

A year in the great republic. v.I

A YEAR IN THE GREAT REPUBLIC.

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A YEAR IN THE GREAT REPUBLIC.

BY E. CATHERINE BATES, AUTHOR OF "EGYPTIAN BONDS," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

On my return from America some months ago I was hailed on all sides by the question—put sometimes cheerfully, more often with a sort of polite despair—“Of course you are going to write a book about it?”

To go to America and to come back and write a book seems one of the recognized forms in which we can prove an unutterable nuisance to our friends and the public in general.

It seemed to me that wild horses should not drag me to swell the ranks of these literary bores. Moreover, Mrs. Pfeiffer's clever and charming book had lately been published. How could one hope to touch that in interest? Then Miss Florence Marryat has given us an amusing volume of Transatlantic chat; Sir Lepel Griffin, in his “Great Republic,” has dealt very powerfully with the political aspect of the country; Mr. Edward Money tells us the “Truth about America,” *b x* and warns us against American 'cuteness (specially as connected with ranching business matters), in a most handy little volume that contains many valuable hints for intending travellers, quite apart from this speciality. Add to these the noble array of preachers, lecturers, musicians and artists who have crossed the Atlantic of late years, to preach, to teach, to fiddle or to paint, and have come back recording their experiences in daily papers, magazines or books, and what is there left to say on such well-beaten ground?

It is not a question of finding no *stone* unturned. Is there even a pebble left by the wayside that has not been picked up and polished over and over again?

The disconsolate young housekeeper is said to have cried out in her despair, “Why won't they invent some new animal?” I am sure many a “reader” (both before and after

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publication) must have groaned in bitterness of spirit, "Why cannot they go to some fresh continent?"

It has since struck me that after all, the individual point of view makes the chief interest of the sketch.

It is the same old sheep, but we may serve it with a xi fresh sauce. The cynical Frenchman said that England had a hundred religions, but only one sauce; America has more than a hundred religions I am sure. Let us trust to find some mental *sauce piquante* that may tickle the palate and give some variety to the ragout.

Some travel for scenery alone; others apparently to enjoy the pleasures of eating and drinking, under constantly changing conditions; some again to find fertile soil for that cherished English growth—a grievance. Lastly, there are those whose chief interest abroad or at home lies in the study of their fellow-creatures.

Being of a gregarious turn of mind, I must class myself amongst these last.

Man cannot live by mountains alone, has always been my inward protest when accused of not finding scenery, however beautiful, sufficient to fill heart and mind for any indefinite period.

This perhaps is one reason why, having persevered in a contemplated visit to America in spite of cheerful prophecies that I should hate it when I got there, "find the scenery over-rated and disappointing," the *b2* xii food overpowering as to quantity, and badly cooked as to quality, the people (like their *menus*) pretentious and unsatisfactory on further acquaintance. In spite of all these dreary prophecies I have returned, after a year's sojourn across the Atlantic, feeling that I have never spent a more profitable and, therefore, on the whole, a more enjoyable year than the one that has just passed away.

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Now it seems to me that any one of ordinary intelligence after such an experience should be able to put together a few short, readable and fairly interesting chapters on a country bound to us by ties of such close relationship, sharing with us so many of our most glorious traditions in the past: a country with many of the faults and follies and pretensions and with much of the over-confidence perhaps of youth, but with so much also of its generous enthusiasm; so full of its grand possibilities.

The attitude of England towards America has been more or less that of the parent of a capable and enterprising son. The son has cut away from home ties; xiii has justified his act by success and is living his wider life as the father did before him; but the latter (unless he is that *rara avis*, a man who remembers his own youth) will never quite forgive the apparently ruthless snapping of the leading strings. Least of all will he do so when such lawful insubordination has paved the way to prosperity and independence.

So I think we have not quite forgiven America for her General Washington, for her Bunker's Hill, nor for her Yorktown: that series of events passed over with so light a hand in our own school books, but commemorated in America by pictures fraught with so much aggravation to the ordinary British tourist. "The surrender of the British troops under Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown," "Throwing the tea overboard in Boston Harbour," and similar scenes, stare at you from the walls of every public building over here.

That historical tea, by the way, became a subject of ceaseless torment to me; not from any over-sensitive national feeling on my part. I have no doubt that the Bostonians showed a very fine spirit upon the occasion, xiv and that their action in the matter was not only justifiable but entirely worthy of applause. But why must this subject of the Boston tea triumph crop up on every possible occasion within ten minutes of almost every conversation held during our ten or eleven weeks sojourn in Boston?

It was from no unkindly or uncourteous spirit on the part of my American friends I am sure; but, somehow, one was always being told that story and shown pictures of it, with

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the remark, "Of course you know that Boston Harbour was the scene of this memorable event," and so forth and so forth. Boston Harbour bade fair to become as great a nuisance as the harbour at Sydney, on approaching which some ingenious passengers are said to have slung a painted sign-board from the rigging with the words, "We admire your harbour very much."

Sometimes I felt tempted to protect myself by a written declaration beforehand, "We know all about the Boston tea that you threw overboard a century ago." But this is a digression.

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We must add to the soreness of feeling of which I have spoken the fact that so many look upon America as the country of the future. Most of us hold in some form or other the "wave theory" of national progress: the gradual accumulation of strength, the culminating point when a nation may be said to ride on the crest of the wave; the gradual but equally certain decline and fall. Many, and these not inveterate pessimists, think that with England this culminating point has been already reached; nay, passed.

