

# POST-MORTEM CONFESSIONS:

BEING LETTERS WRITTEN THROUGH A MORTAL'S HAND BY SPIRITS  
WHO, WHEN IN MORTAL, WERE

OFFICERS OF HARVARD COLLEGE:

WITH COMMENTS BY

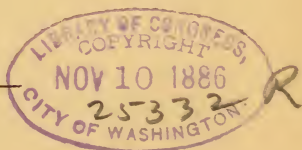
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ALLEN PUTNAM, A.M.,  
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Author of "Natty, a Spirit;" "Bible Marvel-Workers;" "New-England Witchcraft Explained by Modern Spiritualism;" "Agassiz and Spiritualism."

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*Myriads of beings walk the earth unseen,  
Both when we wake and when we sleep.*



BOSTON:  
COLBY & RICH, PUBLISHERS.  
1886.  
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# POST-MORTEM CONFESSIONS

BY

Officers of Harvard College.

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THE chief contents of this work will consist of correspondences between its author and certain former officers of Harvard College in reference to their attack upon Modern Spiritualism in 1857, supplemented by his comments upon the same.

Since that date a new generation of readers and students has come up, many of whom may desire and even need to be told briefly how that so-called *investigation* originated, how it was conducted, and what were the outcomes from it.

In the spring of 1857 the now well-known and highly-esteemed Spiritualist, Dr. F. L. H. Willis, was a young student in the Divinity School at Cambridge, and because of his being used one evening by spirits as their instrument in the presence of H. L. Eustis, a professor in another department of the University, Willis was accused of fraud or imposture, and *expelled* from the Divinity School.

The Willis case, an outgrowth from Spiritualism, naturally drew the minds of the College President

and Professors intently to that subject, which was then agitating the public mind, and "threatening to turn the world upside down." Much to my surprise, Agassiz states that *President Walker* deemed the intelligence *diabolical* which was outworking the spiritualistic phenomena. It may have been that even that liberal and able man, as did our ancestors in witchcraft times, undertook to banish the *Devil* by punishing *mortals*. Better it would have been to kindly clasp his hand, and convert him to an angel of light.

The attainments, character, and position of those who constituted "The Faculty," that is, the administrative or governing board of the College, justified their belief, if such they had, that it was in their power, and might be their duty, so to act and teach that the public mind would *frown down and extinguish* any wide-spreading mental delusion. No other body of men in this region had powers equaling theirs to detect and expose the deluding force of fictitious claims. The Faculty assumed the claims of Spiritualists, that decarnated men and women return, to be *fictitious*,—not based on veritable *facts*. Therefore, in good faith, no doubt, and for what they deemed public good, they, in the words of Spirit Agassiz, "as a body, agreed to give it *battle*, and that, too, believing we could demolish the structure, . . . but we soon found we were powerless in the matter."

Their *purpose* was "to give it *battle*." But Spiritualists, and the public extensively, understood that they proposed to make a *fair investigation*, not to



"*give battle.*" I was present when they and Dr. Gardner agreed upon the arrangements for a fair trial of the powers of spirits. Would that I could deem them in their subsequent course fair and honorable. But I cannot. It will be shown by the letter of George Lunt, editor then of the Boston *Courier*, that *prior* to open movement he had agreed with the Faculty to co-operate with them in the contemplated war upon Spiritualism. In the columns of his paper soon came out what was essentially a challenge to Spiritualists to bring mediums before a committee of Harvard Professors, and submit spirit-doings to investigation by high scientific scrutiny and skill.

Dr. Gardner met Prof. Felton, and soon between them it was agreed that four specified professors should be that committee, and that Dr. Gardner might bring before it such and as many mediums as he pleased. He did bring before them the Fox Sisters, the Davenport Brothers, G. A. Redman, J. V. Mansfield, and many other mediums. The committee sat through two days at the Albion, in Boston. It was soon apparent that the strong minds of the two *older and abler* members of the committee, and that of George Lunt, were firmly set against the mediums, and though an abundance of raps came upon table, chairs, and ceiling, not much more mystery was evolved. The committee reported failure by the spirits; denounced Spiritualism, and promised to "publish a report of their proceedings," and an explanation of the occurrence of the raps, and of the phenomena of Spiritualism.

The same mediums who appeared before the aus-

tere professors subsequently went before an assembly of editors and reporters connected with the daily and other papers, when success in production of marvelous phenomena of various kinds was surprisingly great. The public was soon informed of this success, and received distinct and extensive accounts of many doings which the highest science of Harvard was unable, and remained unable, to account for. The then prominent members of that committee are now, through their letters to me from their abodes in spirit-land, after twenty-nine years' consideration, putting before mortals that promised explanatory and often called-for REPORT.

More extended account of that conflict is given in the pamphlet of seventy pages, entitled *Agassiz and Spiritualism*, written and published by me in 1874. Being then ignorant of secrets now revealed, I wrongfully presented Prof. Felton as chief instigator and manager of the assaults. Now we learn that he acted as servant of President Walker, and the whole Faculty.

On the forenoon of Jan. 29, 1886, was received through J. V. Mansfield a very welcome, interesting, and valuable communication, which I deem worthy of publication and preservation. A statement of causes which brought it forth may impart interest to what follows.

On an evening in or near the month of April, 1885, the writer was one of a company of thirty to forty Spiritualists assembled in the parlor of W. A. Dunklee, on Tremont Street, Boston. The host, knowing that I had been present at, and participated

in, the doings of the investigation of Spiritualism by certain professors of Harvard College in 1857, invited me to give some account of the same. In my account I spoke in commendation of the general character of Prof. Felton,—the challenger to the investigation, though not one of the investigating committee. I had known him from his youth up; we were fitted for college at the same academy; were in college together; were *intimate friends*; the friendship existed when we became *contestants in the press* concerning the character and merits of Spiritualism, and was not broken by our argumentations and conflicting views. Each retained confidence in the other's uprightness of intention and desire to promote public good, though each viewed the other as having been beguiled into harmful paths of error pertaining to the source, character, and prospective operations of the strange phenomena then abounding in the community.

My commendation of that professor, *as a man*, whom I had known well for thirty years, and ever found pure and benevolent in his intentions, re-kindled smoldering fires in the bosom of Mr. Mansfield, who was one of the listening company, brought him to his feet, and moved him to dissent in *burning ardor* from the justice of my characterization of my old friend. Mr. Mansfield, no doubt, had justifying cause for his strong language in reproof of one who in blind zeal worked discourteously and harshly against the ostensible producers of phenomena which that professor indiscriminately viewed as the productions of fraud and imposture.

Shortly subsequent to my thus getting knowledge of the prolonged vitality of the fires of Mansfield's indignation toward my friend Felton, who years ago passed out from his mortal form, my thoughts turned to consideration as to how those fires could be extinguished. Felton, a spirit, years ago, told me, through Mrs. Rockwood, medium, that through Mrs. Ricker he had been convinced of spirit return and action among us before he passed from the plane of mortal life, but "position constrained him from avowing it." He also said that he was then befriending the cause of Spiritualism. The query arose whether I could get Spirit Felton to write out his present views of Mr. Mansfield and his work through Mansfield's own hand.

Much time passed on ere fitting opportunity and requisite means were mine for trying the experiment. Sunday, Jan. 24, 1886, I met the spirits' scribe at the Lyceum Session, in Paine Hall. He then cordially invited me to call upon him at any time, saying, also, that he would gladly write for me gratuitously. Thus a way was opened for my attempt.

On Wednesday, Jan. 27th, I wrote the letter, which will appear below. The next day was so stormy as to confine me to the house. On Friday morning I took the letter to Mr. Mansfield, told him the letter was long and peculiar, and that it might take him some time to answer, and therefore that I would leave it for him to reply to at his leisure. The letter was still in my own hand, and had not been touched by him. He asked: "Did you write the letter *yourself*?" "Yes," said I. "Then," said he, "sit down



now at the table and write a single question to the person to whom the long letter is addressed. I can do better while you are present." I sat down and wrote, folding over what was written, thus concealing it from his sight.

The long letter was as follows : —

BOSTON, Jan. 27, 1886.

SPIRIT CORNELIUS CONWAY FELTON :

Dear friend in the days of our youth, and my contestant about spirit operations in the days of our manhood : Memory now carries my thought to the spirit of Prophet Samuel, who, when called up by King Saul, asks : "Why hast thou *disquieted* me?" I seek to get some thoughts from you through one whose memory and views of you disquiet him very much, and approach to him may *disquiet you*.

I never lost esteem and respect for you,—never distrusted the goodness of your motives, though I often did the wisdom of your processes of action toward Spiritualism and Spiritualists.

I now am bent upon an experiment. I desire to learn whether a spirit can use the physical organism to write out his or her views, where that organism belongs to one who hates the spirit that dictates.

Please answer the following questions : —

1. Do you now see or know that spirits do use Mr. J. V. Manfield as their amanuensis ?

2. How do you now estimate the effects of his labors upon mortals and spirits ?

3. Are you conscious that you ever misjudged him, or harmed him by thought, deed, or word ?

4. Please express your present estimate of him, and his work.

5. Comment upon any other matter which it pleases you to notice,—whether it pertain to me, your old friend, to the cause that most interests me,—Spiritualism,—or to any other matter.

Your friend in your youth, in your manhood, and such now while your home is in the spirit spheres.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

P. S. — You need not put Mr. Mansfield's *name* in your response, but say thus and so about the person to whom my inquiries pertain.

The short letter, written in the scribe's room, was : —

SPIRIT CORNELIUS CONWAY FENTON :

*My Dear Old Friend*,—If you can, please say what you now think of Mr. Mansfield as an amanuensis for spirits.

JAN. 29, 1886.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

I sat down in a chair eight or ten feet from Mr. Mansfield. His hand soon commenced to write, and in less than twenty minutes, I think, he handed me the following on the sheet which contained the sealed request : —

“My honored and very dear brother, once college-mate, and life-long friend, I am so pleased to meet you calling for me. I was with you, and so were our old but dear friends, Dr. Luther V. Bell, President Walker, Peirce, and H. F. Gardner, this early morning. It was by our united action that you were forced to come and talk with me through the man I so abused while I lived in mortal. But, friend Putnam, I did it not maliciously, or with any feeling of selfish-

ness, like attempting to shut out the light of truth, which was then dawning upon the age we lived in. But it was from a desire I had that the people should not follow a bubble that would, in my opinion, burst, and that, too, in the near future.

"I freely and fully beg Mansfield's pardon for the course I took at the time he so kindly and freely invited my investigation and criticism. I now see, as millions have, that once, perhaps innocently and honestly, they opposed one light of truth, and later were forced to admit the fact.

"I have often talked this matter over with Eustis, as to his and my doings with young Willis. We are convinced of our wrong-doings, and are now ready to *proclaim such to you and the world*.

"I now know that your friend Mansfield is all that he has professed, or all that is claimed for him by his and your friends. Tell him I sincerely beg pardon for all the pain I have in the long past caused him.

"Your friend and brother,

"JAN. 29, 1886.

CORNELIUS C. FELTON."

Such was the response. My experiment succeeded far beyond my expectation. It brought forth Felton's free and full supplication for Mansfield's pardon for abuse bestowed upon this scribe for spirits, when he asked Felton to investigate and criticise his operations. I hope and trust that this suit for pardon will contribute to the peace of both the abuser and the abused.

My questions were fully met by the responses having application to Mansfield alone. But my friend heeded my hint that more would be welcomed. His notice of other matters indicates probability that he perceived the purport of my letter to



him prior to the morning of the day of its presentation to the scribe. He says that early that very morning he, Dr. Bell, Prest. Walker, Prof. Peirce, and Dr. H. F. Gardner met, and, by united will-powers, "forced" me to visit Mansfield.

Why those spirits, rather than any other of his and my many old associates and friends now in spirit life? Obviously, in my view, it was because each one of those men, while mortal, took part in, or surely had accurate knowledge of, onslaughts by Harvard professors upon mediums and Spiritualism.

Whatever may have been the views and feelings of any one or all of them after viewing their acts pertaining to Spiritualists in the light of a spirit-sphere, amid which truth would reveal itself and justice make demands for righting wrongs committed as far as circumstances and conditions would permit, they probably up to that time had found it difficult to command befitting mediums, magnetisms, and recipients for information so combined as to render it expedient, if possible, to satisfactorily put their present views and feelings before mortals.

My relations to those men, in matters pertaining to Spiritualism, did formerly, and still do, differ somewhat from those of any other mortal. 'This fact may cause them to view me as prominently deserving and well fitted to be recipient of their present views of some of their mundane transactions. The statements contained in Felton's response apparently have the sanction of all the persons he names, as one band which, after consultation, joined in applying powers which "forced" me to go and submit my letter.

What were the relations of these men, severally, and of myself to the famous HARVARD INVESTIGATION in 1857?

Prof. Felton was the challenger of Spiritualists to the trial. Dr. Gardner accepted the challenge. Prof. Peirce was a prominent and very active member of the investigating committee. Dr. Bell was present at the investigation as a *very intelligent and unbiased* observer. I went with Dr. Gardner as his counselor and aid when he met the investigating committee to specify and agree upon conditions for the trial; also was present at the trial throughout. While thus aiding Gardner I was working against two — Felton and Peirce — whom I had well known, and who had well known me, for nearly thirty years. I had their friendship, and they had mine. Br. Bell and President Walker were my acquaintances and friends. I alone of all graduates from Harvard was open contestant for Spiritualism then, and am, I think, down to this day, the only graduate from that institution who has openly advocated Spiritualism on the rostrum or in the public press, *over his own signature*. These facts may have pointed to me as a preferable one to be receiver of the statements which those spirits have become ready to voluntarily put before the mundane world pertaining to their treatment of mediums and Spiritualists while on this mortal plane. No other mortal had possessed better, if as good, opportunities than or as myself to become cognizant of some past doings by these professors which they now know and feel were persecutions of honest manifestors of genuine facts, and promulgators of important truths.

The members of that band knew that no other survivor of them could comprehend the extent and character of special mundane errors and wrong-doings by themselves better than myself, and none other would be more likely to put their confessions before the world, and try to aid them in righting the wrongs of their mundane teachings and acts. This I gladly attempt to do, in kindness to them, in kindness to the mortals whom they aspersed, and to all who hereby learn that changed views have come to Harvard professors relative to mediums and Spiritualism since they have scanned them in supernal light.

One other person was named by Felton, not as his adviser and aid on the morning of the conference of spirits, but as one with whom, as he states, he had often conversed in reference to their treatment of *young Willis*; they (as they surely ought to be) are ready "to proclaim, do proclaim, to *the world*," that they are convinced of their *wrong-doings* in that case.

Spirit Dr. H. F. Gardner, I congratulate you! How joyous to you must be your retrospect now! The cause in which I aided you, and in which you fought undauntedly, your contestants now, in their abodes above, concede to have been the cause of fact and truth,—glorious truth. Accept my congratulations, and give me your helping hand to work on in the same cause to the end of my sojourn here.

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In the *Banner of Light* of February 27th (see p. 10), was a communication from Spirit C. C. Felton, acknowledging errors and wrongs, by himself and

others, in treatment of Spiritualists while in mortal. An intelligent private correspondent has suggested to me that a statement by Prof. Agassiz seems needful for making clear some points pertaining to the Harvard Investigation. Thus prompted, I addressed Agassiz in a sealed note, and submitted it to Mr. J. V. Mansfield. That note and the response to it are as follows:—

SPIRIT LOUIS AGASSIZ—*Illustrious Naturalist and Scientist:*

DEAR SIR,—Having been a witness of many of your sayings and doings in connection with a *reputed* investigation of Spiritualism by yourself and three other Harvard professors in 1857, having also been author of a small work, entitled *Agassiz and Spiritualism*, in which were set forth my views of your position then and of the investigation, I now state that I will gladly receive from you such account of your present views of Spiritualism itself, and of the doings of yourself and associates at the *reputed* investigation, as you can gladly give in willingness that the world should see them.

Very respectfully,

MARCH 1, 1886.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

LETTER FROM PROF. LOUIS AGASSIZ.

“*Much Esteemed and Long-Cherished Friend Putnam,—*  
Yours of the 1st inst. is before me, and our friends Felton, Peirce, Gardner, Mapes, Huntington, Eustis, Longfellow, W. Phillips, Epes Sargent, Robert Dale Owen, Luther V. Bell, Thomas Whittemore, one and all, most sincerely congratulate you in your steadfastness to the course which has been, and now is, so precious to your heart, viz., spirit-intercommunion.



“For one, I will admit that we did agree to disagree, and never for once did it lessen our friendship or esteem for each other. I have often thought we did not so much disagree as it was generally supposed we did by the outside world; where you had the manliness and courage to proclaim the conviction of that which welled up through your humanitarian heart, I shrank from proclaiming what I knew to be true, viz., the presence of phenomena I could not fathom or explain. I would place my hand upon ponderable matter or objects, and, without any volition of mine, such would not only move under my touch, but frequently manifest an intelligence most surprising. But, being unable to account for such intelligence or phenomena, I was not willing to proceed or continue my investigation, and therefore and therefrom gave it a wide berth. Could it have been explained to me satisfactorily, or could I have demonstrated it as I could a natural science or a product of nature, I would never have turned my face from it.

“I talked with our friend President Walker several times touching the subject which bid fair to turn the world upside down. At one time Walker admitted there was an intelligence underlying the Spiritual Philosophy, but rather attributed the intelligence as originating from demoniacal sources, and ever after that discountenanced the subject. He declared that so long as he occupied the position as President of Harvard College, that institution should not bear the stigma of its (Spiritualism) being countenanced by the Harvard Faculty.

“That being the decision of our President, we, as a body, agreed to give it battle, and that, too, believing we could demolish the structure which was then so distasteful to the (then) masses. I need not repeat our course of procedure, — that is to your mind and recollections too patent.

