



BIOGRAPHY OF
the spiritual medium of the 1800s
mrs. J.H. CONANT
Book of 1873

(this is partly ocr of [book](#) on net, txt errors may be here)

INTRODUCTION.

There are two questions which have followed like phantoms the footsteps of each generation along the years: "Is this state of material being all that is in store for us?" and "If we indeed survive the shock of death, shall we remember those we loved on earth, and be able to make our presence known to them?"

The great mass of humanity — in whatever age or country — has instinctively repelled the thought of annihilation, although, as a minority idea, it has frequently found existence in peculiarly organized minds. After-life, in some form, however crude in its conditions, has been the incentive of all the moral ethics and religious formulas to which time has given birth.

It would seem that to him who sincerely questions of his interior consciousness the verity of immortality in hours of twilight or midnight

silence, when the toils of the day are done —or in the brooding presence of some chilling sorrow, when the loved of earth have passed the bounds of mortal ken — there can be but one answer which comes therefrom, and that is, that the ego (my inner being) is deathless and indestructible. From the earliest dawn of reason as evidenced in the acts of the primitive races, and foreshortened upon the canvas of time by archaeology, man has been convinced in some way — though the process may be inexplicable at times— that he is really twofold in nature; that as the seed in the material world contains the germ of life and the nutritive principle which is to sustain that life till it gains power to draw from the surrounding soil its daily supply, so his body is but the nucleus of higher possibilities, containing in itself a power that is to live after it has exhausted all the vital food which the physical form can offer, by drawing from the soil and atmosphere of a contiguous and higher — though unseen and mystical — country the nutriment which shall expand it to full development.

This wide-spread and intuitive looking for immortality has affirmatively decided the first question ; but the correct answer to the companion query concerning the after communication of the so-called dead, while it has been also shadowed upon the traditions and beliefs of all races, and partially embodied in certain religious systems, has not met with the universal acknowledgment among mankind which it merits—in too many cases being arbitrarily placed in abeyance by those who, having charge of the rising generations of the people, educate them to treat the subject from standpoints antagonistic to the use of God’s choicest gift—the human reason!

Nevertheless, in obedience to the ever increasing enlightenment of the world, we find in the nineteenth century the cropping out of a wondrous demonstration of the truth of man’s aforesaid dim and clouded conceptions or inexplicable evictions. To the hearts of millions in America, England, France, Germany, Russia, and other civilized countries the fact has become patent, through conclusive evidence—both mental and physical—that there is “a continued, conscious existence beyond the change called death;” and that those in that state of being, but little advanced by the process — ascending only in the scale by subsequent development, from that position to which their conduct while in earth life logically assigned them —can identify themselves to those whom they once cherished. ‘This new principle of belief has been designated ‘Spiritualism,’ whose meaning Hayward’s Book of All Religions informs us may be stated in a single proposition :

“That disembodied human spirits sometimes manifest themselves, or make known their presence and power, to persons in the earthly body, and hold realized communication with them.’

This is the great truth which the present age has given to cheer the whilom dark pathway to the tomb with the glory of a coming world of eternal progression, and to drown the dismal dirge which the sombre, cave-arched waves of death’s Jordan have chanted for ages gone, with the thrilling music of angelic welcome to life’s “evergreen hills!’ Right has found its willing martyrs in every age. Men and women, filled with an irresistible impulse whose source is from above, have in its cause fearlessly

dared whatever of physical anguish or mental disquietude the bigots of their day could heap upon them; and in this nineteenth century many who recognize within them the voice of consecration are, like their prototypes of old, devoting their self sacrificing labors upon the public rostrum, in the seance, through the columns of the spiritual press, and every avenue in social life, for the advancement of a knowledge of this new revelation among men, without fear and without adequate reward — hoping only for the harvest which their children's eyes shall see. Happy in feeling that 'Te who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined into their hearts' — knowing that they "have this treasure in earthen yessels" that the glory may be ascribed to the true source of inspiration, they continue — as does the subject of this sketch — while 'troubled on every side, yet not distressed,' "perplexed, but not in despair," to proclaim to a world lost in the glaring wastes of material gain, and misled by erroneous educational guides. ;

"God is not dumb, that he should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, thy soul is poor;
There towers the Mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find, but he who bends
Intent on manna still, and mortal ends.
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore!"

BIOGRAPHY.

The following record has been prepared, that the reader may know somewhat of the strange experiences, deep sufferings, sharp trials, and noble fruits which have attended the life line of only a single individual among the many apostles of the new dispensation, and learn to value the gift of spirit communion in proportion to its cost.

Frances Ann Crowell was born in Portsmouth, N. H., April 28th, 1851. Her parents, named Peter and Hannah, respectively, were in moderate circumstances, and at the time of her birth resided on Parker Street, in the western portion of the (then) town.

When about the age of six years, she commenced attending a private school near her home, kept by Mrs. Leach, a widow lady; this she continued to be connected with for about eighteen months, when she entered one of the public schools of the town on Cabot Street — Mr. Blaisdell, preceptor. After the lapse of some months her father removed to another district — the southern part of the town — and she was enrolled among the scholars of Mrs. Marshall, who prepared girls to enter the high school. Owing to sickness she was not able to attend regularly, being kept from her studies nearly half the time.

On her attaining the age of eleven she left this school, and never attended any other. The foregoing institutions in Portsmouth, and the limited time spent therein, have been her only opportunities for education, as that word is commonly used.

II.

Her mechanistic faculties existed from her earliest years, although for along time she did not understand what was meant by them. When about seven years of age she was prostrated by a fever, and one evening she heard her mother, while watching by her bedside, conversing with some person apparently in the room, who in her bewildered condition she supposed to be one of the neighbors. Finally, rousing herself to partial consciousness, she gazed around the apartment, but failed to see

the individual addressed. Her mother not detecting the movement, and supposing she still slept, continued the conversation. At last childish curiosity gained the ascendancy over weakness, and the little one asked:

“Who are you talking with, mother?”

“Why, my child,” replied her parent, ‘I thought you were asleep,’ and she endeavored to turn the attention of the patient to some other subject. But the anxiety of the daughter could not be appeased, and finally her mother said:

“Well, my dear, I was talking to the angels.”

“The angels, mother! I thought they lived in heaven.”

“Yes, but they sometimes come to talk with us in this world.”

The future medium having never been brought face to face with the matter before, was strangely moved, and feared that her mother must have become suddenly deranged. ‘Who are the angels, mother?’ she asked.

“The angels, my daughter, are those who once lived on this earth, but who are now called dead.

Your little sister is an angel.”

“So you were talking to them?”

“Yes.”

What did they say?”

“Your little sister tells me that you are to recover.”

III.

From that day, like one of old, she kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart, wondering if those scenes and persons she sometimes beheld, though others could not, were really of angelic origin, as the philosophy of her mother would seem to indicate. She heard raps, and saw articles of furniture moved in her room when she knew no mortal hand was there to perform the acts; and she gravely considered these —the first, premonitory drops of the great shower yet to come —with a depth of interest beyond her years. Her mother, yielding to her importunities, talked frequently with her, explaining the matter as fully as she herself understood it at that early period (ten years before the accepted date of the advent of Modern Spiritualism) and prophesied that her daughter would one day know more concerning it.

At that time —and to the hour of her decease — her mother was a member, in regular standing, of the Chestnut Street Baptist Church, and her friends were sorely troubled at the thought of the “ wild delusion which had taken possession of Sister Crowell. ”When her daughter was about nine years old, Mrs. C., was seized with a severe illness which threatened her life. She grew rapidly worse, and one black midnight the little Fannie was called up by a member of the affrighted household, and told to dress herself with all speed and summon the physician who lived two miles away, as her mother was dying. She arose hastily and in youthful trepidation rushed out into the darkness with her bonnet under her arm, a shoe upon one of her feet, and its companion in her hand — she intending to put it on as she journeyed. In her trouble she lost her shoe and her way also, and found herself alone in the broad unsettled suburb outlying the “South Road” as it is called. She was extremely frightened, and ran rapidly, with a hope of finding some familiar object. Suddenly she fell, and, as she supposed, fainted away — but after-experience has shown her that she passed into the state of trance. When she returned to consciousness — or came out of the trance —she saw a tall gentleman standing by her side. She looked at him at first with joy at the hope of finding her way and gaining the physician’s house in time to be of assistance to her mother, but there was something in his appearance which filled her with indefinable awe.

‘You have lost your way, little one,’ he said, kindly.

‘Yes, sir,’ she replied.

‘Come with me,’ he continued, ‘and I will show you where you wish to go.’

Fear again struggled for the mastery: ‘He is a stranger to me — how does he know where I wish to go?’ queried the child, as she looked earnestly at the luminous form before her. ‘Is he an angel?’

She again supposed she fainted from fright, but was really entranced, and did not recover control of her senses till she found herself at the doctor’s door with her guide, where the spirit — for such it really was — informed her that he was Epimenides, an ancient Greek, and that he had come in answer to her prayer.

This to her seemed strange, but was true, as she had kept up a mental cry — though she had not spoken it aloud — to the angels, in the midst of her fears, that they would come and help her, and retain her mother in life till she could return to the house. Her efforts were successful ; the doctor and a friend her mother desired to see were both summoned, and the failing patient recovered. Fannie often after this occurrence felt the influence of her mysterious friend — she did not always see him, but knew that he was near.

IV

Sometime after this event, and when she was about ten years of age, while playing, at the hour of twilight, she suddenly fell in what was pronounced a fit by her medical attendants, and remained in an unconscious condition till three o’clock on the following morning. On her returning to a cognizance of surrounding things her glance fell first upon two well known professional gentleman, Dr. Cheever (a celebrated physician of Portsmouth, and well known while in life throughout New England,) and Dr. Dwight; the one held a spoon, the other was endeavoring to force her teeth apart sufficiently for the administration of the prepared prescription. She then passed into the trance, and while so conditioned, some spirit, evidently well versed in the intricacies of pharmacological lore, gave directions through her lips to the two wonder-struck M. D.’s, as to what should be done for the betterment of her case.

Although the physicians considered this as merely the result of an abnormal state of the brain, yet they acknowledged the advice given, to be astonishingly scientific, and such as it would be well for them to follow — which they did, thus presenting an exhibition of remarkable professional liberality, though it was perfectly in keeping with the general dealings of the fearless gentlemen in question. Her sickness at this time proved a serious matter, extending over a period of six months, during most of which these physicians attended her; they then gave up the case into the hands of Dr. Goddard, also of Portsmouth.

Through all this season of trial, as soon as either physician entered the room the young patient would be entranced, and if he was about to administer anything which her “ guides” (as she afterward learned by increased knowledge of the facts of spirit communion) thought she ought not to have, they, through her organism, would refuse, and make a prescription themselves. All the physicians employed considered her case a most remarkable one ; she was visited by Drs. Lynton, Kelley, and many others from different parts of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, all of whom were desirous of tracing the workings of the peculiar ‘disease’ for themselves. These investigators finally came to the conclusion that she was troubled with some new derangement of the brain with which the medical faculty were not yet acquainted.

V.

