first in his story, oft-repeated, of the tragedy in all its details; then in his efforts to have his son cleared from all complicity with the crime; and, after the trial, to induce him to come to Grand Rapids for a sitting with the medium, hear his voice, prove that true which he believed impossible, and communicate details and facts vitally connected with his interests.

It tells us that the crime was committed by no one of his

family, but that there were three guilty persons, two men, the one related to the other, and a woman. These parties are now all living. The object of the murder was to obtain possession of the money supposed to be with Polley, the cattle drover, in a very large amount. The whole sum actually obtained was only \$500. There was no intent to kill any person in the house but the drover, and the method pursued was as follows: late in the evening, a pitcher of cider was drawn from the barrel in the cellar, in which chloral was put in quantity sufficient, as supposed, to completely stupefy all who drank of it just before retiring. Of this drugged cider, Polley, Mr. and Mrs. White, and Mr. Crouch all drank very freely.

The effect of the chloral was not as was expected, and when the murderer approached Polley's bed, he awoke. The struggle and report of despatching him awoke Eunice White, who was first struck senseless to the floor. Fearing the others might awake before the money was secured, and also frightened at the turn of events in regard to the drugging, the others were shot, and also Mrs. White, whose body they afterwards put back in bed. The marks of the rubber boots in the mud were made by one of the men, the aid in the crime.

"Eunice suffered terribly!" said Mr. Crouch, with awe and slow emphasis.

All were now slain and none left to give evidence of the murder, and the pitcher was thoroughly rinsed with water to cover all traces of the chloral.

Mr. Crouch stated as to which of the murderers killed this or that one of the four; how it was done, and whether the victim was asleep or awake, together with the action of the guilty parties subsequently during the night. He also told what disposition was made of the money, where hid at the time, and where removed to afterward; as also the watch belonging to Mr. White.

Through Mr. Crouch's continued effort and importunity, a circle was convened at the house of a well known real estate

man in this city, composed of detectives and persons from the best rank in society, including some holding high official position, at the time of the beginning of the trial of Dan Holcomb.

The room was darkened and all the circle in place, as the medium entered and took her usual place in the center of the space thus made. The first voice that came, directed a Mrs. G—— to exchange seats with Mr. ——

"Mrs. G—— is not here!" spoke some one, as if by authority.

"Mrs. G—— will exchange seats with Mr. ——!" sternly repeated the voice.

All was silent for a few minutes, when Mrs. G—— and Mr. —— quietly exchanged seats.

"Mr. S—— and Mrs. —— will now exchange seats!" resumed the voice.

Again the same person spoke,

"Mr. S—— is not present."

The voice came now with purpose and half-concealed irritation, "You will understand that *we* control the conditions here, and want no more of this foolery, or we will leave you and you get nothing to-night. *Mr. S—— will exchange seats with Mrs. ——!*"

The change was at once made, and the events of the tragedy were talked, argued, and discussed, till late in the night. As the writer was not present, and no report preserved, we can only give such few things as have been related to us by persons there. In answer to one question by a well-known city official, the affirmation came so loud from right beneath his feet, as to fairly shake the floor. It is hardly necessary to say that the city official needed nothing more for his complete conversion. The place where the money was first hid was described so that the detective well remembered the spot from the description, and he was told that the treasure was at the time of his search immediately under his hand, but after-

hid in a manure pile, and afterwards changed to a place under the stairs, reached through a hole broken in the woodwork at the side and under. The detective was sure that the manure had all been drawn out, and no pile left.

One of the results of the circle was, that the detectives and Stephen Cool went to Jackson the next day. Cool had interrogated Mr. Crouch in the matter of the watch, and was desirous of proving the truth or falsity of the details given. In the yard lay a small pile of manure, left there at the time of cleaning up the yard, in consequence of some difficulty in backing up to get it; also, under the stairs was the break in the boarding. The man who afterwards lived in the house, related to him a curious desire he several times had when descending the stairs, to, without other thought or object, put his hand within this aperture, and to which at one time he actually yielded, and thrust it in; when, suddenly struck with the unmeaning character of such a performance he quickly withdrew it. It was also found that the party Mr. Crouch had implicated as one of the actors in the tragedy, had been seen on a certain occasion leaving the yard where the watch had first been concealed. The man had no business there whatever, and for that reason alone the incident was remembered.

This circle was, more than usual, a secret gathering, and its results were given no publicity; but, from what the writer has heard, we have no hesitation in saying that the demonstrations were almost unparalleled in the history of modern Spiritualism.