“We soon found we were powerless in the matter; but as

*we* professors (as Mr. Lunt would say) had put our foot into it, we must make the best of it.

“We did not wait until coming here to see our mistake; we learned that mistake long before. Our friend Felton has openly acknowledged to you, and allowed you to publish to the world, a frank confession of his doings toward mediums and Spiritualists generally,—his acknowledgment voices my present feeling.

“I only regret that I had not that confidence which unwavering faith gave you, to have sustained me, and that has characterized your life-doings for more than thirty years. Here allow me to say in all sincerity, as a spirit, that much as I labored to disprove the claims of Spiritualists, the unexplainable phenomena exhibited by the mediums were my only evidence or hope of a conscious individuality beyond the tomb.

“Now, my good friend Putnam, do not weary in ways of well-doing. You *know* now where once you hoped it *might be so*. Your sand of life runs low; soon you will join those that have passed within the veil. Then you will know as your dear ones know, see as they now see.

“Sincerely and kindly,

“To ALLEN PUTNAM, Boston.

LOUIS AGASSIZ.

“MARCH 3, 1886.”

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Prior to that account by Agassiz, I had supposed that the four professors who made the reputed Harvard investigation were selected to act, and were generally supposed to act then and there, simply as four learned and trustworthy individuals, and not as representatives of the college. They were, ostensibly to the public, selected to witness a trial from which

to determine whether a definite sum of money, conditionally offered, should be won or not by mediumistic operations in their presence. The public had no reason to suppose, I did not suspect, that the college government as a body had any connection with that matter. But Agassiz now states that the president of the college was their director, viewing the reputation of the college as being involved in the outcome of that trial.

Such information made me desirous of getting a statement from President Walker himself. Therefore I addressed him as follows:—

SPIRIT JAMES WALKER—*My Revered Friend, President of Harvard College when what has been called the Harvard Investigation of Spiritualism occurred in 1857:*

It is obviously known by you that our friends Felton and Agassiz have recently, from their abiding places as spirits, addressed me in reference to that reputed *investigation*. Statements by Agassiz imply that your views of Spiritualism influenced him and his associates to “battle” against and strive to demolish the structure—Spiritualism—rather than to calmly investigate its merits. Therefore, if it be wise in your present view, and agreeable with your sense of duty to the public, I shall be glad to have you write out through the hand of Mr. J. V. Mansfield, and allow me to make public, an account of your own sayings or doings in reference to that reputed *investigation*, and in reference to the expulsion of young Willis from the Divinity School.

With deep and abiding respect and reverence for your wisdom and many virtues, kindly yours,

MARCH 6, 1886.

ALLEN PUTNAM.



## LETTER FROM PRESIDENT JAMES WALKER.

*“Much Respected and Highly-Esteemed Friend while I was Mortal, and not less so now I am a Spirit:*

“I thank you, doubly so, for allowing me an opportunity to express my regrets for my course toward Spiritualism when I was in the body mortal.

“I will, then, say all that our mutual friend Felton has told you of our course toward young Willis is true, and yet one-half of our manœuvring never came before the public. It is not necessary to divulge it, so long as what is already before the world accomplished our plan. As Felton has told you, we sincerely believed we were doing the world at large a favor to bring to light the most stupendous fraud ever invented by mortal or his Satanic Majesty. While we, Agassiz, Felton, Peirce, and Eustis, did among ourselves agree that there were exhibited phenomena that we could not explain, we came to the conclusion that they were demoniacal, and as honest men we pursued the course we did. Had we deferred our investigation, say later, we might have arrived at quite another conclusion; for not more than two years after young Willis’s permission to resign (for that was really all that it was) Agassiz and Felton and myself were reasonably convinced we had taken a position (and that position had been made public) that would, as it has, lowered us very much in the opinion of the scientists of the world at large.

“I do not deny the charge made public by our friend Agassiz, that we did conjointly agree to exert our utmost to demolish what seemed to us so destructive to Church and State,—the wide-spread of spirit-communion. I, of course, was not to be placed in the front ranks of the battle, yet, so far as advice was needed or solicited, I was not coy in imparting it.

“Even before I passed within the veil I regretted deeply my haste in taking the step I did, and so proclaimed to my associates, Felton and Agassiz. Dr. P—— and Thomas Starr King called on me just prior to King’s leaving for the Pacific coast to—if possible—convince me of my wrong toward young Willis. Their arguments confounded me; and yet I was obliged to sustain my position or lose cast with the public. Agassiz, I think, would have publicly confessed his mistake had Felton and Peirce yielded.

“I have witnessed the most astonishing phenomena in the presence of Louis Agassiz (and produced, too, through his own organism) I ever beheld. I would often say: ‘Agassiz, what do you make of such phenomena?’ He was always without an explanation. It would, at times, cause him to *tremble*, and once he shed *tears*.

“To ask the world to now forgive us would simply be wasting precious time. That we were wrong—wrong—we humbly confess.

“I would be so pleased to take young Willis by the hand, and confess my error. Would it be asking too much of my dear friend Putnam to visit Willis, and ask him to forgive and forget? I will be with you in so doing. Eustis would ask the same were he here to do so.

“You have, my dear Putnam, stood the brunt of many hard-fought battles since you espoused the cause of *truth*,—*truth*; and as I once pitied you from the depths of my heart for what I was confident was an error, I now envy the comfort you realize from day to day that you walked not blindly, but by the light of the spirit-world, which shone not only into your own mind but all around you.

“Truly and sincerely your friend in life, and now as a spirit,

JAMES WALKER.

“MARCH 6, 1886.”

President Walker was not supposed by me, and I think not by the public, to have had any connection with the reputed investigation. It saddened me to learn from Spirit Agassiz that so great and so good a man had been chief director of the operations of the investigating committee. Walker himself now confesses that he was. I have not the slightest doubt that he, like Paul of old, acted then in all good conscience before God, and in genuine regard for the welfare of humanity. He saw his mistake before leaving the mortal; and when he writes that he thinks Agassiz would have confessed to the world if Felton and Peirce would have yielded, he perhaps indicates that he was ready to confess.

No other mortal probably can derive pleasure equal to mine from these *post-mortem* revelations and acknowledgments. What they say relative to myself and my course is rich compensation for all the strength and means I put forth in the "many hard battles" I fought against their views and their doings pertaining to Spiritualism,—not against them as men. Their thanks for opportunity to confess,—“thanks, doubly so,”—implies that confession gives them relief. May heavenly blessings, ever increasing, be theirs.

The above communications are so plain as to need no explanation. They reveal a distinct purpose by prominent members in the government of Harvard College to *extinguish* Spiritualism. Though Agassiz, by stating that there was more apparent than real difference between his views and mine in 1857, and by the manifestations through him as medium wit-

nessed by President Walker, evidently must have felt that it might be working against *fact*, yet in compliance with the wishes of others he yielded to their solicitations, and labored to accomplish, seemingly to the public, the impossible, viz., the demolition of a positive fact. He now wishes that he had then been strong enough to have acknowledged that he had witnessed facts which he was unable to explain.

All the others may have been confident that they were striving to demolish a harmful, wide-spreading delusion at the time of the trial. However, not more than two years elapsed before they found they had warred against a deathless and invulnerable *fact*.

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ALLEN PUTNAM'S LETTER TO HON. GEO. LUNT.

SPIRIT HON. GEO. LUNT, *one year my senior as a graduate from Harvard College, and my esteemed acquaintance thenceforth to the close of your very efficient, beneficent, and honorable course as a mortal, but yet my decided and active contestant as editor of the Boston Courier, and backer of our mutual friend C. C. Felton, and others, in their efforts to extinguish Spiritualism in 1857 :*

DEAR SIR,—If it now be your pleasure to give me *for publication* your present views of Spiritualism, and of the course you and others nearly twenty-nine years ago pursued in efforts to extinguish it, I shall gladly receive your statements. If, however, you feel the least reluctance to comply with this request, omit to do it, and no offence will be given, and no public mention be made of the omission.



Many decarnated ones express thanks to any survivors who by definite calls furnish the departed opportunities to comment upon their own mundane operations.

Respectfully and kindly yours,

JUNE 2, 1886.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE.

*“Highly Esteemed Friend and Associate of my College Days,—* Much as we might, and really did, disagree on matters of an after-life,—Spiritualism in particular,—I do not recollect a time when we were not friends, and ready and willing to greet one another cordially, wherever and whenever we met.

“The subject of Spiritualism was distasteful to my mind; to believe it seemingly belittled my manhood. But again, when I for a moment stopped and considered that my superiors in many instances believed it possible for spirits and mortals to communicate, such men as Prof. Hare, Robert Owen, William Coleman, John W. Edmonds, J. J. Mapes, yourself, and a thousand more who dared to openly avow it, I said to myself: ‘There must be some fire where there is so much smoke.’

“Prior to that conclusion, I had agreed to battle the so-called Spiritual Philosophy with others, viz., Agassiz, C. C. Felton, Peirce, Eustis, Walker, and the Faculty generally. But before six months had passed we found we had an elephant on our hands, and he was fast becoming troublesome.

“But as the world was looking to *us*, or *the Faculty*, to solve the problem, we could not gracefully back down and out without incurring the ridicule of the scientific world and of those who did accept that claimed by the Spiritualists. We battled as best we could, but recruits became so numerous our movements were flanked, and we beat a hasty but quiet retreat, reserving our report for another day.

“Agassiz would often shed tears at what he confessed to the committee he had no philosophy to explain away. C. C. Felton at times would turn pale at phenomena that manifested clearly through his own mediumship. Peirce would often say: ‘Gentlemen, it would be more honorable to make a clean breast of the matter’; to say to the public: ‘We have no philosophy that touches this subject.’ Eustis was bull-headed from the first to the last.

“We too plainly beheld the strong hold the Spiritual Philosophy had upon the public mind.

“Talking with Wm. Lloyd Garrison, and one time with W. Phillips, they were coy in giving general expression of their feelings, but indicated it might all be true. If, said they, it is a truth, it can be demonstrated, and it will live. If not a truth, it will *fall, fall, fall*.

“Taking, as I did, position to pull down the structure that bid fair to upset or overthrow the popular institutions of the day (particularly religious), I could not take a back track, and sustain my position as editor. I was not long in convincing myself that least said for or against Spiritualism was the proper course for me to pursue.

“I need not lose time in telling you what you already know, viz., that the church organizations, since the advent of Modern Spiritualism, have lost their power or sway, morally and religiously, and every year their numbers become less and less. The world at large, as it advanced in all arts and sciences, demanded a more consistent form, or mode of religious worship; and while the world was fast becoming infidel to the then popular leading of the day, this white-winged messenger of Spiritualism made its advent, and Old Theology weakened, and today it is but a wreck of its former self.

“Not long since I met Felton, Agassiz, Peirce, Eustis, Bell, Mapes, Gardner, Dr. Putnam, Walker, Jno. W. Ed-

monds, Robert Owen, Tyndall, Channing, Henry Ware, Buckingham, B. B. Mussey, Judge Phillips, T. Starr King, T. Whittemore, Lynde A. Huntington, and a score or more of spirits, convened together talking over the past, present, and that which the future must, of necessity, reveal. They finally concluded the revelations of today were only stepping-stones to those more mighty in the near distance.

"If you desire to give my sayings to the world at large, you are at liberty to do so.

"Respectfully your friend,

"JUNE 8, 1886.

GEO. LUNT."

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LETTER BY ALLEN TO SPIRIT GEO. PUTNAM.

SPIRIT GEORGE PUTNAM, *for many years a Clergyman in Roxbury, and from 1853 to 1877 one of the six Socii or Fellows of Harvard College:*

MY DEAR COUSIN, — Letters recently received by me from Spirits James Walker and George Lunt contain your name as cognizant of, though not a performer with, them and others of doings pertaining to the removal of F. L. H. Willis from the Divinity School, and to the so-called *Harvard Investigation*. Your position in or over the college government, and your long and intimate acquaintance with me, and your uniform tolerance of study and advocacy of Spiritualism by myself and many other members of your church and parish, make me desirous of getting, for open use, a statement by you of your present views of spiritualistic matters.

Your affectionate

"JUNE 10, 1886.

COUSIN ALLEN."



## RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE LETTER.

“VERY DEAR COUSIN ALLEN,—Yours of the 10th is before me, and for such courtesy and fraternal respect you have my thanks.

“I need not reiterate my often-expressed views of Spiritualism, for the change termed death has by no means changed them, but rather strengthened them, if such could be possible. Occupying as I did position as a minister of the Gospel, I was compelled, to a certain extent, to exercise great caution while speaking to my parishioners, lest I give offence by stating what some thought to be a departure from the teachings set forth by the accepted church organization.

“When I talked with you it was without the least fear or restraint. We understood one another perfectly. I was often labored with by several of my flock for giving utterances that *smacked* somewhat of spirit-communion, but, as St. Paul said: ‘None of those things moved me.’

“Spirit-communion is not only possible, but it is a fact. *Aside* from evidence manifested to mortals of an after-life *through spirit-communion*, there is none whatever.

“Touching the matter of that so-called *Harvard Investigation*, I will say, as far as I was connected with it, or the Faculty, all that has been told you by Agassiz, Felton, Walker, and Lunt is virtually true. More could be said which it was not deemed expedient by the committee to communicate. However, enough has been already said to place the matter, or the course pursued by that now more *repenting crowd*, before the world in its proper light.

“Talking the matter over with Drs. Lothrop and Channing, they only wonder that the churches attempt to stand in open opposition to the very groundwork of their faith.

“Well, the ball is in motion that will roll on until it crushes beneath its ponderous weight *all* the opposition which now, and may in the future, stand in its way.

"I rejoice, cousin, that you have lived so long, and, at the same time, sustained the flag you hoisted in the cause of truth more than a score and half years since. Be faithful to the light within you, and ever before you. Your battle is nearly fought. Your record is really one to be envied.

"If you desire to give my views, as briefly stated above, to the public, you have my full consent.

"Kindly and sincerely your friend and cousin,  
 "JUNE 19, 1886. GEORGE PUTNAM."

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#### LETTER TO SPIRIT PROF. BENJAMIN PEIRCE.

SPIRIT BENJAMIN PEIRCE, *once an Eminent Professor of Mathematics at Harvard College, and while such, one — yes, Chairman — of the Committee to Investigate Spiritualism:*

HONORED AND RESPECTED SIR, — Doubtless you well know what Felton, Agassiz, Walker, Lunt, and Putnam have recently given me in reference to that investigation. Walker has intimated that *yourself* with Felton held Agassiz back while in mortal from open avowal that Spiritualism presented phenomena which his philosophy could not explain. Lunt, however, presents you as having favored such an avowal. Such facts call upon me to furnish you with opportunity to make your own statements, if you wish to make any, in reference to the renowned battlings against Spiritualism in 1857.

Very respectfully yours,

"JULY 21, 1886. ALLEN PUTNAM."

#### RESPONSE BY SPIRIT PROF. BENJAMIN PEIRCE.

"VERY DEAR AND HIGHLY-ESTEEMED FRIEND PUTNAM, — Yours of the 21st is before me and others who took

active measures to stay the rapid strides of Spiritualism about the years 1856 and 1857.

“Now, what can I say after what Agassiz, Walker, and Putnam, Lunt and Felton have already admitted, and is now before the public? If you indorse not what they have stated, you would not credit what I might say even now. But allow me here to say I fully concur in all that has been said by those above mentioned.

“I did not willingly enter the contest; and here allow me to say I did protest against it, knowing the hold Spiritualism had upon the masses, who were then not only investigating the subject, but demonstrating their claims, to my mind, as clearly as any problem of mathematics.

“But holding the position I did, I could not act in contrariety to the idea sustained by the Faculty, and that body was far from being ready to say all of their preconceived idea of the future was an error. As Agassiz, Felton, and Lunt have already stated, we—as the Faculty—banded together to give battle as we did.

“The result of said attempt of the Faculty is too patent to need *comment*. Suffice it to say that after twenty-nine years of deliberation we have given our views of that long-promised *report*.

“I am sincerely, truly your friend,

“JUNE 21, 1886.

BENJAMIN PEIRCE.”

#### LETTER TO SPIRIT LUTHER V. BELL, M. D.

SPIRIT LUTHER V. BELL, M. D., *in 1857 at the Head of the McLean Asylum for the Insane, the Neighbor, and in Scientific Attainments the Peer, of Harvard Professors:*

DEAR AND HONORED SIR,—You having been present at the so-called Harvard Investigation, as a non-partisan ob-

server, not a Spiritualist, but a lover of facts and fearless adducer of whatever facts plainly taught, I solicit for public use such comments as you may be pleased to make upon the statements recently made to me, through Mansfield, the spirit's scribe, by the parties who conducted the warfare against Spiritualism.

Kindly and very respectfully,

JUNE 21, 1886.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

#### RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE LETTER.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND PUTNAM,—I recollect you in all the kindness of a friend and brother, and particularly an investigator of the so-called Spiritualism of an early day. You know, my dear friend, I was not an avowed believer of the then claimed facts, or said to be facts by you and Spiritualism's thousand adherents; but was a fair and cordial investigator. I admired facts wherever I found them. But although I witnessed much — yea, very strange phenomena — said or claimed to have emanated from departed spirits, yet I never was fully convinced that I had talked with any one I had previously known while mortal. I was probably as far convinced as was the philosopher Socrates. He 'hoped for an after-life.'

"But since coming here I have solved the question I so often asked, not only as I watched over or cared for my patients in yonder McLean Asylum, but while on the tented field, when the sick and wounded lay prostrate before me, just on the verge of another life, if one there was, I would ask myself, Will those now dying live again? Will Luther V. Bell live again? Will anyone live after the body has become food for groveling worms?