Soon after Fannie's recovery, her mother was again prostrated by sickness — which proved to be her last —and with this event commenced the occurrence of many singular spirit manifestations, both mental and physical in character. So startling were these displays of invisible force, that neither money or friendship would induce persons to stay in the house with the patient. As soon as the disturbances began, away ran every one in mortal fright, leaving upon the daughter the entire burden of household duties and the care of her afflicted parent.

When she was about eleven years of age this period of anxious and self-devoting labor drew to a close, and her parent, slowly sinking, passed the reaches of mortality. A few days previous to her decease she called the little one to her bedside, and said:

“Fannie, I am going to leave you,” upon which the sad-faced child cried out, “Oh take me with you.”

“No, my dear,” replied the mother, “God has a wondrous work for you to do in after years, and you must stay here and perform it.”

Fannie had been before impressed to feel a vague outlining of some remarkable course in life reserved for her, but nothing definitive had been portrayed, and she again said:

“Oh, how can I do anything without a mother?”

“My dear,” answered the parent, “the angels will be your father and mother. When you come to meet me in heaven, bring me a clear record that you have always obeyed them. You will know more concerning this by and by.”

In after-time when the child had grown to womanhood, and was present at her first understood spiritual seance, the remembrance of that mother's prophecy, coming to her like the echo of a refrain across the years, was the great cause of her assenting to the demands of the spirit world as expressed by Dr. Fisher.

At the time of her mother's decease, raps were heard and electric lights seen in the chamber, and the child medium was frequently entranced; indeed, so much of her vitality was consumed previous to this event in supplying the needs of the sinking one, that when those attending took her away from the cold form of her arisen parent, she herself was, as she expresses it, ‘nearer dead than alive.’ During her mother's departure from the form the little one beheld a strange vision — unseen to others in the room — akin to that which has so often been portrayed since by clairvoyants, but which at that time she failed to understand. Andrew Jackson Davis, the wonderful seer, has beautifully described the process in his recent work, “Tus TremMpur,” as seen by himself on other occasions in after years:

* * * “Death’ is the word used to signify ‘the end of life,’ spoken by persons who see not that seeming death is really ‘the beginning of life,’ and the opening of the sacred volume of eternity. But let us peer through the seeming, into that which is within the veil.

“The person is now dying; and it is to be a rapid death. Observe something about temperature, The feet are cold; the hands hot and white ; a coldness pervades the entire cuticle. See? What is that accumulating in the atmosphere just over the pillowed head? It is an ethereal emanation — a golden magnetic halo — a throbbing, almost self-conscious atmosphere.

“The bodily temperature is now lowering rapidly. The coldness has extended upward from the toes to the knees, and from the finger tips to the elbows; while, in exactly the same ratio, the emanation has ascended higher over the head. ‘The arms are now cold to the shoulders, and legs to the hips; and the emanation, although not higher in the air, is more expanded, with a compact white centre, resembling the bright nucleus of a miniature sun. This brilliant central spot is, in very truth, the brain of the new spiritual organism now forthcoming.

“The death-cold steals over the heaving breast, and around on either side the temperature is greatly diminished. Look now ! The psychic emanation contains some proportion of every principle composing the soul — motion, life, sensation, ethers, essences, vital magnetism, vital electricity, instincts — and, much enlarged by accessions, it has floated up in a compact mass, and now occupies a higher altitude near the ceiling.

“Now the lungs have ceased to breathe, the pulse is still, the physical heart is motionless; while the brain cells, the corpus callosum, the medulla, and the spinal cord and ganglia, are ablaze with contractive and expansive energies, which gently pulsate and seem to direct and govern themselves by a kind of automatic self-consciousness. See! The negative (gray) substance of the brain is interiorly throbbing — a slow, measure, profoundly deep throb — not painful, but massive and harmonious like the deep heart-beat of the sea.

“Look up! The exalted emanation, obedient to its own changeless laws, is now elongated, and has attained a position at right angles with the horizontal body below. Behold! See how the outline of «a beautiful human form is being fashioned within that emanation. Beneath it is still tied by a white life-cord to the medulla and the corpus callosum within the brain. * * *

“You observe that a very fine vitalic thread still connects the vortices and central fibres of the dying brain with the lower extremities of the exalted outlined human being in the atmosphere.

Notwithstanding the existence of this life-thread, which acts like a telegraphic conductor — conveying messages in opposite directions at the same moment — you observe that the shadowy image, enveloped in a golden emanation, continues almost imperceptibly to ascend skyward,

“There! What do I now see? A symmetrically shaped human head rising above the mass — slowly, beautifully rising out of the golden cloud of substantial principles. And now appear the outlines of a spiritual countenance — a quiet face and full of beauty, surpassing the power of words to delineate. Look again! behold emerging the fair neck and cautious shoulders; and see! as we gaze, out come, one after the other, in rapid succession, as if influenced and directed by the wand of a magician, all the parts of a new body—a bright, natural looking, yet spiritual image —only a little less than the deserted physical body, a perfect re-appearance of the person in the immediate heavens, prepared to accompany the celestial group of superintending intelligences to the Summerland.

“What was that? In the twinkling of an eye the vitalic electrical telegraphic thread was snapped — the yet lingering particles and principles were suddenly attracted upward and

absorbed into the spiritual body — and lo! the new organization is free of terrestrial gravitations, is instantly and absolutely independent of the weights and cares that chained it firmly imprisoned to earth. (“Those only are free at death who have lived righteously. Any enthralling passion, the least feeling of duty undischarged, of injustice committed, holds the spirit to earth, as a ship is fastened by a heavy anchor. Only the pure are free.”)

“Here now behold a true, substantial, immortal, spiritual body. It was sown in darkness and dishonor ; it is raised in beauty and brightness.

“Behold the contrast — the vastly wide difference — between the interior and outward. Cast your eyes around the room. There are many friends, aged relatives, and little children, in the death chamber; * * * they mourn, without the comfort even of blind faith; they grieve, with only the whisperings of hope to the doubting car; they gather around the prostrate, cold body; they press together the lids of the sightless eyes; in silence and in sorrow they withdraw from the scene; and now other hands commence those final preparations with which the living consecrate the dead.

«But let us open our brighter eyes — the eyes that we shall all have when clothed with the deathless garment of immortality. See! The newly organized spiritual body — surrounded by a group of guardian angels — moves gracefully off in the direction of celestial shores. The arisen personality follows a vibrating thread of magnetic attraction, which while the dying mutations were in process we noticed penetrating the apartment and fastening itself to the earthly brain of the resurrected. It comes floating down from the sensorium of superior intelligences — a golden fibrillous stream of telegraphic light — sent from on high, to greet with love and guide with wisdom the newly arisen.

* The thought-laden love-thread tranquilly draws the new born higher up and farther away. *

«Over the velvet lands and flower fields of the celestial country the bending bow of eternal promise is visible, filling with indescribable beauty the boundless ocean of world-laden skies, which cover with infinite loveliness the immeasurable zone-lands of the Hereafter.”

Here, then, in that lonely sick room at Portsmouth, years before the world had heard this voice that lifted the veil, ‘youth, the perpetual counterpart and companion of old age, endeavored to cheer the lonely traveller, and the young child, whose name was destined to be known among the friends of liberal thought the world over, hung with breathless earnestness over the form of a mother in a physical sense soon to be no more. She tells us that she saw the brilliant emanation rise and stand above the body; “I thought it was an angel, but it looked like my mother. When she turned to go away she appeared to know me, and gazed so kindly upon me; yet she seemed anxious to go, and I was much frightened. ‘The room was full of spirits — some strange faces, and some whom I had known while on earth.”

Though she sometimes saw her mother, — as other departed ones — by means of her spiritual perceptions, it was not until she was twenty-two years of age that she received a message from her through the organism of another medium.

VI

Her father gave in his adhesion to no form of religion, being opposed to the same in every shape, but thought, at the time of his wife's decease, that some clergyman should be summoned to attend her funeral. As before stated, Mrs. Crowell was a member in regular standing in the Baptist Church, though she had, previous to her death, fallen under the shade of the priestly ban by reason of the strange manifestations occurring at her house, which were denominated by her neighbors "dealings with the devil."

When his daughter asked who was to be the parson summoned for the observance of the last rites, Peter replied: "I suppose her minister; do you know where he lives?" "Yes," replied Fannie; whereupon she was directed to go and request him to attend. She repaired to his residence, but when the trembling child announced her errand, he positively refused to officiate as pastor on the occasion, because of the "dealings" aforesaid.

"Directly," she says, "I felt an entire change in my feelings; a strong disgust took possession of me, together with a desire to kick the reverend bigot; in fact, I do not know what restrained me from it. I left the house and sat down upon the door-step out-side, wondering what I should do. While I sat there, the same noble presence who met me on the night when I lost my way several years before while, looking for a physician for my mother, appeared to me, and said, kindly:

'Little one, go to Mr. Robinson, the Methodist preacher; he will come.'

'But,' said I, 'I don't know him, or where he lives.'

'I will show you,' replied the spirit.'

She was then thrown into a trance as before, and 'on regaining consciousness, found herself at the door of the minister's residence. She called for the gentleman, and when she had explained her errand, and told the manner in which she had been treated by the Baptist clergyman, Mr. Robinson exclaimed, with hearty indignation: 'My dear, I am almost ashamed to acknowledge that I live in this age! Certainly I will go to your mother's funeral.'" He did attend, and performed the services in a manner at once soothing and sympathetic.

VII

Her father procured a housekeeper, and the tide of life bore the little lonely one along upon its breast to the fulfillment of her mission. She used frequently to see spirits, and sometimes heard their voices as plainly as those of mortals. She was frequently very much frightened because those she saw were strangers. At intervals she was cheered by the sight of her mother. There was no one to reveal to this isolated child more of the mystery of the law of communion than her mother had given her in the conversations upon the subject, had while she was on earth, for Spiritualism had not yet dawned with "healing in its wings," and with but few marked exceptions the spirits seen by her seemed as ignorant as herself of the proper methods of expression to be used.



When she arrived at the age of fifteen years, for her current of life deepened, and she was launched upon the sea of active labor. She left her childhood home by the winding Piscataqua, and went to Lowell, Mass. where she engaged herself as a tailoress, working at that business till she attained the age of twenty, when she was united in marriage with John H. Conant, a grandson of Prof. John Hubbard, of Dartmouth College.