The tendency of civilization has always been to move, as the sun, from east to west.

The show has been in turn set up in India, Egypt, Phœnicia, Greece, Rome, and so on, through Moors, Teutons and Gauls, until, as we fondly believe, the most perfect theatrical representation has been given in our own "bright little, tight little island," and many of us seem to have concluded that England is the scene of the positively "last performance" of this great drama of Human Progress and Civilization, and xvi that when the curtain drops here the world may metaphorically "go to bed."

But those who see further and can reason from analogy believe that this will not be the case; and here lies this vast American continent, with its boundless space, its unlimited "stage"—to carry out our metaphor—a young nation, poor indeed in tradition and art, but rich in its strength and promise and enthusiasm; with enough cosmopolitan blood in its veins to insure a healthy circulation. That cosmopolitan element is constantly thrown in the

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teeth of America to invalidate her national claims; but surely therein lies one great factor of her future success.

We all know what happens to our own old families when constant intermarriage has weakened and depreciated the original stock. If alien blood is so necessary to the healthy sustenance and development of a single “old family,” why should not the same rules hold good on a larger scale in the case of a nation?

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It is, however, almost impossible for us English not to look with some distrust and suspicion on this great, energetic, noisy child of ours, who was born at sea upon the little “Mayflower;” who cut its teeth in the throes of the American rebellion, and who is now in the hobble-de-hoy age truly, but growing towards manhood with such sure and rapid strides.

We have so much that America lacks—our traditions, our ruins, our literature, our art.

She is bound to come to us (including our Continental neighbours) for all this, and she comes freely and appreciates fully. But on the other hand she gives us somewhat to envy.

It is the old story of the aged man with his calmer vision, his wider experience, his greater possessions; but the young man, with all his faults and foibles, his want of balance and errors of judgment, holds within his hand that one glorious treasure—the strength of his youth and a future of possibilities.

So much for *our* view of the question; and now for one last word from the American point of view.

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During past years we have all heard of, and most of us have joined in, denunciations of the American conduct with regard to that terrible British blister, the Irish question. No doubt there has been much sympathy shown, even allowing a wide margin for exaggeration.

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But we must remember, in the first place, that the Irishman *pur et simple* is a real power in America. The Irish overrun the country and seem more successful here than with us in utilizing their wits, concentrating their energies, and rising to positions of trust and authority.

Then come the large number of American-Irish as we may call them; the results of inter-marriage in the last two or three generations. That all these should sympathize more or less blindly with the “ould country” is only natural. As for the residuum—the *bonâ fide* American who is accused of glorying in our annoyance and discomfiture and longing that the Irish whip (in whose manufacture we have had some hand after all) may descend still more heavily upon the British back—well! I cannot defend him for a xix moment on high moral grounds, but I do think our righteous indignation over the matter shows a lack of reflection, or a lamentable ignorance of the human nature which works pretty much alike on either side of the Atlantic.

At a time when the child at least of the “oldest inhabitant” in America could recall stories of the *terrors* of British rule, the tyranny of British soldiers and the horrors of that old struggle for dominion on the one hand and for liberty on the other, there broke out on this continent their own civil war between North and South.

I have no wish to discuss the right or wrong of our attitude on that occasion. Amongst Englishmen more will be found to justify than to condemn it, but from the American point of view our very decided show of sympathy with the South was looked upon as an unjustifiable piece of interference; another instance of the ubiquitous British habit of minding other people's business for them, and which has involved us in the usual fate of those who interfere in family quarrels.

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We did no good and we sowed the seeds of a rankling bitterness that is bearing its fruit, now that the chance has come for them to teach us how much more pleasantly we also could settle our own affairs if strangers would kindly leave us alone.

Such a spirit is not right. It is a sort of national tit-for-tat; it is unworthy of the highest standard. Granted all this. But is it not very human? And should we not have acted in precisely the same way in their place? Of course we should, only we should have done it on the most undeniable grounds of morality and Christianity combined—the real old “British mixture” that we always keep in stock and are ready to infuse at a moment's notice for the benefit and edification of our neighbours.

And now for a few words as to the plan of these slight sketches. To begin with, I have no plan, so the words, fortunately, can be very few.

It is impossible to interest others in that which has not interested oneself, and it is impossible to write with equal interest of all places or of all people during the varied experiences of a year.

Then again, one has to reckon with an almost infinite variety of taste in the reading public.

One man hates people but loves horses, another abhors detail but revels in generalities, another is bored to death by any reference to literature or science, but delights in music and the theatres. I intend to devote one chapter to spiritualism, but it will be specially labelled “dangerous,” for the benefit of that almost universal public who look upon such a subject as fraud and folly combined.

Some years ago I wrote a short story—a love story—with a background of Egyptian palms and dahabeahs. In orthodox style, I took my hero and heroine as far, I believe, as the second cataract; rushed my hero through Palestine, and brought them together again in an old country house in Leicestershire. During the Egyptian episode, a certain amount of very mild Egyptology was introduced—the old Egyptian myths were touched upon.

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Occasionally the Christian xxii religion was mentioned in connection with such myths, and I trust and believe that any such touches were dealt in a reverent and humble spirit.

So much for the facts; now for the results. As a matter of curiosity I kept a list of criticisms, public and private.