"The question was solved when I arrived here and took old acquaintances by the hand as naturally and as really as



I ever took their hand in life. Yes, friend Putnam, I *live*. Louis Agassiz and J. J. Mapes, Timothy Thompson, James Stearns Hurd, M. D., *live*. Our mutual dear friend, Lynde A. Huntington, and President Walker, *live*. Your ever active, zealous and firm friend, Henry F. Gardner, and scores of others who fought for and against the wide-spread of the light which now shines into the darkness of mistaken theology, *live*.

"I, for one, rejoice that our very repentant friends (for really they were our friends at heart) have at last published their REPORT,—long time coming, my dear friend, but 'better late than never.'

"If I have said anything that will confirm or add to that already given you by the *so-called sorry Faculty*, you are at liberty to publish it over the signature of

"JUNE 21, 1886.

LUTHER V. BELL, M. D."

#### LETTER TO SPIRIT DR. HENRY F. GARDNER.

SPIRIT HENRY F. GARDNER, *my Dear Friend, and my Leader in Battling for Spiritualism's Defence, when that was assailed by the Culture and Science of Old Harvard:*

You are no doubt cognizant of all that has recently been revealed to me by Felton, Agassiz, Walker, Lunt, Putnam, Peirce, and Bell. Their statements are being published, and I feel that you should be permitted, yes, invited by me, to furnish statements in reference to the famous *investigation*, if you shall desire so to do. Please respond.

Your former subordinate aid, and your friend both then and now,

ALLEN PUTNAM.

JUNE 28, 1886.

## RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE.

“MUCH ESTEEMED FRIEND AND BROTHER PUTNAM,— I have been a silent looker on at the correspondence that has so recently passed between you and Felton, Agassiz, Walker, Lunt, and Bell. It gives me great joy to see that after nearly three decades of years our opponents throw up the glove.

“I no doubt have been a thorn in their side ever since we have met as spirits; although I have considered their position, and regarded their feelings, yet I have often said: ‘My friends, when is the *Harvard Investigation Report* to be brought out?’ They took my taunt, as they termed it, and at one time Felton said: ‘Gardner, would you kick a man after you had thrown him down?’ He said: ‘We shall right the matter ere long.’

“I rejoice exceedingly, my dear Putnam, that they have acquitted themselves so nobly; they made a clean breast of it, and were willing that the world should have it (their statements) too.

“I never met a more pleased set of spirits than they were, that they had unburdened their troubled souls. Why, they do not look like the same spirits.

“Friend Putnam, spare no pains to place the correspondence before the world. It will be as well received as it has been anxiously looked for. Rejoice, my dear Putnam, that you live to read and publish the long-looked-for REPORT.

“Your friend and brother,

“JUNE 30, 1886.

HENRY F. GARDNER.”

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COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS.

The several responses to five of my eight letters now before the public, *if* written by the spirits whose

names they bear, present *confessions* — distinct *confessions* — by a band whose members, in their personal culture, positions, and character, were fairly representative of New England's highest attainments in Theology, Literature, Science, and Philosophy, — representative of her highest skill and power to solve the mysteries of nature and life, — yes, are their own *confessions* that, by *pre-arranged and vigorous trial*, they found themselves unable to explain the phenomena of Spiritualism by any science or philosophy known by them. Vaunting presumption only can anticipate success where such men failed.

Were they the *authors* of those letters? That is the crucial question. My letter to each of them was by myself, personally and alone, written and so enveloped that no mortal vision could read it. The envelope I so sealed that no mortal could take the letter out from it without marring the envelope to such an extent that the marring would be detectable.

Each of my letters to those spirits came back to me in the identical envelope in which I *personally* either dropped it into the mail-box or took it to the scribe's writing-desk. Each was carefully examined by me upon its return, and both its envelope and the seal upon it, stamped before left with the blade end of the handle of my own double-bladed pocket-knife, seemed under close scrutiny to be, and I doubt not were, just what they were and as they were when they passed out from under my personal care.

Whether my processes were conducted carefully and honestly, I, and I only in mortal, can *know* ; I



*do* know ; and I assert that they were. Also, I believe that no mortal but myself had opportunity by the exercise of either mortal sight or mortal hearing to learn the contents of either of my letters, nor to whom either of them was addressed, until response to it was written in full. I deem it impossible that the scribe could possess knowledge of the contents of the letters when answers to them were penciled by his own hand.

Whoever concedes that I have not been deluded, and that I am capable of being, have been and am, both cautious and truthful in these my statements, may — yes, *must* — perceive in the above correspondence *proof* that some departed spirits have communed with a survivor in this mundane sphere ; also, that Spirit President Walker's own use of a medium's organism to write through proves that the intelligence manifested in the production of some spiritualistic phenomena may be far *other than demoniacal*, unless Walker himself now is widely different from what we believed and thought we *knew* him to be when in mortal. Agassiz, as may be seen (p. 16), stated that President Walker viewed the intelligence underlying spiritual phenomena *diabolical*. I cannot view *him* as an outworker of DIABOLISM.

The efficacy of the foregoing correspondence in swaying any mind toward or into belief that spirits return — that Modern Spiritualism is true — may be, naturally will be, proportionate to the estimate a reader has of my mental sagacity and power, of my truthfulness,—yes, of my *integrity*, in its broadest sense. Those who know me personally and well will

be swayed in judgment by the knowledge they possess. Other readers, recalling the terms in which my respondents address me when opening and closing their several responses, may draw inferences from that source.

My aim is *public* GOOD; and in all the foregoing statements I carefully sought to be accurate in perception and truthful in recording. Modern Spiritualism, outflowing from recent opening of doors for free return of spirits of all grades, has its *basis* in "*The Nature of Things*," originally involved there, designed to come into extensive operation for humanity's good in both the spheres above and on earth, when fitting conditions — when "fullness of time" — for its beneficence should arrive. This rare perihelion period may have brought that "FULLNESS."

Have any departed spirits in this age communed with their surviving mortals? That is the primal question pertaining to Modern Spiritualism. Let us see.

In what precedes it appears that seven spirits who each while in mortal was highly learned, well known and much esteemed within and widely around the walls of Old Harvard, and an eighth one who started life's labors in a blacksmith's shop, and there took on the hardness of an anvil, which withstood undented the heaviest blows of scientific hammers, and forced their rebound,—these eight, each for himself, have distinctly, pertinently, instructively, penciled out on palpable paper, using therefor a mortal medium's hand, accounts of their views, acts, expe-

riences pertaining to the famous so-called Harvard Investigation of Spiritualism in 1857.

Each of the eight did this in response to a mortal's letter addressed to the respondent spirit solely. Thus eight distinct cases have occurred, in each of which there was very intelligible and very instructive and valuable intercommunion between a mortal and a spirit. Each one of those responses envelopes within itself clear *demonstration* of a spirit's impartation of knowledge to a mortal,—yes, a demonstration of which I will say, in the words of Prof. Peirce, Harvard's most eminent mathematician, was and is “as clear as any *mathematical* demonstration.” Eight eminent ones, all well known in this generation, have each made such a demonstration. They all agree. That is enough. The problem is solved. Harvard's *ablest* have solved it. They, while being spirits, have returned. So have countless others. Modern Spiritualism is a verified *fact*,—a momentous fact; it is revolutionizing and enlightening; worthy of closest scrutiny by loftiest, not less than by humbler, minds.

I am about to bring this article to a close, and incline to do it by quoting the last paragraph in good President Walker's response to me,—a paragraph which drew forth from the depths of my heart gratitude to him, and thrilled me with joy. It is a high commendation of Spiritualism itself, as well as congratulation with me:—

“You have, my dear Putnam, stood the brunt of many hard-fought battles since you espoused the cause of *truth*,—  
TRUTH. And as I once pitied you from the depths of my

heart for what I was confident was an error, I now envy the comfort you enjoy from day to day,—that you walked not blindly, but by the light of the spirit-world, which shone not only into your own mind but all around you.”

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The individuals previously named were, while in mortal, holders and adorners of positions which bespoke their power to comprehend, qualify, and sway the tendencies of public opinion and belief. They severally ranked high — prominently high — in the esteem of both the recent past and the present generation. They were emphatically learned and good men, holding and deserving public confidence in their wisdom, their philanthropy, and their competency to weigh the merits and forecast the influences of passing events and operative beliefs, as accurately and well as any residents around or in the city of Boston.

Such were the men who deemed the phenomena and teachings called *spiritual* pernicious in action upon the public mind, and therefore to be decried as illusive and deluding, and to be prevented, if possible, from gaining wider credence in and stronger influence over society.

No feeling, no thought, prompts me to censure any individual named, nor them collectively as a band assailing a cause which I espoused and deemed holy.

As a *Spiritualist* I am thankful for what they did with intent to demolish the structure of my faith. Yet, as their fellow-being, some of them now have



my pity that they needfully have been anguished by a conscious and pressing sense of hasty harshness in their treatment of some innocent outworkers of marvels. Now they ask forgiveness by those innocent ones whom they once viewed as culprits, and, solely to crush Spiritualism out of them and the public, treated with cruel severity.

Why can I feel thankful? Why may all Spiritualists be thankful for what *such men* did to abolish our faith? For myself, I make response as follows:

Rarely, if ever, has today's Spiritualism received as weighty evidence that it is what its espousers claim, viz., that it has base on fact positive, and involves rich blessings for humanity in both mundane and spirit spheres, as has now been furnished in and by the recent writings of those decarnated Harvard professors, who, when in mortal, deliberately and vigorously assailed it, because, as viewed by them, it was a pernicious bubble. Their assault, combined with their frank confession now, when spirits, that they were powerless in assault, were baffled, puts them high among the most efficient testifiers to its verity and invincibility.

The single fact that from out the realm of spirit they now put forth through use of a mortal's hand responses to my letters *proves* that some departed ones have communed with a survivor in mortal. Such fact alone may do more to establish conviction in *logical and thinking* minds than the whole Board of the College Faculty could have accomplished by twenty-nine years' vigorous use of their highest learning, keenest logic, expanded science, and fer-



vent eloquence in exposition and advocacy of the cause while they wore robes of flesh. Its assailants once, they now reveal their incompetence when using their most efficient mental weapons to crush or even bruise it. Few others could or can wield such weapons with force equalling theirs. Where such ones failed, who can anticipate success?

Had they not been assailants baffled while in mortal, no words from them now, as spirits, could take such tenacious hold upon the minds of their successors in high collegiate positions, of graduates from colleges, of thinking, logical minds in all grades and classes in society, as their grasp now gets and will retain through all time. As skillful testers of spiritualistic metal, they found it *precious*, valuable for a currency whose worth would command wide and abiding circulation. Their *post-mortem* stamp of approval upon it more than overbalances their mundane allegations that it was spurious.

INVESTIGATION??? Yes, such it proved to be. By its discovery was made that some intelligence, with powers other than mortals possessed, was broadly applying forces among men which brought out into mortal view operations requiring operators not known by ablest mundane scientists. Who did this? Harvard's abler expounders of theology, literature, natural sciences, and mathematics combined did it. Their report, now made "after twenty-nine years' consideration," involves such strong testimony that Modern Spiritualism has basis on solid *fact* that their work begins to be and is long and widely to be helpful to the cause of Spiritualism, that this writer

puts those professors among — high among — efficient agents whose doings tend to broaden reception and enhance the beneficence of that revolutionizing and enlightening truth. Thanks to them for their *attack*.

It is obvious that to make their assulting work beneficent, as it has now become and will be in the future, there was needed some dauntless Dr. Gardner, backed by unflinching supporters, upon whom the hammers of science might be swung with vigor and force. Such ones were on hand, stood their ground, and let science try the resisting properties of themselves; those properties proved to be an anvil, receiving the heavy blows unharmed.

Apart from firm resistance, there never would have come forth the strong — the vastly strong — proof that departed ones can and do, and may long henceforth and in hosts, hold communings with their survivors and successors in mortal, imparting to the latter accounts of personal experiences in the life beyond, and teaching mortals how best to train themselves as aspirants for peace and joy in the inevitable hereafter.

Spirit friends, ye who projected and enacted the assault upon Spiritualism and Spiritualists in 1857, please view yourselves, far as possible, as having been more helpful to a vast and good cause by your assault upon it than you could have been by espousing and advocating it. I sincerely view you thus. Strong opposition to any new cause of magnitude and general interest draws public attention to it, leads to close scrutiny of its claims, reveals its weaknesses, brings into view its strength, leads to fore-

castings of its future action and results. In the case before us you and I were on opposing sides, each party conscientiously believing it was advocating right and opposing wrong,—teaching truth and denouncing error. Thus far—and that is *very far*—we were alike.

You—the most of you—were restrained by your positions, avocations, and habits of thought, from mingling freely with most of those people who were early known to be instruments through whom marvels were being manifested, and also with that grade of beholders who felt free to give openly and to anybody accounts of marvels they had witnessed or heard of.

The *restrictive bonds of position* and avocation were upon each one of you, holding you mainly within orbits of scholastic and social circulation, within which was given at first scarcely a hint, or not more than a few vague hints, that any new thing of special interest was transpiring in your surrounding Nazareth. I was free from any such hamperings.

Later on, occult workers of marvels found a facile instrument within your accustomed orbits, and through that put forth such demonstrations of their power as led you to view their instrument as personally guilty of imposture, fraud, or diabolism, and to maltreat and banish him therefor. For the harshness and cruelty bestowed by some of you upon Willis and Mansfield, stinging and prolonged self-reproach may be richly deserved and needfully endured.

Simply as opponents of the general cause, viz.,

Spiritualism and its adherents, Walker, Felton, and Lunt regarded what they assailed as either diabolic or illusive, void of good, full of evil, and therefore to be fought down. Agassiz and Peirce surmised, perhaps even knew, that facts existed on which the claims of the Spiritualists *might* rest firmly. Still, they may have viewed the *influences of Spiritualism* as they then saw them hostile to the public good, and warred against it from good motives. I can and do trust that their action against *the general cause* gives to no one of them all any regret or disquietude; also, I hope that they may see, and derive pleasure from seeing, that the assault they made has been and will continue long to be highly helpful in revealing the source of Spiritualism's emanation, and the involved purposes and ultimate aims of those who in realms above supervise the methods and processes for gaining its wide reception among such mortals as will be disposed and able to keep on opening, and holding steadily open, gates for the egress earthward of wise teachers and powerful helpers from realms of supernal experiences and wisdom.

On Jan. 27, 1886, at home, I wrote to Spirit C. C. Felton, aiming only to quench, if I could, flames of indignation against him which had been burning in the spirits' scribe — Mansfield — twenty-eight years. On the 29th I carried the letter to Mansfield, seeking response through him. Felton, using Mansfield's hands, opens his reply thus: —

“I was with you, and so were our old but dear friends, Dr. Luther V. Bell, President Walker, Peirce, and H. F.



Gardner this early morning. It was *by our united action* that you were *forced* to come and talk with me through the man I so abused while I lived in mortal."

Why those spirits especially? What was the relation of those parties severally to the Harvard Investigation, and therefore to me?

Prior to that time, ostensibly to myself and the public, Prof. Felton was main projector and manager of that assault upon Spiritualism. Now we learn that President Walker was at the head; Prof. Peirce was chairman of the assulting committee, Dr. Gardner was head of the assailed party, and Dr. Bell was a non-partisan observer of the conflict. Thus it is rendered probable that my writing to Felton on January 27th was known by those spirits before, or surely on the early morning of the 29th, though the letter was all the while in my own keeping, its very existence known by no mortal but myself, yet *as a band* it is claimed they put upon me a force which carried me forthwith to the spirits' scribe. Fair inference from this is that the response to my letter had been agreed upon by, and had the approval of, that special band as a whole. Though not myself mediumistic enough to be conscious of promptings and sway by spirits, yet I give credence to affirmations that they do at times prompt acts which I perform; and especially such as pertain to the cause of Spiritualism. Prospectively even then they may have seen the sequel down to this time, though I then had no aim beyond that of changing Mansfield's feelings toward Felton.



FELTON (see p. 10). — This man, no doubt, honestly and sincerely thought that people were being led on by Spiritualism “to follow a bubble” that would, in his opinion, “burst in the near future.” He acted conscientiously and for what he believed was public good; he however was too harsh in action and speech. But manfully he now “freely and fully begs Mansfield’s pardon.” Says also that he and Eustis are ready to “proclaim to the world” their “wrong-doings with young Willis.” Also, that he now *knows* “that Mansfield is all that he has professed, or all that is claimed for him, by his friends.”

It is pleasing to hear Mansfield say, as he does, that since that acknowledgment was made the fires of his resentment against Felton which had been burning for twenty-eight years have fully died out.

My sole aim in writing the first letter in the foregoing series was fully attained at that time, and no intention or desire then existed in my mind to extend my correspondence with supernals.

AGASSIZ (see p. 15). — After the publication of Felton’s communication, and as a result from it, I was prompted by a letter from A. J. Heinsohn, of Cleveland, O., to write to Spirit Prof. Agassiz. Did so, and in that spirit’s response I first found that the famous Harvard onslaught upon Spiritualism was *deliberately planned by the College Faculty*, under the leading of President Walker. Found, also, that Agassiz went into the conflict less in obedience to perception of falsity in Spiritualism than to the wishes of the College president.

By saying as he does that he differed less from *me* than the public generally supposed, he at least hints that he apprehended that something more firm than Felton's "bubble" was to be encountered, yet he did not view it as an adamant wall, for he says they made assaults "believing they could demolish the structure," but soon found they "were powerless in the matter."