<<*The Lowell Mill Girls in those days* (not from this book)

While residing here, she was told by the invisible ones, concerning whom she was as yet ignorant save as to their palpable existence to her interior perceptions, that the line of descent to be traced in the history of her progenitors was extremely interesting: that her great grandfather, known to the whites as “Swift-Foot,” was an Indian chief of renown in the early history of the New World, his name, Quinsigamond — still borne by a fine sheet of water in Massachusetts — serving as a memento of his high place among men; that he was married to a French Canadian woman, the grandmother of Peter Crowell being the result *The Lowell Mill Girls* in those days of that union; that this daughter’s Indian name was Meona, her English, Betsey; that she was in turn married to an individual bearing the name of Crowell — or as it should be, Cromwell, for he was a descendant of one of the three Cromwells, Thomas, William and John, who left England during the time of Charles I. These three brothers, on leaving the mother country, were never heard of afterward, but Mrs. Conant was assured by the spirits that they came to America, and could be traced as far as their settlement in Canada, where their name was suppressed by them that they might not be known. One of their descendants, as aforesaid, settling in life, married the Indian girl Meona, or Betsey, Peter, Fannie’s father, being the child of that union. Thus in direct line — though by aid of spirit perception and information rather than mortal — ***the medium was enabled to trace her descent on one side from the English Cromwells, and on the other from a chief of the American Indians.*** Of this peculiar extraction she was kept in ignorance till just previous to her marriage, when she discovered it, and, determined to prove the truth or falsity of the report, wrote to her father in Portsmouth; from words received in return, further inquiries in other localities, and the recalling of little memories of her early childhood, she was enabled to fix a material certainty to her descent on one side from the aborigines, and was thus led to give full credence to the assertions of her mysterious attendants as regarded the others. She was able, among other things, to recall to mind that on a certain occasion when she was very young, her father went to visit his mother, who was then living in the northern part of Vermont, and, returning, brought her many articles of skillful Indian workmanship as presents from her grandmother.

These she had exhibited in childish triumph to all who visited the house, exclaiming, “My grandmother made these,” till her mother, who seemed not to relish the relationship to the red man, thus so fully avowed, had taken them from her and hidden them. She was never able to discover the fate of these little offerings, to which in after years she would have attached inestimable value, but the circumstance was to her a strong link in the chain of conviction.

PART II.

SHE BECOMES A PUBLIC MEDIUM.

PART II.

——“By that world of beauty,
 And by that life of love,
 And by the holy angels
 Who listen now above,
 I pledge my soul's endeavor
 To do whate'er I can
 To bless my sister woman,
 And aid my brother man.”
 —Lizzie Doten.

In the year 1851 she left Lowell, and, with her husband, came to reside at the North End of Boston. Here her health, never robust, gave way, and she was again prostrated by sickness. Dr. Tobey, a well known physician, was summoned to attend her, who in view of the exigencies of the case, prescribed a certain preparation of morphine — he being at the time, unfortunately, under the influence of stimulants. Mr. Conant obtained the prescription, as ordered, from a neighboring apothecary, and it was administered, per directions, to his wife. The amount written down by Dr. Tobey proved to be a large overdose; she was thrown into a semi-unconscious state, and began to sink so rapidly as to alarm all those residing in the house. Mr. Conant immediately proceeded to the doctor's office to apprise on him of the fact. He inquired concerning the medicine and its effect — became agitated, and hurried to the sick chamber. A glance told him that there was some mistake in the remedy administered, and the imminent danger of his patient immediately sobered him. He doubted that he had prescribed so much, and was utterly confounded when, on applying to the druggist, he found the prescription filed in his own handwriting — the apothecary meanwhile assuring him that he should not have put up the medicine in such quantity had he not known him well, and supposed that he was acquainted with his business. Dr. Tobey said there was no help for Mrs. Conant — she must die. She, however, told him that she should not.

During the absence of her husband in search of the physician, the second time, Mrs. C. had been mysteriously aroused from the deathly stupor — her body was shaken, involuntarily as it seemed, and a series of shocks, as from an electric battery, passed through her frame; she then began to speak, and prescribed for herself as she had done frequently before at Portsmouth in her childhood. The medicine, which was something of a simple nature, had been given to her, and by its influence, while the terrified physician stood by her side anticipating her speedy dissolution, perspiration began to set in, and witnessing this sign of returning power — though ignorant of its cause — he declared, with great relief to his mind, that she would yet survive. **Although neither herself nor the parties in the house were at that time disposed to attribute the cure to the agency of spirits** — by reason of want of information on the subject — yet in after years she was told, through the organism of a medium, William Rice, whom she had never before seen, and who was a perfect stranger to the facts in the case, that she had been restored

through the efforts of Dr. Kittredge, an old physician of her native town, who had been several years in the spirit world.

Nature rallied, and she rapidly recovered. When she regained full consciousness, she remembered that she seemed to have been in some beautiful place, she thought was heaven. Here she met the mother who left her in earlier years, and when she wept and begged to be allowed to stay with her, her parent gently but firmly told her that she must return to earth life — that she had yet a mission to perform — and her poor tempest-tossed bark was again obliged to put to sea from out the haven of peace where it hoped to rest; but blessed were the assurances she received, that in due time she should again and finally vast anchor amid the golden sand that sparkles in the river of Paradise.

II

At the age of twenty-one she was attacked by a seyre illness, pronounced by the physicians to be consumption of the blood, and no hope of restoration appeared for her. She remained fora long time under the care of several prominent medical men of Boston, but received no help, and her journey of life seemed about to end. While in this condition, a lady, Mrs. Bryant, with whom she was boarding, asked her:

‘Why don’t you try a medium?’ This was in the incipient stage of public spirit communion, and Mrs. Conant had not as yet considered the subject of Spiritualism, as a definite thing. ‘A medium!’ she exclaimed, ‘what is a medium?’

A person,” replied Mrs. Bryant, ‘through whom spirits — or dead folks — can come to talk with their friends in earth life. I can introduce you to a fine one, who has worked many wonderful cures.’

“Well,” responded Mrs. C., “there seems to be no hope from the doctors, and I will try, though I have no expectation of receiving any good from it.”

Mrs. Bryant then introduced her to Miss Anna Richardson, aged some fifteen or sixteen years, who was a medium of great promise in those days. Mrs. C. took her seat, the medium became entranced, and then for the first time, in a practical sense, she discovered what her own powers denoted. Dr. John Dix Fisher, an old Boston physician, controlled Miss Richardson, as a medical adviser, and, after carefully considering Mrs. C.’s malady, said: :

“Your ease has been pronounced hopeless, but I do not consider it so. If you will obey my instructions, and do what I require in payment, in three weeks IT will have you well; but I shall charge you what perhaps you will call a heavy fee.”

Mrs. Conant answered that she had not much to pay with, as she was not possessed of pecuniary means, to which she supposed he referred.

I will state my terms,” he said, “and then you may decide as to whether you can meet them, or not. You have some of the finest mediumistic powers that I have ever seen, and the world ought to have the full benefit of them.”

“I !?” exclaimed Mrs. C.

“Most certainly,” returned the spirit physician; “You are yet to be ‘remarkable medium if you will give your consent.” He then proceeded to render a correct synopsis of her past life and experiences, fully explaining those sights, sounds, and occurrences which had been so strange to her from

childhood. ‘These, he informed her, were perceived and recognized in consequence of her mediumistic capacity of discernment. While she sat rapt in astonishment at the revelation, the spirit continued :

“You *are* a spirit medium, and the fee I require in consideration of your case, is that you will give your powers to the world hereafter.”

Still failing to understand the proposition, Mrs. Conant said, ‘What do you mean by giving my powers to the world?’”

“By becoming a public medium,” rejoined Dr. Fisher: ‘I want you for a medium, myself, and this is the fee I exact for your cure.’”

After some hesitation, in which wonder and anxiety were nearly balanced in her mind, she replied: ‘Well, Doctor, I will pay the fee.’”

The spirit physician then began working for her benefit, and in three weeks from that date — as he predicted in commencing the case — his medicines had wrought such a perceptible improvement in her, that all her friends united in declaring they should not recognize her as the same person they had known previous to the commencement of his treatment.

III.

The Doctor then prepared for business with his new medium, and as an introductory step, by writing through her hand while entranced, demanded that she should change her place of abode, not giving any particular reason for it at the time — though the benefit was afterward apparent — but seeming to wish to test her confidence in him. She indicated her willingness to comply, but when he directed her to go to a certain place on Hanover Street, Boston, which she knew to be a large and very popular boarding-house, where rooms were rarely, if ever, vacant, she did not entertain much faith that her errand would be successful. She however called at the house, saw the landlady, Mrs. M. E. Cates, and was told, as she anticipated, that there was not a vacant apartment therein. The landlady desired to know who recommended her to come, and upon Mrs. Conant’s telling her (after some misgivings concerning Mrs. Cates’s belief in her sanity,) that John Dix Fisher, a ‘dead doctor,’ had sent her there, she exclaimed:

‘Oh, Dr. Fisher told you to come, did he? Then there must be something in it. He always has a reason for what he does; he would not have sent you here if he had not seen that I was soon to have a vacaney. Call again to-morrow, and we will see what can be done.’”

It appeared that the landlady, and many of her patrons were firm believers in the new doctrine of spirit return — that George A. Redman, the celebrated medium, was at that time in the house, giving public séances for physical manifestations every evening, and that Dr. Fisher had thus introduced his medium — unwittingly to herself—into a congenial home. That very evening, Mr. Redman called upon the landlady and gave notice that as he was in a short time to remove his office further ‘up town’, his room would be vacant. Upon Mrs. Conant’s calling next day she was so informed, and securing it, was at once the possessor of a location, already magnetized by the presence of a powerful medium and the oft-repeated seances which had been held there; an advantage which, however hidden to the skeptic, will be immediately apparent to those at all conversant with the delicacy of the conditions necessary for successful and easy control.

IV.

Dr. Fisher now desired her to commence her mediumistic duties, as per agreement. She resisted for awhile, but yielded at last and began serving him as a public instrument for medical examinations and prescriptions, having wonderful success in all the cases undertaken, and being from the first, literally overburdened with employment. At this house the most singular manifestations occurred in her presence, both of a mental and physical character. At first it was found that the magnetic aid of the sister of the landlady — Martha Smith — was necessary — she serving as a battery to supply the vital force required for spirit manifestations — but in time Mrs. C. became developed to such an extent in mediumistic power as to no longer require her presence. A gentleman boarding at the house was also found to be similarly gifted, and with such a degree of strength that it was inadvisable for himself and Mrs. Conant to sit at the dinner table at the same time. Whenever such a circumstance occurred the table was violently lifted, or rocked from side to side in a manner suggestive of dining on shipboard in a heavy gale.

Therefore when Mr. Conant and his lady drew near the table it was their custom to see if the gentleman medium was already there, in which ease they remained in waiting till he had retired — the same course being adopted by the other party.

The first person who came to test her capacity as a physician, was a medical gentleman from Bridgewater, Mass., who was desirous of settling in his mind, beyond doubt, the verity or falsity of spirit return. He had heard that Dr. Fisher controlled her, and as he had been acquainted with him while in earth life (having been a college classmate of Dr. F.'s) he determined to convince himself as to the correctness of the report. At the close of the sitting — during all of which Mrs. Conant was unconsciously entranced — he told her that he had propounded to the influence speaking, a regular series of questions similar to those put by a medical board to an applicant who desired fellowship as a physician, and that every one had received a correct answer. This fact, together with the giving of various items of information, of which the medium could have had no knowledge, greatly astonished him.

‘Are you satisfied?’ asked Mrs. Conant.

‘I am sure that I have been talking with John Dix Fisher, and nobody else,’ he replied.

V.