On the whole, my little book, which had given me small labour and much pleasure, was appreciated fully up to, and even beyond its value; but I never had so good an opportunity of noticing the difference of standpoint with different people, when a book or a landscape is in question.

Some said, "I liked the story itself so much, but oh, why did you bring in all that stupid Egyptology?" Another said, "The dialogue was charming, but your Eastern sunsets bored me to death."

My *Spectator* reviewer wrote most kindly of the book as a whole, but regretted that *all* the sunsets and *all* the love had not been omitted and a few maps put in their place, to reduce the work to a proper geographical level. Another reviewer sneered at the xxiii "goody-goody" tone of the writing and suggested that it must have been produced by a religious doctor; whilst, to add insult to injury, the very day I read this review an old family friend happened to call and delivered his conscience by saying that "although he had read the book as a whole with interest, he must deeply deplore the entire absence of any sense of religion which marked it from beginning to end."

Was Æsop's fable of the old man and the donkey ever more aptly illustrated?

It has taught me one good lesson in literature: never to attempt to please any one but yourself and your publisher. Write what comes to you most simply and naturally; leaving him to feel the public pulse.

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I shall therefore follow my own sweet will—not feeling bound to describe Quebec because we happened to land there; not dwelling with a heavy hand on that which ought to have interested me—but did not—but jotting down as simply as I can a few facts, a few talks, a few thoughts, which I learned, or held, or experienced during a very happy year of my life. xxiv Much that interested me most deeply must be withheld in order to avoid unjustifiable personalities. I trust that none of my Transatlantic friends will think that this cord of reserve has been left too slack. To eliminate all personal detail is to eliminate all interest in such slight sketches as these. Again I trust, that having made my most sincere and spontaneous appreciation of America so evident in these preliminary remarks, my friends here will excuse me if they cannot always agree with my observations or conclusions and will at least believe that I have never written of them in any but the most kind and grateful spirit.

To write upon this of any other subject, as if one's judgment were final, is one extreme; to write nothing but fulsome and monotonous flattery is the other; but to do the latter seems to me to be about as reasonable as to attempt to make a sketch, leaving out all the shadows.

A YEAR IN THE GREAT REPUBLIC.

CHAPTER I. CANADA.

We have made up our minds to start with, that there is absolutely nothing new to an English reader, under the brilliant Canadian or American sun. Although at first sight this is rather a depressing conclusion, it carries some balm with it. At once it frees a writer from an immense amount of responsibility. No one will be inclined to complain that the subject has not been exhaustively treated or with a due regard to perspective. No one will suggest that the work has been scamped, that the canvas is too empty, that the colours are laid on too heavily here, with too light a hand there. Most people will be too devoutly thankful for what is left out, to be over critical as to the choice of what is put in.

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So, starting on the wholesome principle of writing only about that which has interested me personally, I must pass over that terrible start one drenching VOL. I. 1 2 October afternoon in the Allan Line S.S. "Sardinian," bound for Quebec.

I can say little or nothing of our fellow passengers for the all-sufficient reason that from the first day to the last we scarcely met them. My friend and I achieved the distinction of being the very worst sailors on board, and of spending more "birthdays" on the voyage (as a punning Oxford don suggested to me the other day) than any other human being.

Our stewardess tried every possible means of cajoling us on deck, but in vain, and having once grasped the fact that there we were and there we intended to remain; like a wise woman, she faced the situation and made the best of it, having the eye of faith firmly fixed on a steadily rising valedictory fee, in which I need scarcely say she did not trust in vain. But before this philosophical moment arrived, she had adopted one ingenious device, which really deceived us for about half-an-hour, without shaking our resolution one jot.

My friend had taken her maid with her; a very worthy woman, but if possible a worse sailor than either of us, and who had succumbed in the Mersey before we got out to sea at all. Her mistress had looked after her comfort as long as she could, but was fain to leave her eventually to the tender mercies of the stewardess. About the second morning, when we had steadily refused to get up, this latter came in briskly: "Now, ladies, don't you mean to get up this fine morning? Why, your maid has been up for hours."

I looked at my friend down below in astonishment.

"Partridge" up? What a miracle!

Could we suffer the degradation of defeat, when the heroine of the Mersey river was already up and about? We hesitated for a few moments, but a sudden movement of my head from the pillow settled matters so far as I was concerned, and my friend took warning

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and decided to remain firm also. Shame after all pales beside sea-sickness, whatever the moralists may say.

In a few moments my weary eyes from the upper berth saw a small black bundle crawling along the floor of our cabin and finally coming to anchor just at the head of the lower berth. I peeped over again, a little further this time, and recognized Partridge (a well-plucked and most miserable little bird) groaning in the most heartrending way, and murmuring, "It isn't misery, ma'am; it's TORTURE."

"Why, Partridge, is that you? Why did you attempt to get up? For goodness sake go back to 1-2 4 your berth," said her mistress, horrified by the poor woman's struggles to do her duty under such trying conditions.

"Well, ma'am," was the answer, "I should not have dreamt of getting up, I felt sure you would not want me; but the stewardess came in and told me you were both going on deck and that you wanted me to help you dress."

I don't think we brought this perfidy home to its agent—lemon squashes were too dear to our poor suffering souls and could only be obtained through favour; but we gave a standing order that the poor maid should thenceforth be left in peace and not dragged ruthlessly from her berth upon any pretext whatever.