The world's need of Spiritualism can hardly be stated more strongly than it is when one such as he says: "*The unexplainable phenomena exhibited by the mediums were my only evidence or hope of a conscious individuality beyond the tomb.*" A great if not the chief difficulty in getting the source of the phenomena of Spiritualism correctly determined is the non-persistence of *leaders in science* when they encounter phenomena not explainable by what they *already know*. Even the great Agassiz says distinctly that he turned his back upon and gave a wide berth to phenomena because they baffled his skill to explain their source and quality. Such procedure manifests good reason why now, as in a former age, supernal prescience and wisdom revealed new truths to babes first rather than to the wise and prudent.

In connection with anything seen but yet not appearing within the explored realm of outward nature, the greater and more renowned the scientist the less is he willing to concede the existence of a reputed marvelous fact, or, if conceding that much, is less willing to put its reality and its claims as to the source of issuance to rigid, *logical test*. The tetherings of position and reputation hold the learned back

from rangings into the realms of mystery. The less learned and less great are more free to enter and explore such domain. What an Agassiz could not explain by his science, he turned his back upon.

WALKER (see p. 18). — Special attention is asked to the response made by President Walker, who, not only by his position, but also, in my view, *as a man*, broadly unfolded, strong, firm, wise, and good, somewhat out-ranked either of his subordinates. See how gratefully he opens his reply to me: "I thank you, *doubly so*, for allowing me an opportunity to express my regrets for my course toward Spiritualism when I was in the body mortal."

Some mortals express wonder why spirits who innocently held erroneous views of matters while here which led them from good motives to act so harshly and unwisely that, when released from the body, they feel a need and have a strong desire to make confession and ask forgiveness earthward — some I say — wonder why such omit to do so through any one of the many mediumistic mortals. My response is that conditions on this side, *well fitted* for so doing, may be of very rare occurrence, because such conditions rarely can be brought about by the spirits alone. Mortals usually have an important part to perform in furnishing fit conditions for such operations. Often among the necessary conditions may be the presence of, or a call from, a mortal who is in mental and emotional mood and condition to welcome, appreciate, and wisely use what shall be put forth. For some reason "thanks, *doubly so*," were given in this case

for the furnishing of "opportunity to express regrets." President Walker, doubtless, was well aware that no other graduate from Harvard, scarcely any other mortal survives, who was both so well acquainted with the harsh treatment of Willis, and the rash attack of the assaulting committee, as myself. The terms in which he addresses me, I think, imply his confidence—a very helpful condition—that I would seek to avoid other than beneficent use of whatever he might say.

He feelingly states that now it would give him much pleasure to take young Willis by the hand, and confess his error; asks me to go and take Willis by the hand, and ask him to forgive and forget, saying, also, that he would be with me in so doing. I did go, not doubting that he was with me, and gained relief thereby.

I am apprehensive that this good man's memory failed to serve him fully when he says that the Faculty only gave Willis permission to resign connection with the Divinity School; according to my memory, they expelled him.

Scarcely any other statements in all my correspondence with these assailants of Spiritualism have given me so much surprise as Agassiz's remarks; one that President Walker was *at their head*, and the other that he deemed the intelligence underlying the phenomena of Spiritualism "*demoniacal*." That president himself now freely confesses that though "not in the front ranks of the battle . . . so far as advice was needed or solicited, he was not coy in imparting it."



That any other cultured and able theologian than Prof. Phelps, of Andover, and those akin to him, should have deemed these modern outworkings from the realms of mystery *demoniacal* astonishes me. I know their likes were so viewed in the days of Salem witchcraft, and the lessons of that age show that mortal combats with the devil are waged and prosecuted with direful havoc and suffering among mortals. I am loth to view such statement by President Walker as other than a casual remark dropped in a state of bewilderment. The candor, warm sympathy, kindness, and deep regrets for acts which erroneous views of strange phenomena led him to perform, cause that beloved and venerated president to be by no means less, but even more highly, elevated than ever before in my esteem, and to be much more warmly loved by me than he would have been but for a course which brought him to be testor of the genuineness of spirit return, and as such subsequently to become prominent among the most credible attestors of the fact of its genuineness by means of his own response to a mundane epistle now while he dwells in spirit land. May his mundane errors of perception, and consequent seeming wrongs in action, come to be, as I conceive they eventually may be viewed by himself, as his mainly *instrumentally* or mediumistically, he having been used by higher intelligences for putting to crucial test the fact of spirit return. Thus could he be made a more efficient promulgator of that momentous fact — fact pregnant with blessings — than he could have been through



advocacy of it by his able pen and persuasive tongue. Good from seeming evil.

The following letter to President Walker, written when the scribe, Mansfield, was absent from the city, and the response after his return, were not at command till after the president's former letter was in print, otherwise the two would have been placed together:—

46 CLARENDON ST., BOSTON, SEPT. 14, 1886.

SPIRIT REV. JAMES WALKER, D. D., *President of Harvard College in 1857*:

HIGHLY-ESTEEMED FRIEND,—On March 6th, in response to a letter from me, you, in reference to the case of young Willis, said that he had “permission to resign (for that was really all that it was).” Now, both he and myself have published our dissent from the truth of what you enclosed in parentheses. According to his knowledge and my firm belief, he declined to avail of that *privilege to resign*, and consequently was *expelled*. Our statements imply that either we or you have put forth an *untruth*. We are not inclined to change our statements, and must leave you in a position not pleasant for me to contemplate, and I think it cannot be otherwise to yourself. My desire is, in my account of the College Faculty's treatment of Willis and of Spiritualism, to put forth nothing but the *exact truth*, and therefore feel in duty bound to furnish you opportunity to make such statements in reference to the difference between your statement and ours as are in harmony with your view of the facts.

In sincere kindness and high esteem, and in gratitude for your kind remarks to myself, very respectfully your friend now, as I was while you were in mortal,

ALLEN PUTNAM.

## RESPONSE BY PRESIDENT WALKER.

“DEAR PUTNAM,—Yours of Sept. 14th is before me; and for explanation of what is said in my letter of March 6th let me explain what I intended. My meaning of that matter was, your young friend Willis was, as I understood it, allowed to resign; and, if he would not avail himself of the offer, then all the Faculty could do was to drop him out. It would have afforded the Faculty great pleasure to have had Mr. Willis accepted that proffered him; but he would not, and, as I viewed the matter, Willis expelled himself.

“You see, my friend Putnam, taking the stand the Harvard professors did (although we know it was wrong in the extreme), yet we had to drop Willis after his refusal to accept the only escape that was left him from expulsion under the rules and regulations of that college.

“Most kindly, your friend and brother,

“JAMES WALKER.”

From this it appears that, by the “rules and regulations of Harvard College,” a permission to resign, if not availed of, must be followed by expulsion; and, therefore, the permission involves expulsion, and embraces all that was done in the Willis case. Permission there is made too comprehensive in meaning.

LUNT (see p. 24).—Next comes Hon. George Lunt, who left his mortal form not till early in 1885. He gives a rapid but clear account of his agreement to aid the Faculty through his paper—*Boston Courier*—in their assault upon what was distasteful to him, and seemed belittling. He went into the work in good conscience; and I, from personal observation at

the trial, know that at the outset he was as resolutely and unflinchly pugnacious as any one of the assailants. But reflections upon the abilities and standing of many avowed Spiritualists soon after moderated his ardor; yet he thought best to hold on even to "a troublesome elephant" for a while, and postpone report to some future time. He saw too many recruits joined the other side; also, his associates had explosions in their own camp, bursting forth from both Agassiz and Felton. He closes with the significant statement that a host of intelligent spirits recently concluded, *upon deliberate consultation*, "that the revelations of today were only stepping-stones to those more mighty in the near distance."

PUTNAM (see p. 26).—Rev. George Putnam, D.D., confesses freely that he believed spirits returned while he occupied the pulpit, but then he deemed it prudent not to avow it openly. The same is true today, I think, in the case of more than half of the liberal clergymen in this vicinity. I also wonder—as he says spirits Drs. Lothrop and Channing do—"that the churches attempt to stand in open opposition to the very ground-work of their faith." He says, too, that "*aside from evidence manifested to mortals of another life through spirit communion*, there is none whatsoever."

I can see the twinkle of his eye when, speaking of the Harvard investigators, he calls them "the now *more repenting crowd*,"—hinting, *perhaps*, that he himself needed to repent a little for his course in regard to Spiritualism. Be that as it may, he did not

oppose the cause, nor dread its action upon his parishioners. The hesitancy of such a man, in the high position he held in his denomination, in his official connection with Harvard College, and in public esteem generally, his hesitancy to openly espouse Spiritualism, may be deemed censurable by many people, especially by Spiritualists; but his course — which was letting the matter alone, letting it work on, neither decried nor commended — was as well, I doubt not — was, perhaps, better for the cause of Spiritualism itself than would have resulted had there been, as almost inevitably there must, disturbance in his parish and the community if he openly and frequently preached Spiritualism under its own name. As the rose would smell as sweet under any other name, so the essence of Spiritualism, which he often poured out, would be as operative *unnamed* as if specifically labeled, and be even more widely acceptable.

During a few years in early life I was in the ministry, and often deemed it prudent, when viewing my relations to the parish, to be guarded in speech upon topics other than purely religious, if the topics were highly interesting to the public, and upon which public opinion was divided. Prudence ranks well up among those virtues which are the eventual out-workers of beneficence. Though Spiritualism is modifying religions, it comes not simply as *a religion*; it makes its first appeals to science, to reason, to logic. Till these establish the fact of spirit return, the clergy may be most helpful to its advance by leaving it undiscussed.



PEIRCE (see p. 28).—Prof. Peirce, chairman of the investigating committee, and nearly the rival of Agassiz in the management of the operations (those two receiving but little active aid from their two much younger, and then much less renowned, associates), speaks out in frankness, showing himself to have been strongest of them all in moral bravery — was willing to avow publicly that they were unable to account for the facts. In this he is supported by Lunt.

Spiritualists had demonstrated their claims as clearly to his mind “as any problem of mathematics.” “But,” says he, “holding the position I did, I could not <sup>act</sup> in contrariety to the ideas sustained by the Faculty.” He says distinctly he “did not *willingly* enter the contest,” and “did protest against it.” He closes — and, I think, thereby receiving as well as giving pleasure — with the statement that “after twenty-nine years of deliberation we have given our views of that long-promised REPORT.” *Fullness of time* for the report to appear was not till now. Earlier, while the reporters were in mortal, the report would have been less valuable.

Many readers probably will not be in mental mood to perceive probable correctness in the supposition which the writer’s mind inclines to hold, viz., that from its inception to its close, now with a report from the spirit spheres, the assault of the Harvard Faculty upon Spiritualism, together with its resultant sequels, have measurably been under the supervision and sway of supernal prescience, wisdom, and power, and so prosecuted that the assailants should



eventually not only be themselves demonstrators of the truth they assailed, but also should personally make *demonstrating* record of its verity by their use severally of a mortal hand. That much they have done. The reporting process itself was spiritual, and proves spirit communion with one mortal to have been a verity,—the very thing that was to be demonstrated, and now has been, by Harvard's ablest mathematicians and others.

BELL (see p. 29).—We have done with the college attachés. Next comes a non-partisan observer, yet an equal in attainments and public esteem to the leading actors in the battle, Dr. Luther V. Bell, head manager of the McLean Asylum for the Insane.

This searcher for and lover of facts witnessed many phenomena called spiritual, but never such ones as gave him full conviction that they were put forth by beings who had once been men or women on earth's surface. Indeed, he had doubts up to the close of his mundane life whether man was destined to live beyond the grave,—he could only hope for a future life.

How strongly that state of such a mind teaches the desirableness of so distinct and extensive return by spirits as shall banish all doubt upon a subject so interwoven in the mental states of every thoughtful, fore-gazing intellect. Not till he passed out of the mortal did he get satisfying response to the question "If a man die, shall he live again?" Passing out, his doubts were instantly ended; for at once he grasped the hands of old earth acquaintances,—hands

as palpable to his spirit hand, as solid and substantial to the touch, as had been their mortal hands in his mortal grasp. Nothing is ghostly about a spirit as seen and handled by a spirit.

The earnestness in which Dr. Bell announces that *Luther V. Bell lives*, also that this old acquaintance and that one *lives*, bespeaks in him intense pleasure and joy that his doubts have been solved, and perhaps indicates in him a strong desire to so emphatically announce the fact that he lives as to give conviction to doubting mortal minds that they surely will live beyond the tomb. His case, like that of Agassiz, indicates that scientific searchers of highest order are probably more liable than most others to find weakness in one reputed evidence of a future life after another till they have set aside all evidence on which the mass of mortals confidently rest, and get themselves enveloped in thick and cheerless mists of doubt. With Luther V. Bell the problem is solved. Though he has died to earth, he still lives, and so reports.

GARDNER (see p. 31). — Last, but by no means the most *sorrowful* comer, was Dr. Henry F. Gardner. It is pleasant to see that in the realms beyond, when consulting bands of college officials gathered from time to time to decide upon what should be put forth in response to my letters, we find with them their mundane contestant, Dr. Gardner.

Felton, the first to respond, says: "I was with you, and so were our old but dear friends, Dr. Luther V. Bell, President Walker, Peirce, and *H. F. Gardner*,

early this morning. It was by our united action that you were forced to come and talk with me." Thus at the outset it appears Walker, the head of the College Faculty, Peirce, Chairman of their Committee, Dr. Gardner, leader of their opponents, and Luther V. Bell, the non-partisan looker-on, united their forces to bring me into converse with Felton. A band consisting of those special co-workers upon me suggests the probability that even then, when my aim was only to lessen or extinguish Mansfield's wrath toward Felton, they foresaw the extended and important sequel. They then, designedly perhaps, harnessed me for vastly more work than I suspected.

Gardner's statement is that he was a "silent looker-on" at the correspondence between me and the others; that it gave him great joy "to see them throw up the glove."

What interests and impresses me most in his account is the statement that he "never met a more pleased set of spirits than they were that they had *unburdened their troubled souls*." "They do not," he says, "look like the same spirits."

Such statement indicates that "confession, good for the soul" here, is so even for the soul of a spirit after its release from earth, when it can and does reach a wronged or injured mortal to be the fitting receiver of the confession. The lesson is here taught that opening wide the doors for return to the mundane sphere may give many a burdened spirit unprecedented opportunity to gain relief by confession earthward. Wrongs are easiest and best righted where they were perpetrated.

Before bringing this article to its close, mention should be made that when commenting upon Prof. Felton's letter of Feb. 27 (see p. 10), I too sweepingly claimed to be the only graduate from Harvard who has advocated Spiritualism on the rostrum *or* in the public press over his own name. There is one notable exception as to use of the pen. Thos. B. Hall, Esq., of Boston, has ably and well put forth the finer essence of Spiritualism in books and articles over his name; and, in so doing, while tethered by the restraining cords which rope the members of a profession within defined limits, has exhibited much more courage than was needful in my case.

Moral courage and love of truth surely were not and are not greater in me than in very many of the clergymen and others among us. It is therefore needful for me to presume that had I remained in the ministry I should not have been the contestant I was against my old associates in Mother Harvard's Halls. I claim no merit for my course, but am grateful for early bereavements and debility which induced me to unbind and throw aside the bands which limit ranges for mental roving by the devotees to either of the three learned professions, or by *eminent* scientists and philosophers.

Though it be a fact that Thos. B. Hall, Esq., and myself are the only graduates from Harvard who have in print over their own names to much, if any, extent advocated and expounded Spiritualism,—and that I myself am the only one who in this vicinity has advocated it *upon the rostrum*, it is not to be inferred that no other Harvard graduates have freely



and openly avowed belief of it. Judge Willard Phillips, of Cambridge; Judge Joseph G. Waters, of Salem; James Furbish, of Portland, made open declaration of their reception of it. Very many others have been and are known by me to believe it who have deemed it prudent not to say so openly.

The chief early advocates of the cause in this vicinity had their prior education elsewhere than at Harvard. Rev. Adin Ballou, Rev. Herman Snow, Rev. John M. Spear, Rev. John Pierpont, Epes Sargent, A. E. Newton, Luther Colby, John S. Adams, Judge Ladd, of Cambridge, Rev. Mr. Mountford, and other early expounders of this cause, were not sons of Alma Mater — Nourishing Mother — HARVARD.

Dr. Gardner closes with an exhortation that I “spare no pains to place the correspondence before the world.” He adds that “it will be as well received as it has been anxiously looked for.” “Rejoice,” he says, “my dear Putnam, that you live to read and publish the long-looked-for report.”

My cousin, Rev. George Putnam, expressed his joy that my days had been prolonged till I could get and publish this account. Because of anticipated beneficence which in both the mundane and supernal spheres may naturally outflow from the procurement and publication of the preceding correspondence, I do rejoice that my life in mortal has been prolonged till this special work was accomplished. More for that than for aught else do I rejoice that my span of life stretched on till it embraces fourscore-and-three years and nine months.

No other mortal is likely to, hardly can, experience



joy born of the foregoing revelations that shall equal what thence has come to me. I early had to view Spiritualism as the harbinger and enfolder of vast light and aid to immortal dwellers on both sides of the line between the mortal and the spirit realm. Advocacy of it brought me into and held me in prolonged conflict with old associates and friends, who looked upon me not simply as a deluded one, but also as the leader of others into harmful errors. Being such in their view, their thoughts and feelings, and in many cases their deportment, have been a depressing weight upon my shoulders; and from none others has there come upon me weight more taxing to my powers of endurance than from the members of the Faculty of Harvard College. Thank heaven that part of the burden is not only taken off now, but the hands that imposed it are now put forth to help me bear up under whatever pressure may come upon me from other sources.

In a portion of broad nature's mental and emotional domain, which was first revealed to my vision by the morning rays of Modern Spiritualism's light, a young upshoot from the soil there soon attracted my careful attention. The mental eye saw it labeled with promise that it would contribute largely to "The Healing of the Nations." Since then it has become well rooted, and is vigorous in its growth, promising to yield good fruit bountifully from this time onward through the coming ages. Thanks to the Infinite Gardener that He has employed me to aid in the culture of such a tree when it was but a sapling in nursery.