The astonishing power of penetration possessed by the spirit physician regarding the troubles of those yet in the form, was soon evinced in an unexpected manner, and concerning a much dreaded matter. A young lady residing in the same house with Mrs. Conant began to be ill, exhibiting mysterious symptoms, and Mrs. Cates desired the medium to give her a medical examination. Dr. Fisher, having carefully diagnosed the case through her, declared the patient to be suffering from small-pox in its incipient stage. The inmates of the house became alarmed, and demanded that a regular physician should be summoned. Dr. Ayer, who lived not far off, was called in, and gave it as his opinion that the girl had only a bad cold — ‘he couldn't help what the ‘dead doctor’ said, it was nonsense to call it small pox.”

Dr. Fisher then controlled Mis. Conant, and sent a message to his medical critic to the following effect: ‘Tell Dr. Ayer, that in two hours Nature will settle the case.’ In two hours, as he had predicted, the patient exhibited unmistakable signs of the disease, and Dr. Ayer was obliged to concur with the unseen practitioner — which he did in a half scornful way, saying with a laugh: ‘Of course the ‘dead doctor’ could see inside a person better than I could.’

Several other instances of the disease came up for consideration in the house, and as she was constantly surrounded by investigators and seekers after medial advice, from 9 o'clock A. M., to

sometimes late at night, it became necessary that the small pox patients be removed for the safety of her visitors. When the time arrived for their departure, Dr. Fisher gave orders concerning their transportation, and the measures to be observed for cleansing the house, (which arrangements were implicitly carried out.) He then directed Mrs. Conant to lock her door, and to refuse to allow the lady who was having a sitting at the time he came, to leave until he reported that all was right; alleging that if his requirements were followed no trouble would ensue, and that the disease should be stayed, as far as this particular dwelling was concerned. Mrs. Conant obeyed with regard to the door, but the lady, after satisfying her curiosity, was very desirous of retiring from the room, and as no word of release came from the spirit physician, the anxiety of the medium increased to perturbation, which was finally dispelled by his writing through her hand that all was well, that the patients had been removed, that he had so prepared the house that the lady could safely go out, and that no one would hereafter be in danger of taking the disease by coming therein. Subsequent events did not disprove the truth of his assertion, although the disease was very prevalent in the neighborhood.

The “dead doctor” was speedily summoned, on account of this success, to treat several patients for this malignant malady. At such times as he made visits to them, he would thoroughly entrance his medium, call at the house in question, make his prescription, and take her home again — she all the while unconscious of what she would have considered her dangerous errand. At one time he thus attended five cases, all of which terminated favorably.

In one instance, however, by reason of some unexplained circumstance, he lost control of Mrs. Conant while at the bedside of one of these small pox patients; she, gaining a knowledge of her position, and seized with a deadly fear of contagion, ran home with the utmost speed, Mrs. Cates met her in the hall of the house, exclaiming, ‘What is the matter?’ but Mrs. Conant was only able to ejaculate something about “small pox”? as she hurriedly sought her apartment. The landlady, who was herself a median, followed her to her room, and, after some time, succeeded in magnetizing her so that she became quiet. Dr. Fisher then resumed control of his medium and informed the landlady that there was not the slightest danger of Mrs. Conant’s taking the disease herself, or imparting it to others — that she was perfectly shielded from it by the power of her invisible guardians.

VI.

The public reception room of Mrs. Conant, at about this time, began to be the scene of very unique physical manifestations, varied in character as to violence or quiet humor; some of the most important of which are here recorded. The table used for her sittings was of oak, three feet six inches in length, and very heavy. When the company sat around it in the circle, sometimes it would be made so light by the agency of the spirits, that Mrs. Conant could lift it with one hand; at others, the same table was rendered so heavy that four men found it impossible to raise it from the floor. It would frequently — and sometimes without warning, when no séance was being held — be tipped at an angle of 45 deg., while the pens, paper, ink, and other paraphernalia which covered it, would be held in place — not an article falling upon the carpet. The individuals generally composing her circle were finally told that if they had the patience to sit and wait for the manifestation, they should see clearly-defined spirit forms. They announced themselves possessed of a sufficiency of that quality. One evening when a party of six were gathered around the table, the promise was renewed, and all those present became quiet save Mrs. Conant, who found it impossible to do so by reason of the magnetic drought which was kept up upon her vital powers. The party continued to wait patiently from six P. M., to twelve o'clock, midnight, and at last, as if to reward their faith or persistence, there suddenly appeared behind Mrs. Conant what seemed a fleecy cloud of steam or

light smoke, luminous and bright. It rose gradually, expanding itself into a pillar-like form some five feet in height, when it slowly parted, disclosing a human figure, which bowed to them and smiled—the lips moved, but gave forth no sound. The apparition remained in plain sight of all present—including Mrs. Conant, who turned around in order to view it—Long enough to be fully recognized as to details of countenance and drapery, and then became enveloped again in mistiness; the cloud of steam or smoke, which before curtained it, closed around it; it sank gradually down to the floor and disappeared. It bore the aspect of a beautiful female, and an enthusiastic member of the company said: :

‘I feel like imitating the disciples of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and saying: Let us build two tabernacles—one for the spirit and one for the medium!’

The table then ascended high above the heads of the circle. The company arose and sang the old melody —

‘Come holy spirit, heavenly dove,’—

The table keeping time to the music by swaying to and fro. The greater part of the manifestations occurring in presence of Mrs. Conant, took place in a brilliantly illuminated room, but on this occasion the lights were turned down so as to render objects barely visible — the electric rays furnished by the spirits themselves then completed the illumination so that all forms, such as the above, together with faces, arms, and hands were distinctly apparent.

Another manifestation of a seemingly violent character would often take place: Mrs. Conant would be requested to take her seat upon the top of a small round table —similar to the bouquet stands now in use —and while there the invisible powers would furiously rock the frail support as if to dislodge her, but she was not allowed to fall from it in a single instance. At the close of this manifestation she would frequently be lifted by the spirits in a direct line from the top of the table, and come to the floor, without injury, behind a sofa which was arranged across one corner of the apartment where the séances were held.

VII

Sometimes the more mischievous order of invisibles — for the experience of the investigator of the present day shows that all classes of minds exist in the unseen world, as here in mortal — would play various pranks at her expense, creating in many cases merriment, and in some a perplexed state of mind. Upon the table in the room where she held her public and private sittings, she had placed a bell, together with a written request, or notice, Ring!” to those who might enter the apartment in the event of her absence in any other part of the house. This apartment was situated up three flights of stairs from the street, and on numerous occasions, after descending them, the medium would hear a warning note from the bell, and hastening back would find—no one!

This was repeatedly done, when persons were on the watch to see that no mortal was in her room. She would frequently find the door of her apartment locked by the passing of the bolt upon the inside, when she arrived at the top of the stairs, and could not enter till it was unlocked from within, when the closest scrutiny failed to discover any person concealed, and escape was impossible without detection, the great height from the ground precluding egress by the windows, and the door through which she passed, being the only avenue by which to safely quit the room. On several occasions, on meeting those who desired sittings, as they ascended the stairs, she would be obliged to inform them that she was locked out— that “ the spirits” had possession of her room, and she must wait till they saw fit to open the door. Looks of incredulity would speedily appear on the faces

of said investigators, and as soon as the door was unlocked, some of them would spring into the apartment and search vigorously for the person who withdrew the bolt, but always without success.

VIII.

On one occasion a party of seven gentlemen favored her with a call for a séance. They were placed, as usual, around the table in the light, with the medium, and all sat in silence—no manifestations occurring — for half an hour, at the expiration of which time Mrs. Conant, becoming impatient at the long delay, called on Dr. Fisher to know the reason. He immediately took control of her hand and wrote: “If these gentlemen will become honest investigators, and throw off all their disguise, we will do what we can to give them satisfactory manifestations.” This missive she read to them, and they greeted it with laughter, after which they proceeded to remove the various means they had assumed of preserving a physical incog.; such as false whiskers, spectacles, etc., etc., and when the transformation scene was completed, she found that she could not recognize a countenance before her as belonging to any of the seven individuals who sat at the table before the edict of the spirit physician was promulgated. They then declared themselves as honest investigators, and Dr. Fisher went on to say: ‘You will now allow me to introduce you to my medium ;’ they stoutly declared that they desired no such honor, Mrs. Conant also said she did not wish an introduction, but the incorrigible spirit went on to give their names—correctly in every instance — much to their astonishment. They proved to be some of the “grave and reverend” city fathers, who, desiring to see if any good could come out of the Nazareth of Spiritualism, had chosen the Nicodemian path to that knowledge, but had been (at least so far as the medium was concerned) brought to light despite their disguise.

As the result of their obedience to the conditions required by the spirits — which example it would be well for skeptics, generally, to follow at the present day, instead of endeavoring to block the wheels by unreasoning demands—a most remarkable sitting occurred, and all the manifestations they desired were promptly given. This occurrence made such an impression upon the minds of these gentlemen that they determined to have additional experience, if possible.

They accordingly asked Mrs. Conant if she would give a séance in another house and room — the same to be selected by themselves — they evidently having an idea that by some means unknown to them, her room had been fitted for the performance of the manifestations. She replied that she was willing to try the experiment. Accordingly the gentlemen proceeded to obtain the use of a house then vacant, on Joy Street at the *West End of Boston*, and fitted one of the parlors temporarily for the sitting. >>

A heavy walnut extension table and a sufficient number of chairs alone composed the furniture of the room or



the house. At the appointed time in the afternoon a carriage sent by them conveyed Mrs. Conant and Martha Smith to the designated locality, where all were awaiting their arrival, full of high expectations of “exploding the humbug” as their vigorous vernacular conveyed it. The medium was full of anxiety, and earnestly hoped that if possible, the spirits would accomplish more startling results than usual. She had previous to this séance heard of a negro spirit of great power, calling himself “Big Dick,” who gave the strongest physical manifestations through the mediumship of George A. Redman ([link to online 1859 book of him](#): *Mystic Hours, Or, Spiritual Experiences*) and others, and she desired Dr. Fisher to secure his services for the occasion. Although he objected at

first to her coming en rapport with such an influence, he finally consented to remove his opposition, and ‘Big Dick’ made his appearance — through his works at least — producing the most convincing exhibits of invisible force, and performing feats of strength far beyond the united power of the medium and all present. The gentlemen in attendance desired that the table be lifted to the ceiling, to which the spirit replied in the affirmative, providing Mrs. Conant would sit upon it.

She did so, and the table at once began to gradually ascend. Four of the party laid hands on it, and exerted themselves to the utmost to keep it down, but it easily broke from their grasp, and reached the top of the apartment, so that the medium was able to write her name upon the ceiling above her head. All the party then seized the table by its legs, and endeavored to pull it down, but in vain, until Mrs. Conant— who, between the danger of being pressed against the wall overhead by the spirit’s exertions to draw it away from the gentlemen, and the peril of slipping from the table to the floor, by reason of the tipping caused by the struggle to draw it down — became alarmed, when the spirit lost control of the heavier body, and the table came crashing to the floor, being somewhat broken by the fall. Mrs. C., however, was not harmed, as she was slowly let down among the ruins of her former seat, and quietly confronted the amazed skeptics, who anticipated for her some severe bodily injury. This circle, occurring like the other, in the full glare of day, seemed to be perfectly satisfactory to the investigators, who, after a playful parley with the spirits as to who should pay for the table, (Dr. Fisher assuring them that they must — which they did) — dissolved the meeting.