Mr. Crouch claimed from the first he would free Judd with the trial of Holcomb. The case moved strangely. The public sentiment against both was overwhelming. An incident occurred before the time appointed, in the sudden death of the prosecuting attorney. When the case was called, the evidence for the prosecution seemed to fall away, or was not forthcoming, so that the jury, in the face of popular clamor for the

conviction of the party held on trial, was obliged to bring in a verdict of "not guilty".

In the matter of Foy, Mr. Crouch stated that he shot himself "because he was a fool," and that neither he nor his suicidal act had anything at all to do with the murder. Foy came once to one of our circles, and there stated that the cause of his suicide was domestic trouble; that it drove him into habits of drink. After a terrible debauch, disheartened to despair and disgusted with life, he shot himself. His talk about the murder was while in a condition of maudlin intoxication, and was but the incoherent imaginings of an unbalanced brain. A lawyer who was present at the circle, resolved that he would investigate the matter of his domestic troubles. He did so, and found the statement correct, obtaining abundant details in proof.

Mr. Crouch anticipated that the guilty parties would in time quarrel among themselves about the money, and might yet criminate themselves in so doing.

At his urgent solicitation, Judd was written to in detail, and a reply came, well and respectfully written, expressing the usual skepticism, etc. At the circle subsequent, Mrs. B. asked the voice,

"Mr. Crouch, do you know what I have in my pocket?"

"Yes! you have a letter from Judd."

"Can you read it?"

"No! but I'd like to hear it read."

"If we break the circle and light up, can you come again when the circle is re-formed, and light again extinguished?"

"I can and will!"

The light being produced, the letter was read to the complete surprise of all present.

After the circle was resumed, the voice said,

"I shall thank you, and remember you always. I can't express my gratitude. Tell him I heard his letter. Tell him to

come here where he can hear my voice. Say to him his mother is here, and Eunice."

"I will write him!" and the message was sent.

After this, at another circle, he said,

"Where's Judd? why don't he come?"

Some one present asked,

"Mr. Crouch, can't you tell us something, or give us some message which will induce Judd to come here and talk with you through the instrumentality of this medium?"

"Yes, I can. Tell him his mother left a paper, made out long before the time of the murder, intended for the benefit of Eunice; which, now Eunice is gone, is for him and for his benefit and use. Tell Judd I also want to talk with him here, through some medium, alone.

I will here state that the medium has another gift: that of reading messages from spirits, on a white handkerchief, which come before her vision in printed form, the letters receding as the words are read, the next appearing after the reading of the last. The print appears whiter than the surrounding surface, with a slight sparkle, or glitter.

At one time I was consulting the medium as to whether the publication of Mr. Crouch's affairs would be in harmony with his wishes. Immediately she was influenced to read me the following communication:

MR. CROUCH'S LETTER.

"To my best friends on earth.—I am only too glad to meet you this evening. Write all you have received in regard to my return, and others of my family. There is no mistake about this, but there is in regard to Judd. He will be persecuted further. What a shame! when it has been proved beyond a doubt, that he is innocent.

"I wish the whole history of my spirit-life could be published!—it is what I most desire. If I could meet with Judd, I could communicate all details of the past, and also, in

addition, facts of much importance to him. There are papers yet concealed and withheld from him.

"I have nothing further now.—No! but let me meet you again in this way."

After a pause of some length he resumed :

"Yes! this is a great satisfaction to me, and the words I can give, will have points of interest to all—both of my life here and while on earth. I wish you would ask Judd's consent to it's publication. If he gives it, all well; if not, go on with it just the same."

I asked him if he would prefer to give it in this way, or by the voice in the dark circle. He answered,

"Either way."

"But it will be impossible for me to take down your words in a darkened room," I replied.

"I will so impress it on your brain, that you will remember every detail the next day."

And he bade us good night.

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE ELSEWHERE.

In an investigation of the subject for thirty-three years, we have personally met with no medium having the same gift possessed by this lady: that is, for the voiced utterance of the spirit without the use of the trumpet. With the aid of the latter for the concentration of the sound, some very remarkable phenomena have occurred. One of the most notable mediums of this class was Mary Hollis Billings, fifteen years ago. N. B. Wolfe, a physician of Cincinnati, a person of wealth and mental ability made a detailed investigation, covering a period of many months, and published the result in a book, entitled, "Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism;" which, in its record of those facts, is one of the most valuable contributions to spiritualistic literature.