## SUPPLEMENT.



INTRODUCTORY. — The contents of the preceding pages have previously gone before the public piecemeal in the *Banner of Light*. Now, as they are to go forth in other form, various questions or points pertinent to MODERN Spiritualism solicit exposition. Many such arise which must be left unnoticed in this small work, yet a few will be briefly considered here.

Because of rare peculiarities pertaining to the methods and process by which the richest contents of the preceding pages were obtained; because, also, of the high characters and positions of men when in mortal, who, after release from the body, have each for himself (using therefor a mortal's hand) written response to a letter addressed to each of them by a mortal; because of these striking peculiarities, this small work may, from curiosity if no other motive, be looked into by many well-educated — even *highly* educated — persons, who possess little knowledge of or sympathy with operations of spirits in the present century; by some, also, and perhaps not a few, who, having a little knowledge concerning their workings, think they know enough to justify Spiritualism's denunciation and discardal.

No surprise is felt that many, being entirely ignorant of its recondite yet firmly inherent and vast

powers, also little of the breadth of its cope in action, of its destined results and of its supervisors, incline to keep aloof from it so long as to them it shall seem repulsive, narrow, low. Many who thus regard the general subject may themselves be deserved recipients of high esteem for their culture, for philanthropy, and the beneficence of their lives. Some such are not averse to perusal of brief statements upon any subject in which large numbers of men and women, both respectable and otherwise, are deeply interested, provided the statements are put forth by a student of the subject who is not in disrepute, nor suspected of being a rash appugner of public good.

For such readers especially a few pages will be furnished in which the author will present some of the many views he, by much study of the subject, has been led to entertain, to prize, and to desire adoption of by all true philanthropists and workers for the promotion of broad humanity's welfare.

Any supposed difference between the source and quality of forces outworking Modern and prior Spiritualism or spirit return exists more in the views mortals, especially enlightened mortals in Christendom, have been accustomed to take in reference to permissions and helps by which returns from beyond the tomb become possible than in any actual difference. Such returns having heretofore extensively been deemed miraculous, and miracle having implied some suspension or supercedure of natural law by either God or Devil, the conclusion has prevailed that such returns are not provided for within the realm of nature. That view is now extensively superceded,

because the world, or the most enlightened portion of it, has advanced to a stage of intelligence which discerns that such return is at least probably provided for *within* nature, and that finite, though supernal, intelligence has devised and is devising ways and means for its much wider extension now than in the days of Ancient Seers, Prophets, Disciples, Apostles, and various succeeding *illuminati*.

The reader's attention will soon be drawn to some views as to present extraordinary action of mighty natural forces, either mundane or supernal, lying *back of all finite intelligence*, which in this century are operating upon our globe in all grades of its animated occupants in more than their usual quantum of volume and energy, thereby evolving marked changes in our world's conditions and needs, — changes which are demanding and are to get through nature increased quantity, improved quality, and new facilities for obtaining the supplies appropriate to advanced stages of the globe itself, and of its occupants in both the mundane and the spirit spheres.

Facts will justify positive assertion that during the last forty years numerous thousands, probably a score or two of millions of beings, each claiming to once have been a mortal and now to be a spirit, have so spoken or acted on this mortal plane as to gain recognition here. This indicates great change of some kind, which in our day furnishes departed ones with either unprecedented facilities, or awakens in them unprecedented desires, or incites them to unprecedented efforts for return, or at least for gaining



recognized action in our mundane sphere. An important question now is: Whence have come and what the character of the increased facilities or the increased desires and successful efforts?

The reader is asked to put in complete abeyance, if possible, when seeking to answer or when viewing another's answer to that question, all preconceived views of either God's modes of special action or special action upon mortals by any one vast *malignant* being, and view this matter in the spirit of a calm *scientist* seeking to verify or to disprove an alleged fact, let its bearings be what they may.

PLANETARY INFLUENCES. — Some vast natural forces during this writer's thirty years' study and reflections (induced and aided to much extent by interviews and communings with wise departed ones) have been brought to his notice, and gained his acceptance, as probably having been and being both needful and vastly efficient operators in bringing today's wide-spreading Spiritualism forth *from Nature's womb*.

This rare perihelion period may have been our special Spiritualism's predestined birth-time. It seems probable that the present rare position of the planets has caused and is causing them to be giving increase of stimulus beyond their ordinary bestowments to our globe itself, and to all its occupants in all its spheres. Even prior to the middle of the present century an increase probably began and gradually has been augmenting up to the present time.

You ask: "How is it that the present particular



position of the planets can cause them to be more energizingly operative upon our earth than they are when in their more common positions in relation to the sun?"

If we trust geologists, astronomers, astrologers (dealers with the *spiritual* counterpart of astronomy), and scientists mundane and spiritual, we may find in their combined teachings probability that our material globe, from its fiery center up through its solid crust, through all its varieties of vegetable and animal life, and not less up through all its spirit spheres and their occupants, may be, and probably is, during this latter half of this nineteenth century more highly charged with magnetic and electrical forces, and its living beings also charged with more physical, mental, and emotional forces than such can be supplied with oftener than once in a little more than twenty-two hundred years. Why so? Because not oftener than that do so many of the large outer planets of our solar system, all at the same time, make their nearest approach to the sun,—their perihelion.

Those planets, as well as our earth, have derived, and do continually derive, all that they are and have from the *sun*, which is the common parent and constant nourisher of each member in our planetary family. Yet not all that earth or any other planet gets comes into it directly from the sun itself; for the planets are continually acting upon and being acted upon by each other; are ever giving to and receiving from each other. The quantity of each and all of the various forces imparted to earth at any particular time by a planet depends upon — is measured

by — the amount possessed by the imparting planet at the time of the impartation.

Just as the nearer a mortal gets to a heated stove the greater is the amount of heat he absorbs; so the nearer any planet gets to the sun, the greater becomes the amount of that planet's inherent forces of all kinds, physical and mental, astronomical and astrological. Therefore, when at its nearest approach to the sun,—at its perihelion,—its own forces will be at their maximum volume, and therefore then will be the time at which it will most abundantly emit energizing forces upon its brother and sister planets.

At the present time — in this last half of the present century — our earth, and all who dwell, and that is in any portion of it, from its fiery center up to the uppermost verge of its highest spirit sphere, are receiving more quickening forces from the planets, viewing them as one mass or body, than the planets have been in condition to bestow upon us at any previous point of time during something more than the whole Christian era. Their increase of forces puts earth relatively into an unusually negative or receptive condition.

Our planet's present quantum of absorbed planetary force is now made high above its average by the present positions of its kindred planets. And this augmentation of such force is viewed by this author as one very efficient, if not the main, natural cause of our globe's unusual amount of physical disturbances, — such as volcanoes, cyclones, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and the like,—producing also more mental activity and restlessness in the dwellers, brute

and human, on earth's material surface, and also throughout all of its spirit spheres,—activity which outworks marvelous amounts of inventions, discoveries, products of many, of almost countless, kinds, and a mental restlessness which is engendering unprecedented discontentments with existing institutions, religious, governmental, social, industrial. The present unprecedented discontents with all these are, to much extent, in this writer's view, natural and necessary outgrowths from, or products of, forces originally inherent in the primary elements of our material globe and other planets, embodied therein at the vastly remote time of the incipency of each globe's formation, and designed, even then, whenever the fitting time and conditions should come to so work, and now may be so working upon this earth as to disturb and take away very much which we deem good, which we have learned to prize and desire to retain.

Our world is studded with idols and fetiches, some of which mortals of all grades — of all degrees of mental and spiritual unfoldment — cling to as their trusted guides and helpers. Bibles, creeds, churches, sects, parties, fashions, habits, varied in kind, consciously or unconsciously, are worshiped and clung to as guides and saviors. All this may have been well — may have been as good as our world (spirit spheres included) has been fitted to use advantageously in its prior stages of growth, refinement, unfoldment. But the globe, and all things and beings pertaining to it, are steadily, though to us it seems very slowly, refining. At successive epochs in its progress, ex-

tensions and increased facilities for intercommunings between its severed occupants,— between not those only on the mundane plane, but between all grades of its children in all its realms,— may be helpful and advantageous to all.

As man's discoveries and inventions by which within the present century he has compelled steam to operate as a vast motive power, giving unprecedented facilities for intercommunings between widely severed dwellers on its material surface, and also so harnessed and trained electricity as to make that flash information across oceans and continents to our mundane world's advantage, so also when conditions exist amid which extended intercommunings can be conducive to the ultimate good of all in all of the earth's spheres, even though the changes come as births accompanied by dreadful forebodings, by intense sufferings and hardships to many mortals, still forces latent in nature will and must bring them forth at the "fullness of time" for their destined outworkings.

Prevalent iconoclasms — breakings of our idols — shockings of our sense of propriety, refinement, wisdom, goodness, crude and distasteful as they are to vast many mortals, may be nature's needful processes in preparing ways for good results from a long predestined oncoming of better things in the various spheres pertaining to our globe; better material products, better views of God's ways of governing, better beliefs, institutions, and habits, to begin to come forth coincidently with this century's rare perihelion.



Nature's methods, processes, instrumentalities for bettering the conditions of humanity are so widely different from what either you or I might have recommended that it is not always an easy matter to get into condition to approve of her course. But her views are vastly broader than ours, her penetration is deeper, her gaze more far-reaching, her waitings upon the lapse of time much calmer than ours. Whether we approve of her course or not, she will pursue it, and our wisest way is to trust in her guidance, accept her offerings *because they are hers*, for she, better than we, know what is best for the whole of humanity.

As well attempt to thwart and hold back the natural oncoming and action of the rising tides, or any tidal wave of old ocean, as the natural advancement and action of the present *planet-born* rising tide or tidal wave of mentality and its outworkings in all of earth's spheres, among which outworkings a widened opening of doors, improvements in methods, instrumentalities, facilities, and inducements for return by spirits may be included.

As before indicated, this student of teachings and operations by spirits thinks he perceives this perihelion period bears strong appearances of being a "*fullness of time*" for opening much wider than ever before, and furnishing unprecedented facilities and inducements for, free return by any spirits possessing the needful knowledge and power who have ever gone forth into the spirit realms. The Infinite Ruler "*works not by partial but by general laws,*" ever



applying general ones "without variableness or shadow of turning."

OPENERS OF THE GATES.—That provision exists in the constitution of broad nature for some amount of spirit return, and cognizable action by some spirits upon and through some mortals, is made clearly apparent by the evidence history furnishes that in all ages, and in all tribes and nations, such return has been viewed as positive fact. Surely both sacred and other history combined clearly teaches that in all ages belief has existed that some predecessors in the realms beyond the tomb have reappeared and spoken and wrought among mortals.

Now, the question is, may not the advance in knowledge and power among both spirits and mortals have reached a predesigned point of unfoldment at which such return might wisely and beneficently be vastly extended? The same waters and winds have existed through thousands of years, on and through which mortals now move rapidly, and in vast multitudes, from continent to continent, and around the entire globe, which but few could do in former ages. Not till within the present century had man reached conditions which enabled him to attain the knowledge and skill by which it has become feasible for such extensive intercommunings as are now held between dwellers whose homes are on different continents. It is claimed by returning ones that advances have recently been, and are being, made by spirits in their own knowledge of and power

to use the natural forces needful for return to and communing with mortals.

Anyone wearing material robes must be learned indeed who can deny safely the truth of such statement. If both those who have gained release from mortal form, and those who are robed in flesh, are making progress in getting command over natural forces, why wonder that they gain and use new facilities, whereby come forth vastly extended intercommunications between dwellers in mundane and in the spirit spheres? Man's advances in physical sciences up to where hosts of its ablest devotees are concluding that palpable matter is all, that protoplasm is the common vitalizing parent of all, and that physical death ends all, may be a point of time at which the All Prescient Ruler designed such a rush of returners from beyond the grave as would prove to scientists that protoplasms are but channels through which flow vital forces existing in a sphere which mundane science cannot itself explore. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." Spirits can prove existence in a realm untouched by mortal scientists.

Having viewed our *material* globe as being more energetic in physical action now than in recent preceding centuries, attention turns to the comparative present with the past *mental and emotional* activities and states of MAN — earth's highest offspring, MAN — whether in mortal robes here or resident in the spheres beyond. Highly unfolded spirits are teaching that they no less than we are subject to continuous inward promptings, desires, and needs to acquire by study and labor new knowledge of the

laws, operations, enfoldments, and unfoldments of nature ; also, to devise new methods whereby to meet the demands of their own growing aspirations, wants, and duties as they move onward in their appropriate courses of labor.

Advanced and highly illumined spirits are teaching that the process by which many, if not most of themselves, can best attain to higher than their present states of spiritual unfoldments and joys is to labor lovingly in giving instruction and aid to any of human race less advanced than themselves,—to be warm-hearted helpers of those below them, to devise ways by which to bear light to the benighted, cheer to the desponding, strength to the feeble, comfort to the sorrowing, whether such ones abide in some lower sphere of spirit realms or are held down to earth because encased in material bodies.

The vast mental expansion and the far-reaching prescience of bright ones aloft enabled them, far in advance of mortal scientists, to see, or at least to fore-sense, definite outgrowths possible from the oncoming and natural action of the present perihelion. Knowledge acquired by their foresight early disclosed to them opportunity and duty to deliberately arrange for making best possible use of any increase of knowledge or power consequent, or soon to be consequent, in *any sphere* upon the rare approaching position of the planets.

Hosts of spirits, whose attainments and conditions may be indicated by such names as Swedenborg, Mesmer, Franklin, Channing, Fenelon, and many compeers and colaborers with such in studying and

manipulating the finer forces of nature — both material and mental — hosts of such early in the present century — had formed themselves into a vast Congress whose aim, at least in part, if not mainly, was to devise ways and command means whereby more extensive return of spirits to this mortal plane might be rendered practicable.

Spirits of that elevated grade hoped and expected, could and should they bring on quite constant and extensive intercommunings between spirits and their survivors in mortal, that great benefit thereby would come to mortals, and also and *especially* (mark that) *especially to residents in the lower spirit spheres*, as well as much pleasure and joy to themselves and other spirits in higher portions of the realms in which they and the wise, pure, and good have their habitations.

One important question with them was: are mortals to much extent in mental states which will let them so regard and receive spirits as to profit by much intercourse with them, or so as to benefit the visiting or other spirits? Through the recent past centuries visits by bright and welcomed returners had been, in mortal view, only “angel visits, few and far between.” Darker and troublesome ones brought many of the mortals through whose organisms they operated into disrepute, to severe maltreatments, and even execution as *witches*. Would it be so now? That was an important question with them.

It devolved specially upon the spirit observers and students of the mental, emotional, and moral states of mortals to make response to such an inquiry.



Fenelon, Channing, and other careful students of the mental states of mortals, after wide survey and careful scrutiny, reported that the population in some limited portions of Europe and of America appeared to be sufficiently enlightened, and free in habits of thought, to witness the advent and operations of visitors from spirit spheres without on the one hand bowing before them in abject, *unquestioning awe*, if the visitors in appearance should be bright and good, and also, on the other hand, without shrinking and turning in terror away from any who might be offensively boisterous or rude.

Encouraged by such conclusion, the scientific and philanthropic hosts above resolved to do, and soon began to do, all in their power to attract the attention of mortals to an extent and in such manner as would induce mortals to ascertain whether mysterious rappers, or wonder-workers by other processes, were, as they would claim to be, intelligent beings who had once been mortals. After many trials, in both Europe and America, in which success was often almost, yet not fully, reached, at last was reached at Hydesville, N. Y., March 31, 1848, and caused rejoicing throughout bright realms above.

Reader, you ask for proof that the foregoing record is based on facts. Such proof cannot be given as you, if not familiar with spirit operations, probably ask for. But if declaratians made through mediums over and over again all along through the last two score of years, and in all the fairly cultured nations on our globe, will meet your demand, as it combined with works I have witnessed has met mine, you may



find much strong proof of the above in spiritualistic literature.

Admitting the truth of what precedes, it seems not unreasonable to ask admission of claims made by the spirits who have opened wide the doors and devised new facilities for return that the introduction and establishment of today's Spiritualism among us have been and are measurably under their supervision, at least so far as instruction and advice imply supervision.

GOD. — While the Harvard investigation was in progress, one of the committee, sitting by my side, in low tone asked whether I supposed, if there be any reality in *spirit* action among us, that God will let this occasion pass without revealing it, *when four such men as we are* have come here to investigate it? I did not — could not — make *uttered* response to such a question. Out of kindness to the asker I thus far have declined to state who of the four it was, and it still is my purpose not to tell till I have opportunity and inclination to remind that individual himself of his question in the life beyond the present. The bare existence of idea in the mind of one of those highly cultured professors that their elevation was so great that God would be specially observant of and helpful to them *astounded* me. I was dumb before it.

The benumbing fact gets statement here because it strongly indicates that possibly many even among the highly educated, the good and the devout, hold on to childhood's undigested idea that there come

special helps or special hindrances to mortals directly from the Infinite One, which idea may be leading their minds wide away from actual facts and truths of great importance.

What? Does not God himself directly and personally perform events called special providences and special conversions? This writer thinks He does not directly. Such special providences occur,—yes, occur much more frequently and extensively than the mass of mortals suppose. But spirits or angels of some grade are viewed as being the immediate *pre-videors*—fore-seers,—and are the immediate operators in all such cases, and in all outpourings of an enlightening, elevating, and holy spirit which lead to conversions, changes of heart, and newness of life. Finite intelligences are viewed as being the immediate operators in such works, they all however being moved thereto by God-derived wisdom, love, and power which inflow under the action of general law whenever and wherever finite minds and hearts are in states which attract and welcome them.