At the conclusion of the séance the medium found herself obliged to pay the penalty of overruling the desire of her spirit physician, for ‘Big Dick’ followed her home, very unexpectedly, and, when her husband and herself had retired for the night, commenced amusing himself with various antics, which, while they were probably sources of enjoyment for him, did not meet the approbation of the servant girls who were in a room near by, but had not yet fallen asleep. These came rushing en dishabille to the landlady, full of fear, declaring that the house was being torn down by the “devil” who was at work in Mrs. Conant’s apartment. The confusion continued — tables and chairs were upset, and the bed was violently rocked, upon which Mr. Conant and wife arose, the former (who was not in the least mediumistic) declaring that it was best to be ‘out of it,’ and that he meant to see what was the cause of the disturbance.

Mrs. Cates, being admitted, advised Mrs. Conant to summon Dr. Fisher, for an explanation, and they accordingly sat at a table, which they raised from its overturned position on the floor, for the purpose. The spirit physician at once came, recalling to the mind of his medium the fact that he had strongly objected to her coming en rapport with ‘Big Dick,’ and saying that as she had insisted on doing so, she must abide by the consequences. Finding she must settle the matter herself, the medium at once, on the recommencement of the disturbance (which occurred as soon as Dr. Fisher had retired from control) opened a conversation with the unruly spirit, telling him in a way that appealed to his reason that, on all proper occasions she would be happy to meet with him, but that at the present time he was greatly annoying the occupants of the house, and she would prefer that he depart. He appeared to listen, as any one would while yet in the body, and, at the conclusion of her remonstrance, went away, giving her no further trouble. That the inmates of the house might see the tangible results of this nocturnal visit, Mrs. Conant allowed everything in her room to remain undisturbed in the position in which the spirit left it (save the table mentioned above) till next day, and morning revealed a most extraordinary state of confusion, as to furniture, in her apartment.

“Big Dick” came to her at different times, at subsequent periods, and was so violent that she was often frightened at his exhibitions of strength. She was therefore much gratified when he at length took his final leave of her.

SHORT clipped in from MYSTIC HOURS ; OR , SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES . George BY G. A. REDMAN , M.D. : from 1814!! (or jan. 1859 · C. Partridge) [link](#)

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PART III, 3, REMARKABLE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS,

PART III.

“Well done, thou watcher on the lonely tower!
Is the day breaking? dawns the happy hour?
We pine to see it:—tell us, yet again,

If the broad daylight breaks upon the plain?

“It breaks — it comes — the misty shadows fly ;—
A rosy radiance gleams along the sky;
The mountain tops reflect it calm and clear ;
The plain is yet in shade, but day is near.”

— Charles Mackay.

I.

THE writing phase of Mrs. Conant’s mediumship now became very strongly marked. She would frequently transcribe the thoughts or desires of two invisibles at the same time—*one using her right, the other her left hand*. Sometimes while her medical control, Dr. Fisher, was writing out his prescriptions with one, the other hand would be engaged in answering the questions of a visitor; *thus indicating that **the mind** of the medium had not the slightest connection with these dual manifestations of intelligence*. Another phase of mediumistic development soon made its appearance in her case, being the power of discerning hidden things, and giving information regarding lost articles. As an instance in point, a gentleman boarding in the house, came one day to the landlady and said:

“Mrs. Cates, I have lost some money from my room; this is the third time it has happened. I want to know whether the spirits can tell me anything about it.”

Advised by Mrs. Cates, he made a visit to Mrs. Conant’s room, in the upper part of the house, and asked for a sitting. He was immediately informed, by the influence controlling her hand, that the lost sums could be recovered. Call the landlady,” next directed the spirit. Mrs. Cates was summoned, ‘Follow the medium’ was the written order, and the exploring party of three, set out upon its errand.

“Where am I going?” demanded Mrs. C.

“We will tell you.” replied the guides, in whom she had implicit trust. She led the way to the gentleman’s room, went up to the bed, which was situated in one corner, wheeled it around, and, stripping back some two yards of the carpet on the floor beneath it, displayed to the astonished eyes of Mrs. Cates and her boarder three rolls of bills there concealed, saying to the gentleman: “There is your money.”

“Who put it there?” he asked.

The spirits replied that they would tell him if he would promise to give good advice to the thief, and not deal harshly, but as Jesus would have acted under similar circumstances. This he promised to

do, when he was informed that the theft had been accomplished by the chambermaid of the house. The spirits advised Mrs. Cates not to discharge her, and thus throw her into the world with the taint of suspicion fixed upon her character, but to take her to her room and talk to her in such a manner as to dissuade her from the evil course she was pursuing.

The lady did as directed, and was rewarded by the penitent expressions of the girl, who acknowledged that she took the money and concealed it where she thought no one would think of looking for it —intending to go after it when the excitement concerning its loss had subsided; she faithfully promised to avoid such operations in future, and was ever after, an exemplary person — thus, as well as the gentleman, receiving substantial benefit from the mediumistic powers of Mrs. Conant; being turned by the gentle means the spirits counseled from the winding path of duplicity to the fair though rugged road of honesty in all things.

On another occasion, something having been lost in the house, Mrs. Conant was requested to find it. She was led by her invisible friends to the room occupied by the person who had taken it, and immediately charged said individual with the theft, but being met with a stout denial, she went up to the bed, and opening it, *displayed the stolen article hidden between two mattresses*, greatly to the confusion of the abstractor, who evidently supposed the place of concealment to be beyond the probability of human skill to detect. But like others, this individual had forgotten that, as the Apostle to the Gentiles informs us, “We are compassed about with a cloud of witnesses, though unseen to the eye of the flesh, and was ignorant that the time had come when their celestial voices were proclaiming to earthly media, as of old the Nazarene did to the wondering twelve, “What we tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetop.”

II.

An aunt of Mrs. Cates, Mrs. White, had occasion to visit the house while on a journey from Maine, her native State, but so much afraid was she of ‘the spirits,” and so great a dread did she entertain of the communion so common with them among the members of the household, that she dare not see Mrs. Conant, and used to dart hurriedly past the door of her apartment in going down stairs. The medium greatly desired to persuade the lady to come to her room, as she was satisfied that she possessed a fine organization suited to the production of physical manifestations, though ignorant herself of her powers. She mentioned her desire to the landlady, who shook her head, saying: “Aunt Betsey is too sharp for you.” But after some days of waiting, the looked for opportunity presented itself. The old lady was ascending the stairs, and as she came opposite her door, Mrs. Conant appeared and insisted upon her entering. Not wishing, under the circumstances, to appear impolite, ‘Aunt Betsy” ventured across the threshold, all the while casting furtive glances around, evidently expecting to see a fearful vision, or to encounter some blood-curdling spiritual monstrosity ; but all remaining quiet, she grew reassured, and took a seat. Mrs. Conant immediately bolted the door to prevent her egress, and then commenced a general conversation upon the city and its mode of life as contrasted with that of the country, gradually turning it upon the question of Spiritualism. Her guest joined in the exchange of views, and as they sat thus, passive to spirit agency, to the astonishment of both, ‘Aunt Betsey ” — who was a powerful woman, and a heavy one as well — began to be raised up, till at least a foot above the floor was reached, when she remained suspended in the air.

“Aunt Betsey” exclaimed Mrs. Conant: ‘ what are you doing? where are your feet?”

“Oh, child, you have bewitched me,’frightened woman.

“No,” replied Mrs. C., “it is done by the power of the spirits.”

The lady — whose weight was at least two hundred pounds — remained thus suspended for about a minute, and then descended slowly to the floor, “Aunt Betsey,” said the resident medium, “if the spirits can do that, let us see what else they can accomplish.

Perhaps they can write for you.” The two then sat down at the table, putting their hands upon it, the visitor having previously been supplied by Mrs. C. with a pencil and sheet of paper. The old lady’s hand was at once controlled, and a fine message written for Mrs. Conant, signed: ‘From one of your spirit guides, Prof. John Hubbard,’ (as previously stated the grandfather of her husband.) All this was accomplished, notwithstanding the fears of ‘Aunt Betsey,’ and her opposition to Spiritualism in the abstract.

III.

The mother of Mrs. Cates, who was a regular resident at the house, was an enthusiastic believer in the new gospel of spirit communion. One evening during a visit paid by her to Mrs. Conant, a work basket upon the table was violently hurled to the floor by some invisible agency, and its contents scattered in confusion around. Grown bold by her familiarity with the various phases of spirit manifestations, the medium immediately commanded:

“Let whoever threw down that basket, pick it up and put it on the table.”

*At once the various misplaced articles were taken, one by one, from the floor, and placed in the basket in sight of both ladies — the room being well lighted at the time — **and when the task was completed, the basket was returned to the table.*** Mrs. Conant then demanded the name of the spirit performing the act, and upon its being written through her hand, her visitor exclaimed: “Why, I knew that man!”

“Yes; I guess you did,” he rejoined. “You owe me half a dollar!”

The old lady protested that she took care of the man in his last sickness, that she did much for him, and that if there was any balance in the ease it was in her favor, not his. He then began to exhibit considerable violence, disturbing the table and chairs to such a degree that the visitor became much frightened, whereupon the uproarious spirit proceeded to transcribe:

“Pray away, old lady — pray, but God’s asleep; he don’t hear you!”

The woman’s terror increased, and she acknowledged to Mrs. Conant that she was mentally praying for protection, when he wrote that message to her. She desired to escape from the presence of such a powerful ill-wisher, and so proceeded to think of a movement toward the door. Upon the table rested two lamps, and the candle which she had brought with her when she entered the room, was also there; said table continued to rock violently, but as yet, neither had fallen on the floor. Fearing lest the undeveloped spirit, in his evident anger, would precipitate such a catastrophe, the old lady, as she sat by the table seized the lamps in her hands, when her unseen persecutor materialized a spirit hand, and with the quickness of thought threw the candle upon her lap, writing at the same time, through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant:

“There, old woman, take the candle, too, if you haven’t got light enough!”

The hand was distinctly visible to both individuals present. After a season the excitement of the spirit became allayed, and he departed.

During her residence at the house of Mrs. Cates, Mrs. Conant frequently suffered from ill health, but was carefully watched over by her unseen friends, and her every request complied with. On several occasions, when she desired it, a glass of lemonade, placed upon a stand in the room, would be brought to her, held to her lips while she drank, and then replaced. She did not always see the agent who brought it, but could perceive the glass approaching her through the air. The windows would be raised or closed by the invisibles at her desire. She was able, by their assistance, to pass her hand through the flame of a gas jet without experiencing any pain, or receiving a burn; paper also was treated in the same manner, and came out without even the smell of fire upon it.

With reference to these early manifestations, and also those recorded in subsequent pages, the reader — skeptic or otherwise — will remember that they are not founded on hearsay evidence, but are transcribed at the dictation of Mrs. Conant herself, and can all be attested by the most credible living witnesses — many of whom, including Mrs. Cates so often referred to, are still residing in Boston and vicinity.


IV.