At the present time there lives in St. John, Michigan, a Mrs. N. C. Barnes, a trumpet medium. The trumpet, or

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MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In this investigation of the life of the
people in the early days of the state, we
have found that the people were not
the same as they are now. The people
were not the same as they are now.

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method, communication were established with those you have left. If at the outset, your first attempt at a message was met with a perfect ignoring of the fact of your existence, and a fixed attempt were made to establish you a fraud and a criminal, what would be the chance of proving the facts in the case? Would not the result be, that your indignation would be stirred to give the actors their fill, and begot and mislead them all you could, in retribution?

It is a lamentable fact that many calling themselves spiritualists, will say to those who raise the mad-dog cry of fraud, that they agree with them in the statement that a very small proportion of the mediums and their manifestations are genuine. The statement is not true. It is true that but a small proportion of the manifestations contain proof positive of the immortal life; but it does not follow that the rest are all fraud. In the nature of things, no intelligent investigator would expect this proportion of proof positive greater than it is. Much of the manifestation is misunderstood. Much is an honest attempt of spirits to manifest under adverse conditions, which latter compel more or less failure. Much, viewed in the most unfavorable light, can be put down as neutral testimony, neither for or against, but may be either. It is an unwarrantable assumption of ignorance, to conclude all is fraud which is not such proof as admits of no cavil. In an investigation of this subject for a third of a century, I have found about the same percentage of actual fraud as exists in the imitations and counterfeits of all else esteemed good: as, for instance, money; and no more. It is a fact that the two worlds are so fringed in together, that the line of demarkation between them is so slightly drawn, that the medium is often deceived thereby; and, as most mediums are undergoing a continued process of development, mistake and misapprehension must of necessity occur to a greater or less extent. In our childish ignorance of this subject, it is very easy to call everything we do not understand, and all which we misapprehend, fraud. It is also

a cheap way of assuming superior wisdom, pecuniary benefit often accruing to such habitual use of the term.

The cry of "mad dog!" is the most certain death to the animal, though he may not have a single symptom of the dreaded disease; and those whose material interests are subserved by the suppression of this truth, are sure to use the same cry, in effect, against all the manifestations. The man or woman who thinks and reasons, will see all these causes of the endorsement of the theory of the police-detective in methods of investigation, and will wisely seek the truth for the truth's own sake, and not for the establishment of any pet theory, hobby or prejudice previously formed.

WHAT SPIRITUALISM TEACHES.

When you come to know the truth, as all sooner or later will, you will perceive that the first and greatest lessons taught us, whether it comes from spirit, child or sage, is the great law of beneficence; that human happiness, here and hereafter, is largely based on the foundation of lifting up into better conditions of enjoyment and improvement, every human being with whom we come in contact; that love of human kind is the magic staff of all existence, which supports its possessor under every circumstance and in all time, and enables him to lay up treasures that eternally endure.

The law of supply and demand is very clearly enunciated: and in the propagandism of this, to so many a new idea, we learn that it is of no possible use to teach spiritual things, only as the person may have demand for the truth, so that the bulk of humanity in to-day's state of development, must necessarily learn this by experience; and most of us by the experience which comes to all in the change we call death.

This change only strips the physical covering from off the real man, the spirit, and we stand there the same person in every respect, excepting the physical body, that we were before its occurrence. If in pain, as the latter came from the

physical, we at once experience relief. But all the wants and aspirations, the entire play of the mental faculties, *all* that makes the inner I and the me of the individual, remains to continue its existence the same as before.

The capital which is wealth there, will be found to be the power to communicate and the will to do with our fellows in the two worlds, that which we desire. This is contained in the life force or magnetism, as we choose to call it, and not in material earthly possessions, which are only heavy dross to weight us down, when we would rise into heights supernal.

The readers of this pamphlet may rest assured, that whatever interest the subject may awaken with them, to the denizens of the other side of life it has one beyond the power of words to describe; and, that now the truth of immortality has obtained a foothold, the invisible operators will prosecute the work of enlightening the people of earth, till all shall know and fully realize that this life is but the vestibule of an existence which can be made for each human soul, great, grand and glorious; and that when the childhood of our present ignorance and undevelopment is past we will, then, on this side, rightly educate ourselves for the continued existence that is to be.

Price 20 cts

Address H. W. Boyzer
Grand Rapids
Mich.