That “whom we call GOD, and know no more,” probably in most minds is viewed as a *person*, as an individual, limited being. So far as such a view is helpful to its holder, let it be retained. In most minds its lodgment, almost necessarily made there in childhood’s days, may be so firm, and its action so familiar, that the utility of effort to extinguish it is very questionable. Yet, a broader view taken occasionally may be productive of good.

AN INFINITE, that which has no boundaries, no limitations, no endings in any direction, cannot be

all embraced in the ordinary significance of the word PERSON, for that implies limitations above, below, around,—something in the shape of man. The *Infinite* is the common parent—both father and mother combined—of all other beings and things, and is in one sense *ruler* over all absolutely,—is the fountain from which all forces, physical, mental, and emotional flow, yet ever leaves to finites freedom and duty in and for applications of those forces.

Various communicating spirits have informed us that they *have seen* Jesus of Nazareth, but no returning one, so far as my knowledge extends, has ever professed to have seen a *personal* God; yet most of the elevated ones reverence an unseen *Infinite*; give thanks to such, and invoke blessings from it. No information has reached me that any grade of finites ever *see* the *Infinite* in any other way than that in which mortals do, viz., through the onworkings of nature in the outer world and in their own minds and hearts. Nothing has been learned which conflicts with an idea that in each higher sphere, as well as here below, the Infinite One leaves the dwellers therein to regulate all their affairs and doings by natural exercise of such knowledge, wisdom, and power as they possess quite as fully as mortals are left to manage theirs. All operations of spirits upon and among mortals hitherto and now seem to have been and to be their personal acts as freely and fully as are the ordinary plannings and acts of mortals in managing mundane affairs, be that freedom much or little in the reader's view. The Infinite Being may not be respecter of individual finite beings in any sphere.

Reverently be it said, reverently this pen is now used to write, that the Infinite Ruler probably never by a specific act of his will directly either aids or hinders any finite in the course he or it pursues.

MANAGERS OF SPIRITUALISM'S ONGOINGS.—Who is or are chief in management, if there be management, of the various operations which pertain closely to the present copious return of spirits, and to their operations upon and among mortals? In this author's view neither God,—the good ONE,—nor any single great Devil,—the evil ONE,—has had anything like what might be called special, personal, or unusual connection with either the oncoming or the onworkings of today's marvels. Who, then, may have?

As far back as in the summer of 1853, when I had only little more than commenced investigating the doings of reputed spirits, Miss Rachael G. Ellis, then of about seventeen years, of only average mental capacities, and of such education only as she had obtained in the public schools of Boston, was made to write in my presence with great rapidity to and for me as follows:—

“Gather in one heap the little facts which have come under **your** immediate observation. Trust not thy brother's eye, for it oftentimes deceives him. Let thy foundation be of stone, and angels will wave the glowing banner of victory on the pinnacle.

“Philosophers, *in the spirit world*, are seeking new modes to manifest themselves more clearly and forcibly. There are ten modes.

1st. Sounds.

2nd. Movements.



3rd. Clairvoyance.

4th. Spiritual discernment.

5th. Hearing.

“The 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th will be unfolded as the wheels of time roll on. Speak of the past and the present; leave the future to be revealed by beings higher than you.

“From your spirit friend,

“BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.”

That communication, unsought, unexpected, was flashed before me through the hand of a girl in her teens more than thirty-three years ago. The character of him whose signature closed it forcibly drew my attention to its implied fact that invisible finite beings of high unfoldment, and workers when in mortal for humanity's good, had already brought their investigating powers into specific application for devising means whereby they, and if they, other decarnated ones might manifest themselves more clearly and forcibly to us in the mundane sphere.

The contents of that brief letter took the matter of new facilities for recognized return by spirits out from operations by the Infinite ONE solely, and placed them partly and largely in charge of our finite predecessors into the veiled realms of the life beyond. Among the contents was a distinct call upon me to “gather in one heap the little facts which have come under my observation.” Who, mindful of his duty to humanity, and to humanity's God, could do less than keep that call in mind, and heed its request?

As specimens of the *quality* of some of the early communications, two will here be inserted.

On the afternoon of July 20, 1852, Miss Ada Hoyt, a miss of 17 or 18 years, at my first sitting with any medium, was the apparent instrument through whom was rapped out for me, letter by letter, as follows:—

“DEAR HUSBAND,—Mourn not; I am happy. The spirit world is full of joy and blessedness. I wish you may be partaker of its joys. God in his mercy is sending his angels to enlighten those who are in darkness, and remove the dark vail of superstition from the world. More at some future time.

ABBY.”

Late in the summer or early in the autumn of 1853 was written for me through the same mediumistic hand used by Franklin the letter soon to follow. Obviously it was written by the common ancestor of nearly, if not quite, all the Putnams in America, since I had no ancestor bearing the name *John* till I get back to that one. Five generations intervened between him and me, and a lapse of more than two centuries. He was one who stood high among the early settlers at Salem, and doubtless was a hearty recipient of the religious views prevalent among the Puritans. Mention is made of this for the purpose of drawing attention to his present view of the action of SECTARIANISM:—

“DEAR CHILDREN OF EARTH,—I, the spirit of your old ancestor, come to hold sweet communion with you. I have watched the world,—its progress in knowledge. Now I see noble works. Mighty ships float on the gigantic ocean; grand forests have been swept down by the hand of man. Beautiful now are the works of God. Onward has man

advanced, but gradually has mist enveloped the once pure soul of mankind. He has strayed from the paths of truth, and left the road that would lead him to join the celestial heavens. Ay, I have seen oppression and sin cloud the Christian's mind. Ay, I have beheld the name of God, the divine giver of all good, borne on the wings of *sectarianism*,—*thus has the world been made dark, and the spirit land dispelled by the thick atmosphere of gross sin.* And now the redemption of the children of earth is proclaimed by angels from the bosom of the Lamb, and the morn of Judgment is near. God, arrayed in sandals of holiness and the crown of brightness, is gently lifting the weak children of earth up, by sending his messengers to fathom the cloudy places of earth,—to impart the dazzling truth of his mansions into the world. The prayers of angels have ascended to the Father,—their voices have echoed through the perfect halls above. And now, my child, I want you to know the happiness to feel the angels impressing your fevered brow,—to hear the melodious strains of exquisite harmony thrilling into your mind,—to tread the paths of truth with the righteous, and think of the God that is ever shedding his love and mercy. This is from your old grandfather, an inhabitant of the celestial heavens, given through the medium of R. G. Ellis, by John Putmun, to my earthly child."

The above communications to me by dwellers in spheres invisible are here given for the purpose of showing that one spirit eminent, world-wide eminent for scientific discovery, for sagacity, for benevolence, for philanthropy; also, one bound to me by the purest affections of a wise and noble woman's heart; and a third calling me his child, whose character, as briefly portrayed by his son's pen, makes me view him as having been a wise, able, and saintly man

when here, and who, because writing now from the *celestial* heavens, indicates the correctness of that view of him. Franklin speaks of *spirit philosophers* as at work in forwarding the return of spirits; Abby speaks of angels as workers in the cause,—the old ancestor names angels from the bosom of the Lamb, and messengers of God.

The advent, promptings, and teachings of those and many others like them, received four and three years prior to the battle in 1857,—these, much more than the ordinary doings of spirits and Spiritualists, were what gave me courage and strength to combat unflinchingly Harvard's ablest scientists. I did not then work *blindly* on.

METHODS, MOTIVES, AND AIMS. — More than thirty years ago, and more times since than one can easily count, mortals have been informed by the de-carnated that the prescience or prevision of numerous highly unfolded spirits enabled them, much clearer than mortals, to foresee, not the coming merely, but the probable outworkings of the natural action of the rare perihelion in quickening and enhancing the energies of dwellers in each and every sphere pertaining to our globe; enabled them also to see that the forthcoming quickenings and augmentations of forces would naturally lead — were beginning to lead — spirits to seek discovery of and power over forces, and to invention of instrumentalities in their sphere of life which would enable them, and other spirits of lower grades, to so visit and act among mortals as to be recognized and welcomed



teachers and helpers, or at least communers with their successors on earth's material plane. Being recognized there, the spirits could make known their present views and many truths and experiences which they had first learned in spheres above. By thus acting they could remove many a veil of superstition or of ignorance which was hiding important truths from most minds in the mundane sphere.

Hundreds, thousands, of spirits whose abilities and characters may be indicated by calling them collaborators with Franklin, Mesmer, Swedenborg, and others who had been keen-eyed students and skillful manipulators of nature's finer forces, material and mental, while mortals, and who upon leaving their material forms resumed and prosecuted their favorite studies in spheres above amid more favorable circumstances than exist here below. Such ones in the early part of this century obtained such knowledge of an oncoming augmentation of forces, physical and mental, and of the mental states of mortals in some localities, as to be trustful that could they but so arrest the attention of mortals as to draw and hold the public mind to operations which they could perform, it would be possible to soon establish available ways and means for free and extensive communings across the dividing line between the mundane and the spirit spheres, which ways, once opened, would ever henceforth remain open and free.

Not Franklin's foregoing instructive, encouraging and onbeckoning epistle alone came to me and others from that noble spirit, but vastly many of similar import from him and his collaborators, by which mor-

tals were informed that there had been instituted a vast spirit congress by, and consisting of, wise and good supernals whose purpose is supervision and regulation of operations, processes and forces whereby mortals, and spirits, too, may be instructed and benefited by the advent and action of a copious, recognized advent of spirits into the mundane sphere.

That congress has appointed very many committees to look into, report, or act upon specific subjects and matters of various kinds. The congress, as an whole, has now continuously through half a century or more been exercising general supervision over the doings of the vast hosts of returning ones, and, as far as possible, so shaping the onworkings as eventually to make results as beneficent as possible to the vast body of humanity,—not to you nor to me, not to your sect nor to mine,—not to those of your grade nor those of mine,—not to mortals alone, nor to spirits alone,—not to the saints alone, nor to the sinners alone,—but to all on earth, all in the hells, all in the heavens which pertain to our globe.

What mortal can deem himself competent to sit in judgment upon the wisdom of the methods and permissions of such supervisors of such a work?

Many people perhaps, as this writer at the outset did, surmise and inwardly argue that, if the work be of God and under His special management,—if it be really for good more than evil,—none but good ones should be allowed to come back; few, if any, but wise and good mortals should be visited and instructed, and certainly none but pure and good mor-

tals ought to be used as instruments through whom instruction would be put before mortals.

Far, far indeed, are vast hosts of truth-loving, truth-seeking mortals led to wander away from momentous truths and facts by errors and ignorance existing in their own minds!

The managers of spirit return are throwing wide the doors so that any spirit who desires and is able to may make a journey or a plunge back. Why do they so? Because their wisdom and spirit closely resemble his who, of old, "came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." What? Do you mean that a return by rude, or boisterous, or bad spirits ever tends to lead them or anybody to repentance and reformation? Yes, I do mean just that.

FOR WHOSE GOOD? — Few readers, not fairly well acquainted with a class of important facts which Spiritualism is bringing to the knowledge of those who are getting somewhat extensively versed in its revealments, can bring their minds into states which let them tolerate with deserved complacency either the multiplicity of returning spirits who are ignorant or rude, or the vastness of the number of Indians, especially young and chatty squaws, who act as controllers. Reasons exist — good and strong — why Indian workers are allowed to be so numerous. Our red brethren being readers of nature's bible, unswathed by creeds, nature-taught worshipers of the GREAT SPIRIT — our God as well as theirs — and their race in long past ages as well as now, communers with departed ancestry, can, and as much

experience shows do, control our mediumistic ones with more ease and facility — less exhaustingly both to themselves and to the mediums — than can but very few of the white race. Also, most Indian controls have at all times good abilities to replenish waste of energies in both mediums and other mortals, and when an exhausting seance ends, they generally restore the energies. They, in the very important line of preserving undiminished the health and vital forces of mediums, much surpass the whites. The young squaws generally are mainly but employés of wise and good spirits. The wisdom would be very faulty indeed which set aside the Indians as workers in the introduction of our Spiritualism. Wreckage of the physical systems of mediums if controlled by the whites exclusively, and to such extent as they now are, would be vastly more extensive than it is while Indians act much as substitutes and much as replenishers of forces which most whites sadly exhaust when they control.

Perhaps you say, or least think, that the great quantity of ignorant, profane, repulsive spirits of our white race who come back do more to injure mortals than the better spirits who return can overbalance by all the good they can do. You may honestly believe so. Once I might have so believed; but now I know that many spirits whom we look upon as bad, who in our view really are so, are extensively encouraged and helped to return by very *good* spirits who, resorting to that process, thus obtain position or means by which they hope and expect to lead the returning low ones to commence efforts to become better.



Did not the needful limits of this work restrain, it would be easy to fill very many pages with details of operations which good spirits have resorted to whereby they sought, and often had great success, in giving help to benighted spirits whom they could instruct most easily, if not solely, by getting them held in some mortal form.

Though our judgments as to what is best must ordinarily be based upon what we know, or think we know, it is wise to remember that dwellers in the spheres above are in positions to see the possible benefits and actual results of returns into the mundane much more clearly than we can. My conferences with spirits during the last thirty-four years, and through more than two hundred different mediums, have scarcely ever brought to my ears what would conflict with statement that it gives *all* voluntary returners pleasure, and does all of them good to return, and also that some good in either one realm or the other invariably results from the return of each and every one, however high or however low, who recommunicates with mortals.

Readers who give credence to the preceding statements may find in them reasons why, when their own loved ones are removed from this plane of life, it may be kind—very kind—to give those who, though departed from mortal *vision*, are not beyond the range of mortals' sympathy,—kind to give such ones opportunity for recommunings through those whose material organisms nature has made usable by spirits. Yes, much observation and experience induce record here of a strongly-felt desire that the bereaved shall,

*for the great pleasure and benefit of those for whom they mourn*, procure for such ones opportunity to re-commune with themselves, whatever may be the mental or emotional cost of such kindness.

It is fact that my own recently-departed kindred, and also most of those others at whose funerals I have recently officiated, soon have sought, and succeeded in getting into, converse with me (through mediums), and have expressed very much pleasure at being welcomed by some survivor, and expressed also deep grief that most of their kindred are so shut up that even entrance into their affectional spheres is scarcely possible, and if gained gives no cheer. Though out of their mortal forms, they may be near you, longing to have you recognize their presence.

If much experience in meeting and conversing kindly with very many *benighted* spirits when they have entered a mortal medium's form can give *knowledge*, then I know that many while in mortal build for themselves prisons,—prisons which are natural and necessary outgrowths from shortcomings or bad doings in this mortal sphere,—nature-grown prisons in the beyond, which will claim occupancy there by those from whose lives here they were outgrowths. Occupants of such may, and often do, obtain by means of a return to this earth sphere helpful, desired, and not elsewhere so easily obtained instructions and cheer, whereby they get knowledge and courage which induce them to gain views and commence labors that will soon open their prison doors and set them free to commence ascent towards higher

and more cheerful abodes. There is joy in heaven over each such liberation.

Probably it has never been extensively suspected — surely has not extensively been taught in this community — that vast numbers when getting release from their mortal robes could not, under the action of nature's laws of spirit gravitation, or perhaps it is better to say, under nature's *restrictive psychological action*, rise into purer auras — a purer realm — but from necessity must be held down near to earth's surface. We are told — extensively told — that *very many* departed ones for a long time, some for many years and even centuries do, must hang about — are tied to — their old mundane homes, haunts, relatives, friends, cronies. Such residents, invisible but necessarily dwellers among us, are said to be, and probably are, quite as numerous around us and among us as mortals are, and such ones probably are viewed by the supervisors of today's spiritualistic operations to be now the class to receive the most special attention, because their enlightenment, spiritualization, and consequent elevation and release from any but optional stoppings here with us, while it will outwork blessings to them will, yea, must, tend very extensively to diminish the causes of both physical diseases and swayings to commissions of crimes among and by mortals. The departed ones who are chained here, living upon us, sapping our vitality, and prompting many to commit crimes, are said to be as numerous as, and in old cities more numerous than, the mortals in this or any other city or town. Help which shall bring enlightenment,

reformation, elevation to such ones must be help to us also,—great help. High supernal wisdom and benevolence may not only permit but desire very abundant workings of rude and low spirits through our mediums, since thereby such may gain for themselves and incite their comrades to gain great helps towards improvement in their spiritual states.

Much experience induces me to say to any who feel inclined to decry Spiritualism because of the seemingly humble grade of both many mediums and many spirits who operate through them that declarations over and over again by higher grades of spirits affirm that getting benighted spirits into mediums is among the most expeditious and efficient processes by which they are able to get the earth-bound ones conscious of their ability to gain release from their states of unrest and discontent, and to incite in them desires, and arouse them to commence efforts, to win better abodes, and happier states of mind and heart.

Nearly all extensive and beneficent reformers known in our world's history at the outset have had mainly lowly ones, persons of no repute, as their chief — their most persistent and most reliable — followers. They began with the low, and worked upwards,—began not with rulers and pharisees, not with professors in colleges, not with leaders in society.

The Great Infinite Fountain of all force which furnishes rain to the just and to the unjust alike, if equally impartial in all its bestowments, is the same in action upon the operations pertaining to spirit



return as to man's ordinary plannings and doings, to man's methods and instrumentalities for crossings and re-crossings of broad oceans,—no more, no less. From Him all finites in all realms get their “power to will and to do,” get also His call upon them in all realms to severally work for good ends as best they can, with such powers as He has bestowed and sustains. Spirits of whatever grade are no more and no less objects of His love, care, and blessings than mortals of every grade.