Mrs. M. A. Pope, who had been previously located at Watertown, Mass., removing to Tileston Street, Boston, was very desirous that Mr. and Mrs. Conant should make a home at her house, which they finally decided to do, going to their new quarters in October, 1855. Nothing of particular interest occurred to diversify the even current of her experiences for sometime after, but one afternoon in the month of December — same year — while she was engaged in giving a sitting for a gentleman, Dr. Fisher took control, saying that he regretted to bring the séance so suddenly to a close, but his medium was needed for another purpose. The gentleman at once left the house, and Mrs. Conant remained in a disturbed state of mind, not knowing what was about to happen.

While sitting in her room she heard the door bell violently ring, and though it was not her custom to answer it, yet led by an uncontrollably impression, she hastily obeyed its summons, and met at the threshold a party of men bearing Col. Pope home in their arms. She retained her consciousness long enough to hear that he had met with an accident, by which one of his lower limbs had been fractured, after which Dr. Fisher assumed control of her organism, not quitting his hold for two hours. He first skillfully examined the wound, pronouncing it a severe one, but was of opinion that he could soon restore the patient, if the parties interested were willing to put the ease in his hands. The Colonel and his family expressed a wish that he should undertake the treatment, so the spirit physician continued to work over the broken limb till all was settled for the present, as far as bandaging and preventives to the arising of inflammation were concerned.

A brother of Mr. Pope, who was present, ridiculed the idea that the spirit doctor could be of any service, and announced his intention of sending for a regular physician. Although Mr. and Mrs. Pope declared that such person should not be allowed to interfere now that the limb was dressed, Dr. Fisher told them that a doctor could be sent for if they chose, that others might be satisfied of his skill.

Accordingly, the family physician made his appearance, but as soon as he had seen the work of the spirit surgeon he declared that it was well performed, and that there was nothing left for him to do. “In the astonishingly short space of three weeks Mr. Pope was able to go out of the house, and was soon after fully restored — experiencing no trouble since from this limb, but finding it in every way in as good condition as before the accident.

The case awakened much interest at the time, an account of it appearing in the Boston “Daily Mail,” and people coming from various parts of the State to question concerning the matter for themselves. Not long after his recovery, while Col. Pope was riding in an omnibus  on Washington Street, the conversation among several of the passengers turned upon Spiritualism and the late surgical operation said to have been so successfully performed by a “spirit medium.” One of the party doubtingly remarked, “I should like to see that man whose leg was set by a female spirit medium.” Col. Pope immediately replied, “Gentlemen, I am the man, and can vouch for the entire truth of the



statement.” Col. Pope is still alive— residing in Boston—and bears willing testimony to the truth of this account.

Many difficult cases were brought for the consideration of the spirit doctor, after his treatment of the foregoing ; the time of his medium was entirely consumed by the demands of patients, and many wonderful cures were wrought by him during Mrs. Conant’s residence at the house.

Whenever Dr. F. perceived on the morning of any particular day that he was about to have a serious matter presented for examination, he would control his medium, and through her, give orders to Mrs. Pope that she must be exceedingly careful of Mis. C.’s diet, and give her nothing, till further orders, but plain “ gruel” — a provision which was not very agreeable to Mrs. Conant, but seemed to be indispensable for his successful operation through her organism. These directions were implicitly obeyed by Mrs. Pope, whose confidence in Dr. F. was unbounded.

V.

Her invisible guides now gave directions to Mrs. Conant that she must discontinue manual labor in any form; proscribing even her sewing for herself; but she being of an active turn of mind, found it impossible to remain seated, when she had a leisure moment, without some employment to occupy her attention. Among her attendant spirits was an old Indian chief, Wapanaw, who particularly (in his capacity of magnetic adviser) objected to her so doing, giving as a reason, that by wasting her bodily strength in physical labor, she was expending the life force which was necessary for consumption by the spirits in their operations. On one occasion, shortly after the accident just recounted, as she sat sewing upon a black silk dress which she desired soon to complete, this Indian friend continued especially near her, and great was her annoyance at the obstacles which he threw in her way with a view to discouraging her personal efforts to finish it — he desiring her to employ some one else. At the time Col. Pope and his wife were in the room. A skein of silk which Mrs. Conant was using suddenly disappeared, and could not be found, although, vexed at its loss, she continued to search for it for sometime.

She then abandoned the chase, and prepared another, saying, “I will hold this fast enough.” Just as she had so expressed herself, Mr. Pope, who was seated on a sofa at the opposite side of the room from her, cried out: ‘ Look over your head.” She did so, and there, suspended by some invisible power, was the missing skein, which was then dropped upon the floor at her feet. The Indian explained that he had abstracted the silk, and held it suspended in the air — at the same time rendering it, by a process known to himself, invisible to their eyes; but that finding her determined to go on with the employment, he thought he might as well return it to her.

This aboriginal friend, on many occasions, proved his interest in her welfare by endeavoring to minister to her health through the subtle powers of spirit chemistry. The medium was extremely opposed to taking medicine, but, owing to her enfeebled colon found it absolutely necessary that she should overcome her dislike. While thinking the matter over on a certain evening, she was entranced by Wapanaw, who demanded that Mrs. Pope should bring him a glass of water. When it was before him, He referred to Mis. Conant’s dislike to medicine, and said he would arrange the matter for her; the hand of the entranced medium was then placed over the top of the glass. In a moment or two he declared the water to be sufficiently medicated. On Mrs. Conant recovering from the trance she again complained concerning the disagreeable medicine she was to take on retiring, when she was told by Mrs. P. that all she need do would be to drink the contents of the glass. She partook of the water it contained, with little faith as to its efficacy, but found that its results were identical with the prescription which had been intended for her.

VI.

Samuel Upham, a trance medium, then in ill health and since deceased, called on her one evening in February, 1856, for an examination by Dr. Fisher, with reference to his disease. Hardly had both seated themselves, when the male medium became entranced by the spirit of an Indian chief who gave his name as "White Cloud." Mrs. Conant, most unexpectedly to herself, was immediately controlled by an Indian influence whose love for "White Cloud" was not of that tender sort supposed to rule in the "happy hunting ground," and a fierce struggle ensued, each hostile spirit endeavoring to destroy its enemy ; the warfare, was, however, of short duration, as the medium of White Cloud being much reduced by sickness, was no match for his brisk opponent, and when Mr. and Mrs. Pope rushed into the room, attracted by the uproar, they found the lamps broken, the table overturned, and Mrs. Conant — unconsciously entranced — belaboring the unfortunate Upham with a chair. In all probability he would have been killed —as "White Cloud" still held control of him with true Indian pluck, and would not yield—had not the Colonel and his wife interposed as a rescue. After considerable difficulty they finally succeeded in separating the combatants, and then set about convincing the belligerent chiefs that they were dead—that if either killed anybody now it would be one of the mediums who would die, not the enemy they desired to destroy. The curious combat then closed, leaving the visitor in a somewhat battered state, while Mrs. Conant was found: to have sustained no injury. **This manifestation — rather startling, it must be confessed — was but a representative of one of the characteristic phases of undeveloped spirit communion at that early day.**

VII

At the conclusion of one of her sittings at Mrs. Pope's, a gentleman paid Mrs. Conant her fee with some of the old Spanish silver pieces once quite in vogue, although now out of the currency, in New England. The coins bore such an ancient date that the attention of the medium was immediately called to them, and she placed them upon the mantel with an idea of keeping them as curiosities ; but while she turned from the shelf to put some coal upon the grate, they disappeared; she looked incredulously at the place where she had just deposited them, but it was a certainty —they were gone, and she did not hear of their whereabouts for several days, when she recovered her lost property under the following singular circumstances. One of the children of Mrs. Oliver Stearns, who resided at No. 6 Cambridge Street, at the West End of Boston, came to her and said: "Mother wants to know if you have lost anything?" "Yes," replied Mrs. C.; "I have lost some silver pieces, and quite mysteriously, too," and she proceeded to describe them to the best of her remembrance.

The boy at once took them from his pocket, and related the manner of their being found. An attendant spirit who used to manifest in the presence of one had brought the pistareens to the house of Mrs. Stearns, as an exhibition of his powers, and on leaving them remarked that he had "stolen" them from Ms. Conant, when her back was turned," and had transported them through the air across the city (Mrs. C.'s residence being at the North End) for the benefit of his child-medium. The mother decided to wait a day or two, to discover whether he would take them away again, or if Mrs. C. would send for them ; but finding nothing further was likely to occur, returned them to the rightful owner by the hand of her son. The same spirit, sometime afterward, told Mrs. Conant that he tried the experiment in order to see "what she would do about it."

One evening, as Mrs. C. was preparing herself to go out with her husband for a visit, and had stepped into an adjoining room for a moment, she was somewhat annoyed on her return to find that the various paraphernalia indispensable to the female toilet, (brushes, combs, hair pins, etc.,) which were but just now handily arranged for her use upon the dressing table, had disappeared. They could not be found, and she was obliged to apply to Mrs. Pope for aid in the emergency. She then went out

for the evening, as previously decided upon, and, on reaching her room and preparing to retire, discovered all the missing articles very carefully wrapped up and hidden in the middle of her bed. So quietly had they been placed there that not a wrinkle or sign of disturbance in the clothing had been left to expose their presence — a thing which would have been exceedingly difficult of accomplishment, had the “hiding” been performed by some mischievous human being, owing to the short time she was absent from the room in the first instance; and it being improbable that any one could have gained access to her room during her visit, as the door was locked and the key in her possession during the entire evening.

VIII.

Time in its course, brings to us great and unexpected changes, which result in the total rearranging of life’s plans, or the turning of the current of existence into new and undreamed-of channels. The great world of spirits had earnestly considered the question of establishing a printed organ for the enunciation of its ideas on earth, which should be ruled by it *za toto*; and the individuals who were to become the pioneers, and subsequently to carry into successful operation the wishes of the invisibles, were being gradually, though insensibly drawn toward each other, as atoms upon the surface of the water, and were soon in a most unexpected manner to become aggregated into working order. Luther Colby, who had for years been connected as a practical printer with the Boston Post — a morning paper, at that time, and also at the present, a leading daily in the city — had become satisfied that his “long night” employment was injurious to his physical health, and was preparing to withdraw from it, having, however, no definite plan for the future. He became an investigator of the new philosophy, and, in Noy. 1855, met and became acquainted with Mrs. Conant at a circle held at the residence of Mrs. Stearns—before alluded to — on Cambridge Street. He at once became interested in her as a remarkable medium for the manifestation of spirit power, and recommended her to the attention of William Berry, afterward his partner.

In a few days, Mr. Berry came to her, wishing her presence at North Cambridge, Mass., to examine a sick girl there residing. She made the journey, and so pleased were the relatives with the statements made by Dr. Fisher, that they greatly desired that he would treat the case. ‘To this he consented, but told them, in advance, that it was impossible for the young lady to entirely recover ; that she would probably live a long while, but would never be restored to sound health. The lady, in verification of this prediction, continues to this day a hopeless invalid.

IX.