One picture alone remains to me of those weary days, fresh and breezy and full of the delicious sense of life-giving sunshine and air; winds blowing high, but warmed by the brilliant sun; white-crested waves flinging their foam over "the deep blue sea," and far away towards the horizon on either side of us, glittering white ice castles thrown up by some sea giants, who must surely be on view if our binoculars were only a little stronger. So it seemed to our weary seasick eyes, as we stood for a few moments on deck, 5 amongst our happier and certainly more civilized-looking fellow passengers.

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A fur cloak thrown hastily over one's night gear, with a down quilt thrust on as a skirt, and feet destitute of stockings, does not constitute a very conventional costume even on board ship; but who could give up such a chance as the sight of four huge icebergs all seen at the same moment?

On our one day of comparative peace, towards the end of the voyage, we made acquaintance with a bright young Bostonian lady, married to a cheery old Scotchman who might have been her grandfather, but who possessed fortunately that rare charm, a stubborn youthfulness of heart that had weathered the storms of some sixty or seventy years.

There seemed to be something sad and incongruous in such a marriage, and one was tempted to marvel how it had come about, for she was too nice to have married him for money, if only her *own* interests had been in question. It was a consolation to remember that a *blasé* or cynical young man would have crushed down her youth much more terribly, and no man or woman knows what he or she may chance to pull out of that velvet lottery bag called marriage.

My sympathies also went out towards a poor young, 6 bride, who suffered much on the voyage, and would suffer more I fear when she reached her destination; for she was going out with her husband, a missionary, to some unpronounceable Indian tribe in the wilds of North West Canada—four days' journey from Quebec.

A handsome black retriever and a child of twelve, who is to act as general servant, together with some cocks and hens complete their curious *ménage*.

The husband gave us a sermon the evening of the day we landed in Quebec, which made me pity her still more profoundly; remembering how many of a like or worse description she would have to hear before seeing old England again.

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I had put on every pair of new gloves and stockings I possessed before leaving England and spent my one day on deck, staggering under the weight of an enormous fur cloak with the fear of the custom house before my eyes; but the anticipation of evil proved our only source of suffering. It is always the unforeseen which is really to be dreaded, not the dangers or difficulties sketched out and coloured up for us by cheerful friends beforehand.

On this occasion no doubt, a friend at court, in the shape of the Rector of Quebec, made our way extra smooth, but I don't believe in any case the stones would have been very sharp; for our last glimpse of the young Bostonian was of her sitting on a large Saratoga trunk, with two more looming in the distance, while she whispered to me triumphantly, that she had already passed two dozen pairs of new kid gloves.

Going *out* of Canada to the States a year later, my experience was much more searching and severe. Fortunately by that time there could be no possible question as to the antiquity of my very last pair of kid gloves.

Every one has raved about the situation and antiquity of Quebec. There can be no doubt as to the beauties of the former. Nothing shall induce me to describe my sensations on first viewing it from Dufferin Terrace, but I am bound in honour to say that the only rival views in my experience and remembrance, are the one over the Golden Horn at Constantinople, and that from the Presidio at San Francisco.

Antiquity is of course a question of degree. I remember with what feelings of awe the great age of the Roman antiquities impressed my girlhood. Later these seemed to dwindle into monuments of yesterday, compared with the thousands of years that one handled so cheerfully and thoughtlessly in Egypt. A mere century more or less became a sort of small change that nobody felt bound to have any more conscience about, than you would have had about a stray penny in paying a heavy dressmaker's bill. If the coin came handy, you gave it. If not, well you were quite near enough.

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Travellers in ancient parts of India and Persia have gone through similar experience of the necessity for a re-adjustment of the standard of antiquity, *Egypt* taking in their eyes the place that *Rome* held in mine.

It is no wonder then that to Canadians, and still more to Americans, Quebec with its bare three centuries seems very old. The city itself is certainly dirty and dismal enough to need some such justification, but we English cannot be expected to find the charm of antiquity so overpowering as our neighbours do.

Had the charm of *association* been pleaded, I could have understood it better; for the Plains of Abraham and the name of General Wolfe must be household words to every English child amongst us.

So many have written of the beauties of Quebec that it seems ungracious in us to have noticed its dirt, dulness and its generally provincial aspect. It has more or less the look of a buried city with the mourners still lingering round the grave. No doubt when winter has fairly set in, when the snow has hardened on the roads, and the sleighs turn out with bright harness and jingling bells, this dead-alive air will pass away; but the doubtful days, whilst the snow though deep is still soft, must be trying; and when the thaw sets in next spring, imagination fails to conceive what the state of the roads must be.

It seems to me that the climax of dirt and mud has been already reached; but they must be positively clean now, in comparison with their possibilities when winter is breaking.

The boarding-house where we have come to anchor (our first and last experience of this American institution) leaves almost everything to be desired, food included. The view from our windows is dull and triste; a great unfinished building in front of us; a melancholy car-stand down below; and a miserable little fountain in the midst of the unhappy little square. An Irish servant with optimist views says the roses in the square are "just lovely" in the summer, but has failed to inspire us with the least wish to see them then.

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Of course we have done our Montmorency Falls, and seen the still more wonderful Natural Steps close by; a succession of horizontal rocks, cut out with the precision of art, but perfectly natural and extending 10 layer above layer right up the valley. The water rushing between them has a very narrow channel in places, but goes tearing and boiling along to form the Montmorency Falls lower down.