The lessons of history teach that less confidence could safely be placed in the wisdom which guides the operations pertaining to this day's Spiritualism, if few others than very good spirits—few except high and holy ones—came, and when come communed only or even mainly with the most eminent, the most devout, the most holy mortals, than can now rationally be placed in the high, heavenly wisdom of its supervisors whose aim apparently and doubtless is to early call those grades of beings to repentance, to reformation, to aspirations heavenward, whose repentance and upward-seekings would excite more joy in heaven than heaven would derive from only making relatively good spirits and mortals *a little better*. Let no doubt that Spiritualism is of God spring up within you because its first extensive operations are much among His quite lowly, wayward, and erring children. It is the sick who most need the physician.

FIRST NEEDS.—Neither many mortals in Christendom nor many spirits therefrom have been trained

to apprehend that return from beyond a bourn which the decarnated had passed was possible. It may not be among the suppositions of most readers that there would be about as much labor needed to spread and establish general belief among spirits graduated from Protestant Christendom that they could return as to gain recognition of its possibility on our mundane side. They had carried with them beliefs so prevalent among mortals as to have nearly the sway of positive knowledge that none could return. Belief of its possibility was almost as rare and as difficult to make common among spirits as among us.

How could such unbelief and incredulity be overcome? Scarcely otherwise than by actual returns which would be reported, commented upon, discussed, denied and affirmed among spirits just as they are and have been among us. Each new returner is a discoverer, whatever his grade or quality, who, subsequently mingling with his associates, becomes an attester to the fact that return to and recommunicating with mortals is possible, desirable, and may be profitable. Supervisors of the doings may say let any and all who can go back and recommunicate with their former kindred or cronies; the more who do that the wider and faster will desired results be reached; none can return without benefit to somebody. Good will result from giving extension of knowledge in any spheres that such recommunicings are possible, and are to become very extensive and helpful to dwellers in distinct and heretofore practically severed realms. Bear in mind, reader, that we who may be deeming ourselves competent to criticise wisely and justly the

workings of Spiritualism may possibly fall far short of grasping the full breadth of its scope, and the comprehensiveness of the aims of its chief managers.

SAD CONDITIONS. — In this dawning of an era of unprecedented amount of spirit return, many spirits, high, low, and intermediate in grades of intelligence and spirituality, have been revealing rather privately than very openly the existence of saddening facts not generally supposed to exist. In this treatise, though short, such facts, even at the expense of essential repetition, will have farther attention.

A great number, upon going out from mortal form, *must*, and others *may*, long remain in and close about their earthly material homes and haunts; will cling to their old workshops, places of business, lounging or loafing resorts, attaching themselves to, clinging to, their surviving relatives, friends, cronies, affinities in mortal, feed upon them, sap their vitality, engender or increase in them debilities and diseases, and also sway many to harmful indulgences, and excesses in eating, drinking, and other sensual gratifications.

Among them will be some — and, perhaps, not a few — who to gratify the special evil propensities they had while here, and carried with them into the hereafter, prompt and incite the special mortals with whom they blend to commission of thefts, robberies, swindlings, or even murders. Results like those are represented to be so extensive as almost to force belief that departed ones are the essential producers of nearly half of the diseases and half of the crimes

which afflict society in this city of Boston, or any other, or in any town, are either engendered or intensified by decarnated *familiar* spirits; that is, spirits pertaining to, and being part of, *the family*.

Many such spirits, from necessity growing out of the bad quality of their own past lives, some from inherent, and it may be innocent, feebleness, also others from kind, but mostly very unwise and harmful, attachment to their mortal kindred, cronies, or friends, — such decarnated ones in vast numbers actually abide in our mortal midst.

An enlightenment of those benighted, earth-bound, fellow-immortals, and an engendering in them of aspirations for ascent into higher spheres, are represented as being at present prominent among even the leading aims of the supervisors of our modern spiritualistic operations.

Spirits whose criminalities and perversions of their powers while in mortal chain them to the lowest plane of spirit habitation are represented as ever being in states of extreme unrest and discontent, each suffering from the burnings of a hell *within self*, builded there and stored with fuel by *self*. Others remain low because of their mundane, mental, or other weaknesses, which debarred from growth of spirit to extent which called for or could enjoy purer auras than those amid which mortals live. But unconsciously to themselves, and unknown by mortals, such ones often and extensively are great sappers of the vital forces and energies of those to whom they cling, or with whom they continue to abide.

Another class hover much quite near to kindred



mortals, strongly drawn there by cords of sympathy, and by desire to assuage the griefs of survivors mourning over their bereavement. Many linger long near their relatives in mortal, hoping by their near presence and their pity to do what in but few cases can be done,—that is, end the sorrows of those who have no faith nor even conjecture that their seemingly lost ones are or can be near to and actors upon survivors here. Vastly numerous are they who could be more extensive recipients of joy in the realms beyond than they are, or can be, so long as held near to earth by the griefs and spiritual blindness of their kindred survivors.

VARIOUS LOCATIONS. — The more elevated in refinement and spirituality any spirit is the more offensive to it are our mundane atmosphere and the emanations which go forth from mortals. Those who from lack of goodness must have continuous abode in our midst of course can be with, commune with, and act upon us with much less discomfort, and for longer time, than can residents in the higher spheres to whom our atmosphere is oppressive. Therefore, since all grades, under nature's laws, have equal freedom to come, it should create no surprise, but be viewed as almost necessary, that when the gates between the spheres obtained, in our day, a more extended opening than ever before that a great majority of our earlier visitors should be our nearest neighbors, and those nearest to us in elevation on the planes of culture and refinement.

Where natural law has free action, the more inno-

cent, pure, loving, heavenly any departing soul is the more remote from this gross, material earth will be the stratum of spirit aura to which the action of spirit gravitation will bear it up. But some variations of action of that law may be made limitedly in extent, and for limited time, by the spirit's own will. Should one desire to be much with associates somewhat less in spirituality than him or herself, that may be. Though a spirit may go far below, and remain long somewhat below, its own natural position, it cannot without some special permission and special aid go above that stratum of spirit auras to which nature's laws would assign it. Consequently departing ones who are weighted with the grossness which pertains to past weakening indulgences, past sensualities, past abuses of any powers, to criminal desires and purposes, to uncleannesses physical, mental, emotional, will by such be chained close to the surface of the solid earth, to the lower sphere of spirit life, not much above their old homes, haunts, associates while they were in mortal. Such are this writer's views, as gained by much converse with communicating spirits.

MEDIUMSHIP. — A vast majority of mortals need some intermediate whereby to get into converse with spirits. Enquiry is often made why our departed kindred, if wishing and able to confer with us, fail to come directly to their relatives and confer in their old homes. Such question is natural. Answer to it is easy.

Mediumship, or susceptibility of being passed

through, or operated through by a spirit, is a quality of the *mortal* body much more than of the mind, or than of the character, either moral or religious. Spirit Benjamin Franklin has said that it "depends upon the qualities and combinations of the elements in the original structure of the brain." It is a *gift*, having no inseparable connection with the mental capabilities and propensities. Like special inborn capabilities for music, poetry, or any of the fine arts, this is *inborn*, not producible by culture alone or mainly, though culture may increase its pliancy. Lack of such susceptibility in a family or household is one reason or cause why departed ones do not and cannot confer there. Another reason may be that they get no invitation and cannot perceive any latent desire for them to operate there, and may feel that they might not be welcomed there. Unbelief stops the performance of not "mighty works" only, but also of many gentle and good ones.

Some beliefs by the author which are outgrowths from personal observations of and reflections upon both the doings and sayings of spirits are quite different from what his earlier mental training would have engendered. Prior to the age of fifty he would have said that good angel visitants coming into our sphere would make their perceptible ingress, put forth their teachings, accomplish their work through none other than quite saintly mortals, that they would give "a wide berth" to vast numbers in the grades of spirituality through whom spirits, reputed good, are now working among us. What do we mortals care for the moral character or mental culture of a

telegraph operator through whom we send our messages to distant friends compared with confidence that he and his apparatus are competent to meet our special needs at the time?

Yet while prolonged and extensive observation have led to conclusion that plastic mediumship in the mortal is the *foremost* desire of the spirit wishing to communicate, and will be availed of in an emergency, though the medium be far below himself in knowledge and purity, still the communicator is obviously more at ease and enjoys work more with a medium who is nearer to himself in mental abilities and unfoldment, and most with a medium who is nearest to himself in moral and spiritual states. Though good and exalted spirits come much to low mortals and low spirits to enlighten and help such, their uncurbed sympathies draw them closer to the pure and good. Be good yourself, and then good spirits, even though never seen, will be your keepers. Be bad yourself, and bad spirits will dwell and bask in your emanations.

HOW COMMUNE? — Should, perchance, any readers of these pages who have never sat with a medium be prompted to seek converse through such with departed relatives, friends, or other spirits, advice is given them to do it, as far as possible, in a calm and *unexpected* state of mind, free from the slightest dread, and from any suspicion of fraud, trickery, or imposition.

Enquiry has brought forth statements from high and intelligent spirits that best, or even fairly good,



results can rarely be obtained unless the electric or magnetic emanations from the band of spirits having care of the medium, from the medium him or herself, also from the spirit band attendant upon the sitter, and from the sitter him or herself blend in harmony, or least intermingle without conflict or commotion. Suspicions of fraud or trickery, or great restlessness in the sitters, or intense desire to commune with some particular individual spirit, will retard, perhaps even render impossible, such a blending of the needful magnetic auras for either a desired or for a desiring spirit to get control, or to manifest clearly in any way, especially if it be a spirit not accustomed to speak nor transmit through a medium.

In many cases some other spirit, probably the medium's usual control, and that control quite likely an Indian spirit, may begin to talk, and may run on and on to the great annoyance of yourself, the sitter. But keep calm. That spirit may be, and probably is, running on thus for the very purpose of getting harmony, getting such blending of the magnetic auras as is requisite for good results, which blending of auras will be retarded and perhaps made impossible by restlessness in your mind by your desire for that one to stop, together with your desire that a particular spirit whom you know and wish to commune with would begin to operate. Keep calm; keep down any rising strong wish for some particular thing; sit without any wish whatsoever, if you can, and without any impatience or restlessness, else you will lessen your chances for getting the most desirable success.

This may seem strange advice, but it is outgrowth from very much experience as a sitter with mediums.

BUSINESS. — Financial matters pertain much more to this life than the next, and the more wise and spiritually minded ones in the spheres above prefer to have us conduct such matters by careful use of our mundane judgments solely. Yet they do not always deem it wise to pursue a course which would crush the motive which very extensively prompts mortals to seek communings with and help from spirits. The well advanced spirits are more prone and ready to advise positively embarrassed mortals, if they see a way how to extricate such from existing conditions, than to indicate how anyone may become *very* rich. Such classes of spirits are more inclined than most mortals are to see truth in the Scripture declaration that “money is the root of all evil,” and obviously in their view *great riches* are not desirable.

Many spirits, however, who when here had keen business capacities, and loved business pursuits, retain those loves, and find pleasure in giving advice through mediums upon business schemes and projects.

Conclusions drawn from extensive observation and some experience are that it is rarely wise to put very confiding trust in the wisdom of unknown spirit advisers and prophets upon business matters. If experts and sharpers in that line, they may allure you to investments or course of action to your detriment, designing thereby to enrich some mortal who is their pet. Unprincipled sharpers here may continue such there for a time,—perhaps long time. I am not in

mood to dissuade persons whose only purpose in ever consulting with mediums is to be informed how they can make some money to keep away from them entirely. Yet am in mood to advise such as at times resort to mediums from less worldly motives to ever leave it optional with the spirit in control whether to touch upon financial matters or not. Some experience makes me deem it occasionally prudent to put confidence in and comply with advice unsolicited, and yet proffered through a medium by some known friend resident in the world unseen.

The great aim of our Spiritualism's high overseers — which should be the high aim of Spiritualists — is to have the teachings of returning spirits well adapted in the main to outwork redemption and preservation from *spiritual* poverty. Spiritual interests may be and are by many persons promoted by wise, generous, just endeavors to earn what is needful for comfortable sustenance of themselves and those dependent upon them, but the danger is great that efforts to get that by shirking labor, or by dishonesty, fraud, or cramping selfishness will be detrimental to one's *highest* interests.

HEALING BY SPIRITS.—As healers of man's diseases vast many spirits are in advance of mortal practitioners. When this is said no implied disparagement of the latter class is intended. They may be doing as well as beings whose vision cannot penetrate matter are capable of doing, and be deserving of respect and commendation for very much of their work. It is no disparagement of the bat to say that he has not the

vision of the eagle. It is *fact* beyond question that clairvoyance, whether independent of matter, as with a spirit, or out through matter, as with the mundane clear seer, it is fact that such faculty enables its possessor to obtain more accurate and extensive knowledge of an invalid's internal organs and their conditions than can be obtained by a mortal's usual capacities for and processes of diagnosis. It has become very apparent that in many cases spirit physicians can and do apply forces invisible and impalpable by mortal senses which result in prompt and marvelous cures. But not all spirit healers are equal in powers and skill. They need to be tested.

Without undervaluing the insight of keen mortal diagnosers of disease, or their skill at divining and administering appropriate remedies, it may be said that thousands upon thousands who, through the long past, were eminently skillful physicians while curbed in mortal forms, and therefore relatively blind, may now with their spirit vision distinctly see into and through arteries, veins, muscles, and the channels through which life's fluids flow in a mortal form, and see the conditions of those fluids, and therefore may be much keener diagnosers and more scientific prescribers than they were while mortals, or than *any* mortals can be. Admit, as seems to have been proved, that many such ones are now acting extensively among us, and it becomes obvious that many cures may come, are believed to have come, where mundane science is and was completely non-plussed.

Admitting that such ones act here among mortals,



requires admission also that many spirits who are less competent may try their hand at healing though they be not more, and may be less, competent to such operations than very many mortal physicians. Therefore while claiming that the spirit world actually furnishes us with abler physicians than mortal sagacity and mundane science can possibly furnish, no claim is made that all, nor that the larger part of, spirit healers are better doctors than are very many graduates from our medical schools.

CONSOLATION. — As the assuager of griefs in seasons of bereavement, Spiritualism comes in her brightest robes, her most benignant smiles, and sustaining power. Few can estimate at its intrinsic worth the inherent brightness of her radiations in bereavement's nights excepting those who have passed such nights both without and with her soothing aid.

A long life usually calls one to part with perceptible presence of several relatives and friends, to mourn their removal into some realm veiled from mortal vision, but where and what that realm is mystery has long and widely kept wrapped up within her own dark robes. Loved brothers, sisters, wives went from the homes of the author, and he ministered at the funerals of many parishioners while living under the darkening veil thrown upon him in his youth by the occasional saying of his elders, that —

“Dying is *nothing*; but 't is this we fear,—

To be we know not what, we know not where.”

Receiving that as true, and holding on to it as true till in his fiftieth year, suddenly then the first seen

ray of Spiritualism's dawning light hinted that we may know, if we will seek for it, something about the "what and where" of our departed ones, and what and where we ourselves shall be when released from the bonds which tie us here; may learn that the departed from our vision can, at their option, be near to us, may be prompters of many of our doings, witnesses of our conditions, sympathisers with us in both our joys and our sorrows, and will be glad welcomers of ourselves into the life beyond when the fitting time for our release from the mortal shall waft us into the homes of our ascended kindred.

Since that light came gloom has vanished from the chamber of death. One feels, or on some occasions may feel, with the prophet of old, that "the day of death is better than the day of one's birth"; feel that it is birth into a fairer and better world; that it is entrance into a higher school-room than the mundane, in which will be prosecuted studies by which to gain ascent from sphere to sphere, and to unfold the soul, and be ever and ever drawing that into closer harmony with the glorious Infinite One who gave it being. And yet it may all the while be learning some lessons needful for its progress and discipline by frequent attendance upon, sympathy with, and help to the kindred and friends still in mortal enrobement.

Amid the light of Spiritualism, experience in one case surely has shown that darkness is not usually an appropriate robe of the angel of death; he comes to bear a soul into other habitation for that soul's good, sooner or later. The bereaved and the minis-

ter of consolation may bid the departing spirit joy over its release, and send forth supplications to the Highest and His ministering angels and spirits, to bestow upon this new comer to abodes above all needful and helpful love and care. If it be a darkened soul, to give it lights and aids to enlightenment and reformation ; if a weak one, to give it strength ; a timid one, to give it courage ; if good and joyous, to increase its joy and blessedness. Each has gone to reap there as here from what it has sown ; yet may renew its sowings there, and by using improved seed, if necessary, grow the fruits of righteousness and love.

Departed ones are as much pleased and benefited by getting recognized and being addressed by their mourning survivors as the survivors can be by getting messages from those who have gone beyond the reach of the physical senses. Give your departed opportunity to speak with you once more, because of its pleasure and benefit to them.

RELIGIOUS ASPECTS.—As now extensively viewed by the public, Spiritualism's present and prospective action upon the community's religious views and upon morality may be swaying some minds to seek more intimate acquaintance with it, and many more to keep aloof from it. Its earlier operations, as widely characterized by pulpit, press, and a large portion of the public, were not such as would give it winning aspects ; neither would a considerable portion of its direct teachings and open operations. Seemingly to many other minds as well as the writ

er's, its earlier workings to much extent, as described and as supposed correctly, were repulsive rather than winning. But as soon as he came into direct and close contact with it, he met evidences of precious wine beneath the much froth and scum which agitation was bringing into view on the surface of the broad sea of humanity, and also saw strong indications that, when clarification shall have well outwrought its prospective action, results will be gladdening to humanity's heart.