Mr. Berry had been in the habit of holding séances each Wednesday evening at his residence in North Cambridge, having for a medium his brother-in-law, James Ross. But that personage desiring, on account of business relations, to visit the Island of Cuba for a considerable period, Mr. B. was obliged to look around him for some one to fill the vacancy. Instinctively he was led to select the medical medium, whose skillful operations, while controlled, were the subject of so much comment, and, accordingly, sometime after his first visit, made his appearance at the rooms of Mrs. Conant, accompanied by Mr. Colby, for the purpose of engaging her as the regular medium for his investigating circles; to which proposition she agreed. Between twenty and thirty persons generally attended the seances of Mr. Berry at this time, being invited to assist him in tracking to some definite conclusion the mystery which had made its appearance in society. The most startling and wonderful manifestations of spirit power, both in matters physical and mental, were obtained at these weekly meetings, of which a few specimens alone must suffice.

At one of these séances the party desired to know if the spirits could not give them some manifestations in the dark — these meetings being held almost uniformly in the light—and were responded to affirmatively. The full moon shone brightly into the parlor where the assembly was convened, through two long windows, and when the gas was extinguished it

seemed quite light therein; some of the gentlemen therefore suggested putting up blankets as curtains to increase the obscurity; the spirits, however, declared that in that direction they would darken the room to suit themselves. Before long the apartment began to grow dark, gradually at first, as if a cloud obscured the moon, but finally becoming almost that impenetrable blackness of which it is said ‘it can be felt.’ Electric lights of large dimensions then appeared in the room, and sounds, akin to the discharge of fire arms startled the company. A spirit present, who passed from his bodily form at the battle of Monterey, in Mexico, then announced his intention of giving a representation of that conflict, and distant -cannonading, slowly growing more distinct, musketry and many of the dissonant accompaniments of nationalized butchery by which man in a professedly Christian era still murders his brother, were faithfully copied, to the astonishment of all — the phenomenon lasting from fifteen to twenty minutes. During all this exciting sound-panorama Mrs. Conant was entirely conscious, and describes it (as do all those who were in attendance on that occasion) as having even at the present day almost the effect of a terrible reality, rather than something given as an evening entertainment. Soon after the “ battle’ was ended, Mrs. Conant was entranced, and, when she regained control of her faculties, found herself raised to the top of the table — the chair in which she was sitting, together with herself having been placed there by invisible agency previous to the return of the light — and, in accordance with the rapid transition sometimes witnessed in physical manifestations, from the sublime to the grotesque, smoking a pipe which the influence just controlling had demanded of the laughing company.

Another phase of astonishing power at these circles was shown in the making of predictions concerning future events in the lives of those present, and also in the history of the nation. The late civil war was unerringly foretold, and its length as to time definitely given, also the manner of its termination. These circles were held at Mr. Berry’s residence by Mrs. Conant for several months, after which they were discontinued, and those for the Banner of Light commenced at the National House, Boston.

PART IV and further....

Titled ‘SHE IS EMPLOYED BY THE “*BANNER OF LIGHT*” AS BUSINESS AND CIRCLE MEDIUM.’

This Will be outlaid later.

PART IV.

‘We see but half the causes of our deeds;
 Seeking them wholly in the outer world,
 Unconscious of the spirit-world which, though
 Unseen, is felt, and sows in us the germs
 Of pure and world-wide purposes.’”

— James Russell Lowell.

I,

Awp now ensued a remarkable fulfillment of one of her prophecies which at the time of its enunciation was hardly believed to be practicable. As heretofore mentioned, Mr. Berry, after having consulted her with regard to the sick girl in North Cambridge, had visited her again, in company with Mr. Colby, to ascertain whether her medical control was willing she should accept the position of regular medium at his Wednesday evening séances; on that occasion (which was in the winter of 1855,) Dr. Fisher told Mr. Berry that he was soon to change his business; that before long he would commence the publication of a paper in the interests of spirit communion — gave its name as the Banner of Light—told him who would be associated with him in business — when he would issue his prospectus, etc., etc.; and all these predictions in time proved true. Mr. Berry went away from the presence of the Doctor deeply

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impressed with what had been imparted to him. Certain vague ideas which had been revolving in his mind for sometime, here appeared to take shape, and before long developed into a determination to carry out the project so remarkably traced for him.

The first number of the *Banner of Light* bore date of April 11th, 1857, and was issued by a firm bearing the style of 'Luther Colby & Co.," at No. 17 Washington Street, Boston. At the time of its first appearance in the literary world, as is the case with every new venture in the field of periodical literature — especially when the matter to be treated is an advanced thought — the publishers of the *Banner of Light* found the pecuniary hill hard to ascend, and were often much disconcerted at the want of means to carry on satisfactorily the project undertaken ; but on such occasions application was immediately made for spirit direction through Mrs. Conant, which never failed to be of the most practical sort when given, and was implicitly followed by them; they were thereby led in safety through the most threatening dangers. The history of the *Banner of Light*, as a bold, honest and unselfish exemplar of the truth of spirit return and communion, is before the world, and can speak always for itself: The object of the present volume is to trace the life-line of Mrs. Conant as it winds, in accordance with circumstances, across the pathway of that journal's existence.

While Mr. Berry, as business manager, remained quiescent and obedient, like Paul of old, to 'the heavenly vision," all went well; but finally questions of policy arose in which he entertained a different belief from his spiritual advisers through Mrs. Conant,

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and the breach rapidly widened till he almost bade them defiance, and declared his intention of publishing the paper to suit himself. With a hope of influencing his powerfully materialistic mind, his own guardian band of spirits sent a fearless, determined disembodied intelligence, who gave his name as William Jeffreys, alias Captain (Pirate) Gibbs, to reason with him upon the plane of thought which was the most natural to both— Mr. Berry being, like the sailor, of a bold and dashing temperament which allowed no opposition to daunt him in the carrying out of his projects. But the arguments, and, afterward, threats of Capt. Gibbs, could not influence the positive mind he had to combat, and he finally told Mr. Berry that under the circumstances nothing more could be done with him, but that in less than two years he would shake hands with him on the spirit side of life. The civil war in time broke out, and Mr. Berry, after some preliminary movements, embarked on its sanguinary flood, became a First Lieutenant in the Salem Sharp Shooter Corps, and fell bravely fighting at the head of his company at the battle of Antietam, Md., September 17th, 1862.

II.

As this powerful invisible intelligence, Capt. Gibbs, has been of much service and assistance to Mrs. Conant, a few examples of his foresight and skill will not be out of place in this connection, though the instances cited occurred later in her experience. He was, at his first coming, very violent in his manifestations, and decidedly dangerous as to his intentions, having on one or two occasions seemingly

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attempted the life of the medium. He desired to have supreme control of her himself, and was thrown into ungovernable rage by the refusal both of herself and her guardian spirits to allow it. Finally, however, he appeared to grow calmer, and made a proposition to Mrs. Conant that if she would undertake a journey to New York city for him upon some business in which he was deeply interested, he would see her safely there, protect her in returning, and would ever after be a constant and helpful attendant, granting any reasonable request which she might make of him. She consulted with some of her friends, and, as they counseled the acceptance of the offer, she started for New York, in company with Mr. Berry, in the month of February, 1860. On arriving there, she repaired to a hotel—the Brandreth House — and, upon establishing herself therein, asked her invisible traveling companion what she was to do next:

* Bring me writing materials, and I will show you what I want,” was his reply.

She arranged the paper, and he proceeded to control her hand, writing a letter to a gentleman, an entire stranger to her, and whose name and address — which latter was somewhere on Broadway — she seemed immediately to forget as soon as the missive was despatched, requesting him to meet a friend at a certain room in the house in question at a specified hour of the day. This letter was sent to its destination by the aid of one of the hotel boys, and in two hours after, the stranger arrived, thoroughly puzzled as to whom to expect, and not knowing even the sex of the party who was desirous of seeing him. The number of the room was no guide to him, for in look-

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ing at the register he found it to be occupied by a lady, while, by the handwriting of the letter, he had been led to expect a gentleman. He, however, decided to call upon said lady and see what was the meaning of the strange procedure. Reaching the room he inquired what was the business on which he was summoned. Mrs. Conant was confused, and at a loss for a reply, whereupon Captain Gibbs proceeded to entrance her, and to explain the circumstances which had led to his calling on her. "The nature of the matter which seemed so important to Gibbs, his medium never knew, though the gentleman seemed much interested when she returned to consciousness, and expressed himself as fully satisfied, both of the identity of the Captain, and concerning the business treated of by him. The promise of the spirit, as regards being her friend in future, was kept in a remarkable degree, and Mrs. Conant had no occasion to regret her unexplained journey.

The day on which she embarked for her return to Boston was fine, and not a cloud was to be seen. Meeting the Captain as he walked through the cabin of the Sound steamer as evening was closing in, she asked if he anticipated a pleasant passage; to which he replied that the night promised to be as pleasant as any he had met with in the course of a long experience.

"Well, Captain," returned the medium, "there will be a storm before midnight ; you'll be obliged to anchor before 10 o'clock."

"I have been on this Sound," said the Captain, "for twenty-three years, and have rarely been mistaken about the weather ; if I am now, it will be very remarkable."

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So they parted —she foretelling a conflict of the elements, and the professional sailor predicting a fair and prosperous voyage. Beginning to feel sick soon after, she sought her state-room, and fell into a fitful slumber, from which she was finally aroused by a hurried tramping overhead, the blowing of the whistle, ringing of engine bells, shouts and commands, the rattling of chains, and other signs which usually accompany a nautical disturbance. Hastily arising, and keeping her feet by clinging to the door— for the boat was rolling heavily —she demanded of the stewardess what had happened.

“Oh!” answered that functionary ; ‘it’s a heavy storm of snow and wind, and it isn’t safe to run any longer on account of the other boats ; so we ’re coming to anchor.”

“ What time is it?’ asked Mrs Conant.

“Ten minutes of ten,” said the stewardess.

The medium, now fully awake, remembered the prophecy she was impelled to make to the Captain, and saw that it had proved correct. Her fears immediately assumed the ascendancy, and sitting down as best she could, with paper and pencil, she asked Captain Gibbs what was to be the result. He at once wrote —

“Don’t trouble yourself, I will take care of this matter, and bring you home in safety.”

When the daylight came, three steamers were found anchored near them, but so thick had been the snow in the atmosphere that neither of the pilots had been able to see the other boats, and the escape from a collision was almost miraculous. The Captain sought for his remarkably weather-wise passenger, and de-

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sired to know by what means she had been enabled to foretell the approaching tempest.

“That is a secret,” was her playful response.

“T would give something for that secret,” rejoined the son of Neptune.

“Why, then, I am a spirit medium! Capt. Gibbs, an old sailor, now dead, told me of the danger, on coming on board, and also promised to protect me.”

“Indeed,” said the Captain. “You would be a fine passenger to have on board ship during a long voyage — better than a barometer. This has been the worst storm I have seen on the Sound. The Steamboat Company ought to carry you gratis. T will give you a free pass whenever you desire to visit New York.”

On another occasion, in the month of May, 1860, on going on board a steamer in New London bound for New York city, in company with Mr. Berry, Mrs. Conant entered the cabin, and looking around, perceived several buckets—empty at the time—and asked why they were kept there. Mr. Berry informed her that they were intended as aids in extinguishing fire, should the boat be subject to such an accident. .