The Indian village, some eight miles distant, is a decided swindle, but a good excuse for visiting the Lorette Falls, which are well worth the drive; lower but wider than the Montmorency Falls and in some points more striking than the latter.

The once dreaded tribe of the Huron Indians lived in this village, the guide book says, but at present the farce is only kept up as a means of making a few cents out of the confiding tourist.

Very few of the men, women, or children had the faintest trace of Indian blood, and the present chief whom we saw standing outside his "store," looked uncommonly like an English grocer in a small provincial town.

My chief interest here has been an attempt to investigate the Emigration question, having already heard a good deal of the other end of it in East End London halls, where a kindly, enthusiastic gentleman is in the habit of holding forth with much eloquence on this apparently sovereign cure for all the ills that poor suffering London flesh is heir to.

Canada seems to him a sort of Aladdin's Lamp, and 11 an "assisted" passage thereto an "open sesame" to a veritable Earthly Paradise.

Watching these poor, pinched, haggard-looking men and women, hanging upon his words, straining their dull sense to catch some glimpse of the brilliant picture painted for them in such radiant colours, it has seemed to me as if Canadian air, and sunshine, and space must be a definite and unquestionable blessing as compared with their present noisome,

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overcrowded lives. But, as usual, there is a good deal to be said on the other side of the question.

A large proportion of the would-be emigrants come unfortunately but naturally from the helpless, "back-boneless" class who have been already worsted in the struggle for existence, and seem to have barely strength left to pick themselves up and make a fresh start; and who have certainly no reserve fund of energy and resolution to face life again under totally new and untried conditions. Perhaps the glowing accounts they have received of what is doubtless a possible, but to them not a probable future, do not tend to increase this stock of endurance and determination.

I know one man to whom this Emigration hall was literally the door of opportunity and success, and this in spite of a large family and a most depressing "help-meet;"¹² but then he had every other qualification for success. He could work well and work hard, was perfectly sober, and had an amount of dogged perseverance that must eventually have pulled him through anywhere. His was one of the exceptional cases, where the fierce competition of an overcrowded country has crushed him down for the time; and he took, wisely, the first chance of escape and won the success that we might all have prophesied for him when we got his passage money together. Moreover he went to Queensland, not to Canada. So much for the English end of the question; now for the Canadian.

In Quebec I spoke more especially to two men on the subject; both car-drivers, one old and one young; the former being English and the latter Irish. The old man had lived fifty years in the city; having run away from a Sussex home at the age of thirteen, to escape from a cross grandmother. He has brought up a family of fourteen children here, and has at any rate made a living; but apparently little more. His children are now out in the world, several of them in New York. Nothing will induce them to return to "stupid old Quebec" no matter what he offers them. He says the palmy days of Quebec ended when the British garrison was removed. Before that it was gay¹³ and flourishing, and balls and parties were the order of the day.

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This no doubt accounts for the less contented spirit of my Irish friend, McDermot by name.

He was a letter-sorter in the Dublin Post Office ten years ago, at ten shillings a week, and would now have been earning thirty shillings a week.

He has a Canadian wife and two children now, and much as he would rejoice to go back, moving is not to be lightly undertaken without some definite promise of employment in the old country. He says his wife would leave Canada as gladly as he himself would do so, if they only knew of any certain opening for them elsewhere. He condemns the emigration movement most strongly, and says that many who come out are absolutely starving and unable to earn even a few cents.

He is very bitter against the emigration agents, many of whom he declares are employed in the interests of the Steam Navigation companies to decoy the people out for the sake of the passage money.

For seven months at least the country is completely under snow, and most work is at a standstill. Every one cannot drive sleighs, and the only other occupation is wood carting. Both of these require regular apprenticeship, 14 and cannot be successfully undertaken off-hand by the denizen of a Whitechapel slum.

Given the most favourable conditions, strength, opportunity, and previous knowledge of the work required, a man may earn from two pounds to four pounds a week out here, which seems at first sight princely; but we must remember how much he is bound to spend to procure the mere necessaries of life. Meat is certainly cheaper than with us, but most other things are dearer; house rent and clothing especially so, and everything in which manufacture or preparation of any kind is involved.

An unmarried man, living frugally and with self-denial, may, of course, save largely; but where a wife and family are in question, the conditions are very different. Even firewood, which ought to be cheap enough in this land of forests, sells for ten shillings the half cord.

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Emigrants are apt to forget that increased wages mean increased prices on everything that labour has touched, and their powers of saving must therefore be in direct proportion to the reduction of their wants. Every child who cannot earn enough to defray his own board, lodging, and clothing must, of course, increase the wants and reduce the savings of the family very considerably.

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A friend of mine, who is a leading clergyman in Quebec, and who is constantly applied to on the emigrant question, fully indorses all that my young Irishman relates. He says that emigration here is quite useless except so far as manual labour goes.

Clerks are constantly coming out from England and are disappointed to find that strangers have no chance in offices already overstocked by the inhabitants themselves.

One poor woman arrived with three or four grown-up children and a sewing-machine as her stock-in-trade. She expected to get her children at once taken on for office work, and to support herself meanwhile by sewing, and this in the very cradle of the sewing-machine! Of course she could get no employment in a country where every woman works her own "Singer," and she then tried to place one of her children in a charitable institution of the city; and was most indignant when my friend was forced to explain to her that these were intended first for the inhabitants of Quebec, and that it would be unfair to fill them with strangers who had no claims on the tax-payers.