A first question with many people pertaining to Modern Spiritualism is: Are our departed kindred and predecessors actually concerned in producing it? Is it other than a child either of bewildered imagination or of diabolism? That is a simple question of *fact* to be determined by evidence. Surely it is now very extensively admitted in all grades of mental unfoldment that spirits of very varied grades of character do return in vast and increasing numbers. That question as to the *fact* has in many millions of minds been settled affirmatively.

Whether one likes the prospective action of an alleged fact or not, if it be proved to have positive existence, then whatever may be its prospective bearings upon one's existing opinions and beliefs, every sound and rational mind must concede the fact itself. If its prospective action be hostile to items in one's creed, that does not, cannot, disprove the fact's existence, nor should it be allowed to obstruct its natural and legitimate action in any direction. If the fact be, as this writer sees, the one of spirit return to be *nature's timely evolution*, and therefore its source



of emanation *Divine*, then all of its legitimate out-workings must be in harmony with the *Divine Will*. Should it shatter creeds, it must be because the *Divine Will* shatters them for their holders' good.

The probability obviously seems strong that teachings by many who have left mortal forms, and had extended experiences in bright spheres above, may gradually, in the coming years, work very marked changes in many now-prevalent creeds and views called Christian. The personal experiences of such teachers surely have commanding claims to be viewed as clearly indicative of the actual relative action of their mental *creeds* to the action of their *works* while in mortal in making them happy and joyous, or the reverse in the realms they now inhabit.

Thus far this author has found both the good and the less good departed ones stating that they severally are reaping from what they sowed here by the deeds of the lives they lived, and the motives which prompted their actions, irrespective of their mental creeds, or reliance upon the merits of any other being further than as the merits of one or many gave them light and aid as they moved along life's pathways.

The drift of Spiritualism obviously is towards great modification and simplification of many creeds; towards demolition of sectarianism; towards an on-bringing of a natural and cosmopolitan religion. Is it on that account to be dreaded, shunned, maligned? Let each make answer for self.

If one will find and read the work entitled *Spirit Invocations*, published by Colby & Rich several years ago, therein will be found invocations to one and the

same Infinite Father, all coming through the lips of Mrs. Conant, by one hundred different spirits, representative not only of most of the Christian sects but of numerous others than Christians, varying by thousands of years in the times of their lives in mortal, thus showing that finites "do not worship different gods, but the same God differently," as one of them has said.

My good old Puritan ancestor, John Putnam (see p. 78), from the *celestial* heavens, charges *sectarianism* with making our world *dark and sinful*. His son John, my uncle, five generations back, who fought the Devil most valiently in the days and amid the scenes of Salem Witchcraft, in defence of his puritanic creed, ere I had been one year a student of Spiritualism, and a cheerful host of returning spirits, when asked by me which among the prevalent creeds in Christendom he now deemed nearest to absolute truth, answered: "The *spiritual sense* of Swedenborg." Also, he made the broad, comprehensive, and illumining statement: "ALL EVIL must meet its utmost expansion, and then, like a bubble,—BURST." My own saintly mother, who received and cherished in her outer intellect, and kindly and faithfully taught to me the old creed which had come to her through four generations unchanged, once told me that before my birth she consecrated me devoutly to the service of the Lord. This was wrung from her when my dissent from that old creed and my leaning towards liberalism anguished her soul. At the age of ninety-two, seventeen years ago, she left her form, and shortly after that, through mediumistic lips, said:

“My son, why did you not explain to me your Spiritualism while I was with you?” and promptly answered her own question, saying: “I know *why*. You did not wish to disturb my mind in my old age,” — which was true. On the very day of penning this (Oct. 12, 1886), she and her good husband, my father, unitedly blessed me, and thanked the Heavenly Father that I had been true to the marvelous light of this age.

Great reluctance to admit a fact whose existence, if admitted, must come in direct conflict with and may undermine some of one's prior and existing beliefs pertaining to important, even to highest, interests is natural, and up to a certain point does good service by holding the mind on a steady course amid the baffling winds of the world's many varied assertions and doctrines. Yet absolute refusal to admit not alone the possibility but also the probability of facts when it becomes clearly apparent that they are broadly alleged to be occurring world-wide, and are by their own potency forcing acceptance of their verity by multitudes in all grades of society, can hardly be consistent with duty obviously resting upon any clear brain conjoined with a sound heart.

Up to early manhood a Trinitarian, and then for twenty-five years an adult Unitarian, prior to acquaintance with Spiritualism, no change of the creed which this author then had was called for by Spiritualism; yet extensive and beautiful additions to its height and breadth were. These have been made, and they contribute largely to the dimensions and cheerfulness of faith's apartments in the brain.

Liberal Christians generally may receive Spiritualism in its fullness and retain all there is in their existing creeds, so far as the writer comprehends those creeds. Whether those belonging to any of the sects which call themselves either Orthodox or Evangelical can without considerable modification or suppression of creed accept the general drift of revelations by the most enlightened grades of spirits who are becoming our teachers will here be left for them severally to determine. No creed, however, can exempt one from obligation to admit that spirits are returning in vast numbers when the copious return is perceived clearly and confessedly by the perceptive faculties of millions, and our ablest scientists remain incompetent to prove the broad world's sight, hearing, and touch most enormously and incredibly deluding.

In humble trust submit your creeds to the outworkings of God's will through the action of His natural forces upon them, whether to yourself they seem thereby likely to be confirmed and hardened, or to suffer disintegration. Let His will be done, and humanity's welfare receive from you no check to its advancement.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.—Time was, and with many it has not yet ceased, when open and avowed advocacy of Spiritualism cost something. That it would cost was early seen by this author. As far back as 1853 he prefaced an address which he then printed as follows:—

The views here presented will be novel to very many



readers, and will not harmonize with their long-cherished, fixed, and yet indefinite notions concerning the conditions, powers, and occupations of their departed kindred.

Friends would restrain me,—for no one is so blind as not to see that avowal of belief in spirit agency will be followed by the charge of mental weakness, delusion, or folly. The charge will come not from the weak and wicked alone, but from the wise and devout. It will come from relatives and friends, kind and sincere. Such avowal therefore will not be made by the calm, considerate mind, excepting upon the evidence furnished through one's own senses, and that repeated over and over again, and weighed well in the mental balances. Even after this process, and when conviction cannot be resisted, there are in most cases circumstances which are allowed to stifle confession. Whether they justify this stifling, each individual must judge in his own case.

There appear to my mind results too high and noble involved in these ridiculed rappings and tippings to admit of my being deterred by the timid pleadings of worldly policy, or the sneers of those, however wise and kind, *who have seen none of the wonders*, from giving them the limited countenance and favor which my character for truth, sagacity, conservatism, and benevolence may afford. What that character is others must tell; but let me say that however it may be rated, and however valuable it may be to me, it cannot be worth more than I would gladly pay for the extension of such influences through the world as promise to flow from the lessons which man is beginning to learn from his elder brothers who have escaped from bondage to the clay, and soared to regions of clearer vision and more accurate knowledge.

The mind which composed the lecture here put in print, however feeble and deluded such production may cause it to be deemed, has enjoyed fair opportunities, has somewhat

studied the simpler principles at least of physical, intellectual, theological, and political science; and whatever power and skill that mind possesses were most strenuously and perseveringly applied in the outset to reason around or away from the opinion that spirits can and do work the wonders that are now seen and heard. But the facts — yes, the *facts* — were too plain and stubborn to be either covered up or broken down. Once seen, they would, in spite of all old notions, keep before the mental vision; there they would persistently stand, distinct and strong, and would teach over and over again that there was something speaking as never man spake; that there was some hidden intelligence conveying its thoughts to me.

What, then, must be my course? It was neither manly, Christian, nor pious to deny a conviction which the *facts* that my own eyes and ears were witnessing forced upon the mind. Delay, until assurance should become doubly sure, might be admissible. And not until an entire year of the most faithful scrutiny, reflection, and re-reflection had passed did it seem best to avow belief.

But at length, as a duty to God, to good angels, and to man, it was made,—made without reserve, without qualification. I believed at first, because I could not honestly — no, nor even dishonestly — help believing. The conviction came and stuck, and still sticks, and long may it continue to stick, for it is fraught with the richest, holiest, calmest thoughts and feelings which my mind has ever cherished, or in which my soul has ever bathed.

Reader, I ask not that you should believe because I do. But, whenever there shall be opportunity, let me trust you will calmly look at *facts*, and follow wherever these heaven-born guides shall lead. Should they bring you to faith in Spiritualism, in doing that they will, *if such be your wish*, let you see and feel that there are helping hands and heaven-

ward attractions in those invisible witnesses around, who

“ Hold *thee* in full survey.”

Open advocacy of Spiritualism then did, and to some extent may even now, incur cost, but also it may bring equal and even overbalancing gain, not however in precisely the same coin. The loss mainly comes in changed conditions of the social and domestic relations, and in the public estimate of one's soundness of mind. The gain is in the growth, expansion, and elevation of the mental and emotional faculties, outgrowths from consciousness of being true to, and faithful in, personal use and open commendation of truths taught by the Infinite Teacher through the evolution of facts which reveal His purposes in manner not yet acceptable to the public mind.

Here I am pleased to say, and say it truthfully, that through my long open advocacy of the cause, and conflicts with college professors, no person, in consequence of my spiritualistic faith and labors, has ever addressed me in an uncivil or irritating manner. The world is not all bad; not all harsh; far otherwise. Probably my course has drawn forth from society much more pity than reproof; and, if so, the course has not been void of benefit to those who were grieved by it, for exercise of pity is exercise of an ennobling emotion.

Ere I had been a student of these then novel operations fifteen months, I addressed a large, intelligent, and respectful assembly of my relatives, friends, and neighbors in Roxbury as follows:—

Life's pathway has seemed to myself and many others to be illumined with a new light, either an *ignis fatuus*, a false light, luring to dismal swamps of error and disquietude, or it is a *sun*, conceived from creation's dawn, in nature's living laws, now but beginning to shine on man with a steady light, and promising to guide his steps to long-hidden fountains of truth and gladness. Is it a phantom or a sun? Is it a creature of deluded human brains, or is it the handiwork of the eternal God? Having used my own senses, those, to me, best possible witnesses, and having used them in this work for more than a year, I am prepared to receive the light that is now struggling through the mists around us, as the dawn of a new day.

And if it has been my lot, as we are performing our march over life's hill-tops, and down across its valleys,—if it has been my lot to stand on a spot where its earlier beams have met my eye,—why shall not I speak of the cheering event to those, whether before or behind me, who are now marching in the shaded valley?

Thus now my bread, or what seems such to my eyes and taste, is cast upon these waters. It will doubtless return to me,—but whether of a finer wheat and sweeter taste, or coarse and unpalatable,—whether to make you, my friends, regard me as foolish or wise is known not to me, but yet is known to Him,—the maker of the wheat,—the Guardian of the waves,—the Great Requirer of truthfulness.

Experiences by the writer have brought to him very considerable changes as to frequency and extent of reciprocal visitings and intercommunings with kindred out of the family, and others in the grade of society in which he most extensively had moved. But the reasons for this have been as much, yes more, on his part than on the part of others; and



why? Because he early found that he could learn more facts and truths from supernal teachers, and have more ready and willing listeners to what he desired to teach when working among very many whose education and circumstances had failed to put them in the same social grade, or nearly the same, as the grade in which his education and circumstances had caused him to mingle freely. Probably many have viewed him as having been pressed down somewhat on the social scale by the views others have taken of him because of his Spiritualism. It may be so; but if it be thought from where respectability holds one back from free searchings for truth, and ties the tongue from its expression and advocacy, be *downward* from there to the level where freedom to learn truths of vast importance, and to inculcate them among fellow immortals who lend to them willing ears, then he steps *down* with great cheerfulness. Yes, whatever changes have come as to his sphere of social circulation because of his Spiritualism, they have come more from his own choice than from pressure from any cuttings or turnings of cold shoulders to him by others. The world has treated him kindly and well.

Changes of relations to kindred and to society at large are very frequent attendants upon espousal and open advocacy of faith that our departed ones can and do return and commune with their survivors. Where the change is strictly in the domestic or home relations, it is often grievous and hard to be borne in patience; but high as is the value of peace and harmony at home, fealty to truth is not less valuable.

He who was the revealer of supernal truth long ago essentially taught that one who loved father, mother, or any kindred more than the truths He was revealing was not worthy of the truths He was dispenser of.

So far as relates to acquaintances, friends, and the social circles in which one moves, or to any not *in* the family, the case is less hard to meet and to bear by one who is a firmly true lover of truths which have swaying influences upon high spiritual interests.

One summer afternoon, in 1827, the author was walking back and forth alone in his natal chamber in serious consideration upon choice of profession, when a *painful doubt* as to the actual occurrence of the miracles came up with such force as to anguish his whole system, mind and body. Soon he said aloud, though then all alone: "O Infinite Father, that I might myself witness such works; could I do that, then would I *believe*, and would thenceforth labor faithfully to disseminate the truths they attest to."

Relative calmness soon came, and then he began to accuse himself of near approach to, if not quite into, *impiety*, by asking for an *impossibility*. *Impossible* because he had ever been taught, and then believed, that the days for miracles ceased forever when Jesus and his apostles and disciples had all passed out of their material forms. His vow then seemed an offspring of folly. Soon it was laid away in memory's darkest closet, where it had a quiet sleep through twenty-five years.

On July 20, 1852, the brief and touching letter

from Abby (see p. 78) awakened the vow from its long slumber. The prayer in 1827 then was partly answered, and soon after was met in full; for, ere long, even water, under his own guardianship and personal keeping, was changed into wine, and many other marvels as great were seen. The obligations of his vow thenceforth were clearly upon him, and it has been his unwavering endeavor ever since to be as faithful in its performance as the duties and cares of his more external life would permit. Removal of friends, loss of health, abandonment of the ministry, loss of property, all have tended (whether so designed, and to that end imposed, is unknown), but they have tended to bring him into the connections and conditions which have made him the author of these pages.

The number of my years says the time is near for my departure from this plane of existence. Therefore, something in the spirit and tone of *parting* words may not be untimely now.

To the sisterhood and brotherhood of Spiritualists my earnest request is that "ye love one another"; also, that each of you shall steadily strive to commend your faith by letting it exercise over self, guiding and restraining, enlivening and cheering influences in holding you steadily to practice of purity, truthfulness, honesty, temperance, kindness, unselfishness in both words and deeds. Live thus guided and aided, and then not other mortals alone, nor they and spirits alone, but yourself also, will be helped in movement onward towards angel-hood thereby. Dwell together in amity, envying no one,

slandering no one, and then the world's redemption from errors, crimes, and sufferings thereby will be increased.

Those who denounce Spiritualism, and would maltreat Spiritualists, may and should infer a future need to suffer for it, by reflecting upon the Post-Mortem Confessions of those officers of Harvard College who gave it vigorous battle, and were baffled.

Backed and fortified by much experience since 1853, I now close this book in language in which I closed a lecture then, as follows : —

I choose to state what is, namely, that the wide-spread half-faith in immortality which but just keeps half the members of the Christian community from denial, and goes no farther, is receiving new vitality and vigor, and growing up to the stature and power of *undoubting trust*. Many think they are furnished with *positive demonstration* of that immortality which Christ only *proclaimed*. The thoughts and affections are lifted heavenward more than before. It must be so when one sees the long-absent travelers returning from beyond the hidden bourn, and finds them willing and eager to help us on and up to plains of higher knowledge, devotion, and joy. The skeptic — himself tells me so — the skeptic joins the trusting band; the believer — I know it, and others say it — the believer girds himself about with new faith. Will it not be so, if the loved and buried, no longer lost, but *found*, stretch down their helping hands, and speak their cheering words? There is vast uplifting power in the belief that good *kindred* angels are present to guide our feet in the paths of truth and peace; to breathe around and through us a purer charity, a brighter hope, a serener joy, than belong to our clay-bound souls.



Recently, since men have begun to learn that the ascended parent, wife, husband, brother, sister, child, embryo infant, friend each pours down from above words of kind endearment, and beckons the doubting soul onward and upward,—since this knowledge has dawned upon us, *some* of the family below trust that they have begun to move *onward and upward* with firmer step, steadier progress, more confiding trust to join the family above,—

“Where the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,  
And the smile of the Lord is the life of the soul.”

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## A P P E N D I X.

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The following beautiful utterances by the spirit guides of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond will adorn a page of this book, which otherwise would be blank :

“Spiritualism wishes and aims only to elevate the individual life, with which alone it deals. It is humanity that it has come to preserve,—not governments, legislatures, armies, creeds, or institutions. It works upon them most effectually as it works through humanity. Wherever a deed is done that serves mankind Spiritualism is there ; wherever mankind are oppressed or down-trodden Spiritualism is there, uplifting and strengthening. If spiritual healing could change its name sufficiently to be silenced as spiritual healing, and

be quietly classed as a new discovery by men of science, it would be appropriated instantly by those who are wedded to the orthodox creed of *Materia Medica*. If Spiritualism chose to be under the authority of dogma, creed, or formula, all mankind would worship the form, while the living spirit might have fled.

“It comes not to do aught to those who deny it, but wherever the heart is sad and weary and worn, wherever dejected and scorned of men, wherever finding in no creed comfort, in no formula the lesson of immortal life, it declares the well-spring in the desert, the voice in the lonely place, and binds up the burdened spirit, and heals the broken heart. It says to all: ‘Deny it if you will, but the rose will blossom on the fair rose-tree, the lilies of life will grow beside the flowing stream, the angels of God will speak with voices of comfort and rich melody to the hearts and lives of men, and before mankind is aware of it the ancient places of desolation and wrong will be overgrown by the blooming flowers of immortal life.’ No place will it refuse to enter where a welcome awaits it,—whether hall, library, temple, place of worship, or human habitation, where there is a heart that requires its presence and that can perceive its voice.”

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