“Why are they not filled, then?”

“Because the officers probably think there is no fear of fire, and so they are not attended to.”

“Well,” retorted the medium, “they had better be filled to-night.”

Mr. Berry became so impressed with the sense of coming danger, portrayed in her words, that he hastened to the Captain of the boat with a warning. That officer was not one of those who resent advice

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even when given in all kindness, and he had the necessary precautions against fire observed, not only in the cabin but throughout his vessel. About midnight fire was discovered near the engine room, which would, in all probability, have proved fatal to the boat, if not to all on board, had not everything been in preparation to subdue it. As it was, the threatened conflagration was instantly stayed. The Captain met Mr. Berry on deck just before reaching New York, and was anxious to know how the fire had been foreseen; and when informed that it had been spoken of by a lady passenger who was a spirit medium, he desired to be presented to her, and expressed his wish to know more about Spiritualism, if the ****invisibles**** could 'do as well as that.' This again was the work of the guardian, Capt. Gibbs, who, foreseeing the emergency, had impressed her to utter the words which had caused the successful preparations to be made.

II.

Those acquainted with the peculiar delicacy of magnetic laws, know the subtle effect which persons of a certain given temperament bring to bear upon others possessed of one negative to or susceptible of approach by them. Shortly after her acquaintance with Mr. Gibbs, a lady whom she frequently met, began to exercise a power upon her which seemed to sap the fountains of her vitality, bringing on that fearful sensation of 'death in life' which so many media have experienced, to their cost. Wherever Mrs. Conant appeared, at circles, parties, or elsewhere, this magnetic vampyre seemed attracted, and came

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also, until it appeared as if her physical decease would ensue. In this emergency, Mrs. C. was fain to call upon her constant though unseen friend:

“Capt. Gibbs — help me,” she earnestly asked.

“Yes,” was his answer; “leave her to me.”

“But what will you do?” she demanded, remembering his former violence of manifestation toward herself.

“Kill her, if necessary,” was his rejoinder. He shortly afterward came and wrote :

“You will be no longer troubled.” As he predicted, the lady soon after ceased to come where Mrs. Conant was, and never afterward annoyed the medium by her disturbing presence.

The friendly understanding between Gibbs (or Jeffreys) and Mrs. Conant has remained unbroken to the present day. He has assisted her in many ways—not the least remarkable in the pecuniary point of view, when she needed such help, by impressing persons to pay arrears or advance her the amount required; he has also given her strength in hours of sickness and prostration.

In the Spring of 1856, herself and husband removed their place of abode from Mrs. Pope’s, and went to live at the house of Mr. Berry, in North Cambridge. Dr. Fisher recommended a change for her, but she murmured, saying that she did not know where to go; that Mr. Berry had offered to board herself and husband, but she was not yet ready to leave her present home. She finally demanded of her spirit adviser a test which should prove conclusively to her that it was really himself, and not another intelligence, who was thus counseling her. In reply he directed her

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to visit Mrs. Hayden, a medium in Hayward Place, Boston, and see what she had to say. She obeyed, and as soon as she entered the room loud raps began all around her. Mrs. Hayden said: 'You have brought some powerful spirit with you.' The parties then took their seats at the table, and the raps continued. Mas. Hayden, without the slightest knowledge concerning the purpose of her visitor, took up a pencil, and at once the name, "John Dix Fisher," was mechanically traced on the paper, after which he (for it was the Doctor) wrote out the same message he had previously transcribed through Mrs. Conant's hand at her own residence. His medium was then satisfied of his identity, and said, quietly: "All right—I will go."

Her removal into the suburbs rendered it necessary that she should have some central location in Boston, in which, during the day, to answer the demands of her rapidly increasing mediumistic business; and such a desideratum did not immediately present itself. In fact, she searched for some time, and was beginning to be discouraged, although Dr. Fisher had previously told her that she should have an office on Washington Street. Finally, despairing of success, she visited a lady who hired rooms in a building—the old Andrews estate—on Washington Street, corner of Central Court, (an edifice now extinct, it having given place to the march of improvement ;) and was informed by her that there was not a vacant room in the house suitable for her purpose, but that the landlord, Mr. Drury, had a fine little office just around the corner, up one flight, which he seldom made use of, and perhaps he could be prevailed upon

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to give it up. Calling on him the next day, he said there was no fitting place in the building for the purpose she desired, and upon her reminding him of the office, was of the opinion that she would not like it when she had visited it. On being ushered into the apartment the medium declared that she would make it do, if he would consent to relinquish it. After taking a day to consider the subject, the landlord rendered his consent, the room was refitted and furnished, and she commenced her sittings therein, remaining as a tenant for something more than a year—many of the most remarkable phenomenal manifestations of spirit power occurring there in her presence.

The landlord informed her that when warm weather set in she would find the little room uncomfortable :

*“T don’t see how you will get along with it,” was his cheering assurance.

“I shall be obliged to engage the spirits to keep it cool,” replied Mrs. C.

She accordingly requested aid from Dr. Fisher in this regard, and he promised her that she should have no trouble concerning the heat. The engagement was faithfully kept, as the landlord himself fully acknowledged when entering the office on a close and sultry

_day in July, he was forced to exclaim with surprise :

“How cool you have it here—this is the most comfortable place I’ve visited to-day. What does it mean?”

** Let us sit down at the table, and see,” answered Mrs. Conant.

She then asked Dr. Fisher if he had anything to

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do with the atmosphere of the room, upon which he wrote in the affirmative, and followed the declaration with quite a lengthy message, giving the modus operandi by which, through the introduction of certain electric forces, and the ejection of certain magnetic ones the temperature of the room was kept at its agreeably low degree, notwithstanding the heat outside. He also stated that it was within the power of the spirits operating about the room, to increase or diminish the temperature therein at will.

Among her patrons at this office was Mr. Charles Bruce, of Cambridgeport, who on many occasions, at private séances, brought fruit of various kinds for the invisibles communicating; on his holding out a specimen, and asking if they would take it, his request would be complied with at once, while both Mrs. Conant's hands were upon the table, and plainly to be discerned by her visitor—the manifestation taking place in the light. Sometimes, a knife being given them beneath the table, the spirits would pare the fruit—the noise of the operation being clearly heard, and the peel falling to the carpet. Again the remnants of an apple—the substance of which had been consumed — (sounds being heard as of eating, although no mortal person save themselves was in the room) would be thrown to the floor, bearing the marks of invisible teeth. This took place repeatedly in the presence of Mrs. Conant as medium, and Mr. Bruce as investigator, at their sittings.

A remarkable case of what is called "the double" occurred at one of her private séances at this place. A gentleman whom she had been in the habit of

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sitting for quite frequently, called on her one day and seareely had they taken seats at the table when a name was written through the hand of Mrs. C. The visitor started back in surprise, ejaculating :

“That can’t be! there must certainly be some mistake!”? But the spirit only replied by re-writing the name.

“ When did you die?” queried the gentleman.

“Yesterday ; in Middlebury, Vt. I was a teller in the Middlebury Bank.”

The visitor, filled with astonishment, in which was mingled an undertone of doubt, proceeded to press the spirit with test questions upon personal matters, of which he was satisfied the medium could not possibly have any knowledge. All these were correctly answered. Utterly at a loss to account for what he heard, the inquirer informed Mrs. C. that he had left Middlebury that very morning, at which time the person now announcing himself as dead, was in perfect health. The medium, being unable to throw any light upon the subject, he repaired for information to the telegraph office, where his Vermont friend, in reply to his anxious query, flashed back a statement that as far as he knew he was alive and well. On his return to Mrs. Conant’s office, the gentleman stated that he was even more mystified than before, as the matters treated on by his questions, and correctly answered by the influence purporting to be his friend, were of a nature to be beyond the knowledge of a third party.

Tn the winter of 1855-6, owing to the nearly equal balance existing between the two great parties of the

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day, in the United States House of Representatives, no election of Speaker could be effected for that body for a space of nearly eight weeks. Day after day the House assembled, and the form of balloting was gone through with, but the result ‘no choice,” was all that could be despatched to the waiting ones all over the nation. The excitement gradually reached such a height that knots of interested politicians began to visit Mrs. Conant at the residence of Mr. Pope, desiring to consult “the spirits” as to the prospects of their particular favorites. At last a challenge appeared in one of the city papers, offering five hundred dollars to any spirit medium who should successfully predict the coming Speaker. This challenge she accepted, and, in accordance with its provisions, three gentlemen called at her office, announcing themselves as ready for a séance. She was entranced, and the spirit controlling (who gave his name as Henry Clay) assured them that Nathaniel P. Banks, member from Massachusetts, would be the one selected to preside. It so happened that all the gentlemen present were opposed in politics to Mr. Banks, and they stoutly denied the likelihood of such an occurrence. But the spirit refused to reconsider his announcement, although the gentlemen continued to come to her room day after day, to see if the unseen intelligence would offer any change of statement. His reply was invariably: “Banks will be the next Speaker.” At length, on the very day on which the news of his election was telegraphed to Boston, they called and remained two hours, patiently awaiting, but in vain, some indication of spirit presence. The medium be-

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gan to be nervous, and wondered what could be the cause of the delay, while she urged them to continue their stay till they received a message of some sort. The influence finally controlled, declaring positively that Banks was elected Speaker of the House. The gentlemen again united in protesting that it was impossible, and one of them volunteered to go to the Transcript office to see if any later despatches were in receipt from Washington. On his return, he said there was some mistake—that no news had been received; this, however, turned out afterward to be an untruth, as the information was even then becoming public. The spirit, however, would not yield his ground. After another hour of suspense, nothing further transpiring, the gentlemen took their leave for the day. She at once prepared herself to go home, and starting therefor, almost the first sound that greeted her ear on passing into the street, was the ery of a news-boy, announcing:

“Here’s the Journal, Traveller, and Transcript !
N. P. Banks elected Speaker !!”

Nothing further was heard from the three gentlemen (?) politicians or their five hundred dollars.

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IV.

In the winter of 1856, she left Mr. Berry's residence at North Cambridge, and, with her husband, boarded at the National House, Haymarket Square, Boston, at that time kept by Mical Tubbs. Here those manifestations which have been the wonder of doubter and believer alike, followed her. The cures, also, performed by Dr. Fisher, were remarkable in character. Among his patients was Mr. Tubbs, the landlord. So powerful were the remedies prepared under direction of Dr. F., that he warned Mrs. Tubbs that the administration of one drop too much, would be likely to "send her husband to the other side of life in less than half an hour." His skeptical friends became alarmed, and said to Mrs. Tubbs:

"Why! you surely do not intend giving him that medicine?"

"Certainly," was her answer; "I shall follow Dr. Fisher's directions with regard to it."

Mrs. Conant was in the room when the first potion was given; the patient soon complained that he could not see, and that his sense of hearing appeared to be failing; he remained in this condition for several minutes, after which he became insensible. Great anxiety supervened in the minds of all concerned, but the result indicated that this state was exactly what Dr. F. desired to produce, for when the patient regained the use of his faculties — which happened after a brief period — he began a successful journey toward renewed health.

Mrs. Tubbs next yielded to the approach of disease,