This is only one instance amongst hundreds which arise every month for his consideration.

Men who come out with a small capital of fifty or 16 sixty pounds, and will go far enough to the North West Provinces, have a fair chance. They can rent one hundred and twenty acres of rich land, and get as much more in a grant, on condition that they live on it for six months in the year. Those who helped to put down the Riel rebellion had similar grants

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of land made to them, but in many cases the gift was a white elephant as they could not reside, and so fulfil the necessary conditions of tenure.

There are good openings for domestic servants in Canada, but they must be prepared to work hard. Where wages are so high, fewer servants are kept, and the burden falls more heavily upon each.

The prettiest picture that remains in my memory of Quebec is that of a charming young girl of fourteen, the daughter of the house where I was dining one evening. At an age when an English girl would have been either painfully shy or extremely pert, this bright little Canadian girl, who sat by me at the dinner-table, did her share towards the entertainment of her father's guests in the most natural and delightful way possible; talking brightly, sensibly and modestly; with perfect self-possession, but the self-possession of a charming and unconscious child, not of a precocious or priggish young woman.

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The first great problem that greets most people on landing in Canada or America is the question of what to drink?

The price of wine is prohibitive; especially in hotels. Many people cannot live on water alone; moreover it is always a difficult matter to ensure a supply of good water, whilst the habit of drinking iced water constantly is most injurious. The Canadians seem to settle the matter by drinking tea at every meal, and must suffer much from indigestion in consequence. Bass's pale ale at a shilling a pint is not always satisfactory, and in any case many people are unable to drink beer twice or even once a day. Otherwise there is generally good "Lager" to be had, notably the Milwaukie and St. Louis brews. This costs about sevenpence half-penny a pint at the hotels. I have found some Californian wines at three or four shillings the bottle, which are drinkable, and seem to be the pure juice of the peculiar flavoured grape of that country. Dry Catawba has been my most successful venture so far; but Diana is also fairly good; not unlike ginger wine in flavour. Still the

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drinking question is a very difficult one on this side the Atlantic, and the votaries of the Blue Ribbon are to be envied here if they do not fall victims to bad water. VOL. I. 2

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Another shake of the Canadian kaleidoscope lands me at Ottawa. Here, I think, we first realized the strange incongruities of Canada; the mixture of advanced civilization with provincial incompleteness, as shown by these rough unfinished Canadian roads lighted up by brilliant electric light. Streets here are reckoned by miles; but they dwindle away into what we should consider merely "tracks," and even in the cities themselves this curious anomaly is ever present: a handsome brick or stone house, and, next door to it, a wooden hovel; electric light, lighting up roads covered with "rocks" or impassable from mud or pools of water. But we toiled up above all these queer contrasts and the ugly provincial rectangular town, to Barrack Hill and the beautiful Government buildings of pink and cream sandstone; and a lovely autumn picture remains in my memory: on one side of the buildings a deep ravine, clothed with trees arrayed in all their autumn bravery; on the other a far-away stretch of wood and river, the Chaudière Falls as a background, and the famous lumber yards, looking quite picturesque, thanks to the enchantment of distance and the last lingering touch of a quickly sinking sun. The bright, crisp air turns suddenly grey and chill, and we hasten home to make final preparations for our start to Toronto and a first night in the famous Pullman cars.

Now, as every American traveller for the last twenty years has described these cars most thoroughly, and generally, I believe, from the standpoint of admiration and envy, I should not mention the subject were it not to propound a new and probably unpopular view of the question of travelling in America. In dealing with this matter I class America and Canada together advisedly, as the accommodation and arrangements are much the same in both countries.

The Pullman cars are delightful either side of the Atlantic, always premising that they are sufficiently full to be steady. Even in England, my unhappy experience, on more than

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one occasion, has been to form one of a miserable duet of shaking and jerking, the result of an empty parlour car. Still, under ordinary conditions, most of us find such carriages extremely comfortable and even luxurious. I only wish to speak about the American and Canadian sleeping carriages.

I am aware that in doing so I shall have every man, woman, and child in both these countries against me, and most of the men in my own country, who all unite in declaring that the nearest approach to paradise possible on earth is one of these Pullman cars. Canadian men and American women seem to consider it a point of honour to uphold this opinion, and so far as men are concerned, the accommodation for them is more ample and their style of dress makes comfort more attainable; but I should lay my view of the case before any twelve unprejudiced English women who have even the most primitive notions of comfort, with absolute confidence. Truly it is more easy to criticize than to suggest possible improvements, and Americans triumphantly point to our own small carriages where space is limited and movement impossible, and ask how we should like to spend night after night in one of them. The answer of course is that we don't need to spend night after night in such carriages. If we did, we should have to confront the problem and settle it in our own fashion; and I am far from saying that our solution would be the better of the two. I only protest against the tyranny of being forced to say that I was never so comfortable in my life, when almost every condition of feminine comfort, at any rate, is conspicuous by its absence.

The gentlemen's lavatory in these cars is sufficiently large to accommodate four or five men at once; whereas that set apart for the ladies is so small that you can barely turn round in it and perform your ablutions as best you may, with a rocking, jolting motion that drives you from side to side all the time, and the horrible conviction that four or five impatient or reproachful females are standing outside the door, ready to take your place the moment you can be induced, by knocking or twisting at the handle, to vacate it.

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Of course, when it is merely a question of one night on board, washing becomes a minor consideration, and can be supplemented to any extent at home or in your hotel. But the peculiar boast of the American or Canadian car system is, its adaptability to long railway journeys extending over several days.

Having received many really well-earned compliments from various "sleeping porters" on what I may call "Non Lavatory Monopoly," I feel more entitled to speak on the subject than many ladies would be, who spend an unconscionable half-hour in an elaborate arrangement of their "bangs," while some poor wretch is waiting outside for the chance of washing her hands after the long, black night journey.

In addition to greater space for toilette arrangements, men have another advantage on board these cars, namely, that their clothes are much more easily taken off or put on, sitting on a berth with the board 22 of the upper berth within two inches of the top of your head; so that we have at once two good reasons why English men may admire, where English women must condemn. I may as well end my remarks on the subject by some notes taken on the spot, after my first night's experience of the sleeping-car, but which will equally apply to the last after some thirty opportunities of modifying my opinions.

The berths (lower and upper) are let down on each side of the long car, a board separating them from one another at the head and foot; and heavy tapestry curtains on rings shut you in at the side. We, having lower berths, commanded the windows, but these are double and so heavy that it is almost impossible to open them or to keep them open, and I had to prop mine up with a collection of clothes to avoid suffocation. The upper berths have no windows, but are within reach of the ventilators which are carried along either side of the roof. The sleeping berths are much wider than ours and are frequently used for two persons on a question of economy, the extra charge in either case being the same. The dressing arrangements are peculiarly primitive. Your only means of getting out of or into your clothes is by burrowing behind your curtain; obstructing the narrow central 23

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passage and running a good chance of banging your head against the upper berth board, or of your curtains suddenly flying open to your great discomfiture at some critical moment.

In order to use the lavatory you must pass down the whole line of the car (unless by happy chance you have secured one at the right end), running up against men in various stages of undeveloped toilette; whilst the shaking of the train may precipitate you into the lap of some unfortunate man sitting on the side of his berth, trying to button his boots. And so, having delivered my conscience once for all on this vexed question, let us take a hasty glance at Toronto, before saying the little I intend to say about Niagara.

Looking at Toronto from the standpoint of a later acquaintance with Montreal (tabooed now owing to the smallpox scourge), I should say that the former is distinctly the link between Canada and the United States.

Montreal, to my mind, combines the pleasanter characteristics of Quebec with a brightness all its own.

Toronto is a curious combination of England, Canada and America. Here you cannot ignore the influence and traditions of the first, the provincial 24 Canadian element, and lastly a brisk activity, a distinct and appreciable go-a-head quality about the city that savours of Yankeedom, but is bracing and pleasant enough after sleepy Quebec and priest-ridden Montreal.

At first sight Toronto seems almost as dusty and unfinished-looking as Quebec, and the contrasts of piggery and palace, fine stores and miserable sheds side by side, seem as great. But by degrees our eyes became accustomed to these; and then we could admire the many fine buildings, colleges, universities 'c., and some really charming suburban-looking houses, along boulevard-shaded roads towards Rosedale, the famous Toronto park and suburb. The beauty of this park and the charming cemetery adjoining it, cannot be exaggerated. I have noticed all over this continent the great beauty of the cemeteries.

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Canadians and Americans alike deal far more kindly with their dead than we do, and choose always the most beautiful spot for their sleep. The living must put up with long unlovely rectangular streets, but the breezy hillside, the most undulating bit of ground, the shadiest and most lovely trees, all these are chosen to receive their dead.

To show a stranger Osgoode Hall (the law courts) is the very Alpha and Omega of Toronto sight-seeing. 25 Some kind friends did us this kindly office the very first day of our stay, and thus practically presented us with the “freedom of the city,” for I noticed afterwards that when you had confessed to having seen that, the most inveterate bear-leader left you alone to your own devices.

You may visit any amount of Theological colleges, High Church, Low Church, Presbyterian, or Roman Catholic; but the famous Toronto university stands out prominently in my memory, partly owing to its own beauty of situation and construction, and partly to the fact that the kindly and courteous Principal took us over it himself and was full of pleasant information about it. It is not denominational, but receives members of all creeds, and many inmates of the various Theological colleges in Toronto attend the scientific and literary lectures here. Those living in the buildings attached to the University are bound to attend daily prayers; but this obligation does not extend to non-residents.

The Principal himself, a professed Evangelical, seems liberal minded towards others. He told me that a Roman Catholic professor had objected to the use of Scott's “Marmion” as a text book, and he was bound to see the force of the objection from the Roman Catholic 26 point of view, although he had read the poem through several times and would never have been struck by such a possibility had it not been suggested to him.

The wooden pavements buried beneath the autumn leaves are slippery and wet, the roads muddy and dirty, and an autumn walk in Toronto a very doubtful pleasure. Fortunately here, as everywhere else, the service of street cars (*anglicé* , tram-cars) is very perfect

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and a positive necessity, where the distances are so great as in these straggling Canadian towns.

Next to the University and the lovely Rosedale Park, I was chiefly impressed by the Toronto Lunatic Asylum, an immense building, beautifully clean and well kept, at some distance from the central part of the town. Some of the wards are free, others pay sums varying from one pound four shillings to one pound ten shillings a week, which seems most reasonable for the accommodation offered. Dr. Clarke, a "Bartholomew's" man, has managed the establishment for ten years. Three years ago he did away with every sort of restraint and says he has never had reason to regret the step. There is not a bar to a window, not a strait waistcoat, nor padded room in the place.

I am bound to say I did hear a whisper that about a year ago one woman killed another in her bed. My 27 only wonder is that they are not always doing so, the attendants seem such slight, pretty young girls. One can hardly fancy their having much command in case of an outbreak; but I suppose Dr. Clarke relies chiefly on moral control.

Some of the women were very cross and violent, rushing up and abusing the doctor, stamping their feet at him, and complaining of being shut up and starved. He was most kind and good-natured, and perfectly cool and unconcerned by their reproaches and violence. The furious women did not appeal much to my sympathies, but one poor woman did. She had come in lately and came up to ask to be allowed to see her friends, in a most excited but far from violent manner. "Not unless you can be more quiet," the doctor said kindly but very firmly, and the poor creature's terrible effort at self-restraint, her almost despairing attempt at self-control, were most touching and most painful to witness.

We had no heart left to go over the men's side of the building. The arrangements were similar, and our guide evidently agreed with us that we had seen quite enough.

What can I say of Niagara? Niagara the sublime, the stupendous, the unutterably hackneyed subject of 28 every foreigner's pen? I see that Mr. Froude in his "Oceana"

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snubs Niagara and declined to go out of his way to renew his acquaintance with it. Well, the Falls have pretty broad backs and can stand the snub. Possibly Mr. Froude's admirers may urge that the recent fall of rock at the "Horse Shoe" shows "rocky depression" induced by his poor opinion of the whole show!

At any rate I spare my readers a general description of Niagara; not because I underrated its beauties, which, after a stay of some twelve days, divided between the American and Canadian sides, seemed ever to grow and increase upon me; but because so many abler pens have already attempted the task, and not even Mr. Black's genius for description can do justice to it.

I will content myself with jotting down a few practical hints for the benefit more especially of lady friends, and with giving a short description of my own expedition to the Cave of the Winds, which may induce some to follow my example, and others to refrain from an undertaking which is attended by some risk to any woman who has not some amount of pluck, self-control and power of climbing. If these conditions are necessary in August, they are still more indispensable on 29 such a stormy wet November day as that which fell to my lot.

The waters above Goat Island divide into two unequal parts, one third of them forming the American Fall, whilst two thirds flow over on the Canadian side in the famous Horse Shoe Fall. The latter is two thousand two hundred feet wide, the American Fall just half this width, whilst the respective heights are one hundred and sixty four and one hundred and fifty eight feet. The enormous bulk of the water, compared with the height of the fall, quite accounts for the almost universal feeling of disappointment when you first see Niagara; the height is so completely dwarfed by the enormous breadth. So many people unfortunately leave the place without giving this first impression time to efface itself, and carry off a nightmare of noise and confusion; wearisome sight-seeing, in which rapids and whirlpools and statistics and swindles, islands, bridges and grasping car-drivers are inextricably

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mixed up. "Do Niagara and die" seems likely to have a literal interpretation sometimes, judging by the weary forms and dazed eyes of the regular tourist.

That is not the way to see Niagara. Stay for some days at least, and on both sides of the falls if possible; 30 make one short excursion each day, but let twelve o'clock noon find you overlooking one or other of the principal falls, and your eyes shall feast on a sight of heavenly beauty: a fairy bridge flung across from one to the other, formed by the sun's rays shining through the glorious reckless shower of water diamonds that are dashed from the rocks into mid-air.

Be firm; do not be bullied into seeing what your hotelkeeper suggests, or seeing it in the way he considers most expedient. This will probably mean a carriage at seven or eight dollars a day, and such a dance through wood and water "elevators" and oil silk garments, as shall leave you in the end a gasping, melancholy wretch, with only one well-defined idea left in your head—namely, to get away from the toil and turmoil as quickly as may be.

It is very well to say "be firm," and would seem easy enough in practice. Possibly in the height of a crowded summer season the individual pressure must be proportionately less; but go to Niagara in the autumn, when most of the houses are shut up, and if you can stand the "constant drip" of a baffled landlord's contemptuous reproaches, you must be harder than the proverbial stone. "You ladies are seeing Niagara quite the wrong way." "Going to cross the river to 31 the American Fall in a boat this time of year? Quite impossible for any lady; you will be drowned in the spray anyway, and probably upset. Not at all a fit thing for any lady to do."

These and other observations were our daily portion until at length the man gave us up in despair; and much to our relief ceased to notice our vulgar eccentricities.

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We stayed afterwards at a charming little house on the American side, kept by a German named Kaltenbach, where we found quiet and good food, and that most precious of all gifts—freedom to do what we liked.

Few readers will require to be told that the Cave of the Winds lies at the back of the central portion of the American Fall. You make your way down wooden steps, and along rock ledges, to a fairly wide standing ground, immediately behind that portion of the falls, and afterwards thread your way through blinding mist across slippery wooden bridges connecting the boulders of rock at the base of the falls, making a complete circuit and finally scrambling up one large rock, almost perpendicular, covered with green slime and helped only by the foothold of natural depressions in the stone.

My friend having entirely declined the expedition, ³² I went alone into the little wooden house containing the dressing-rooms and adorned by innumerable scribblings, some of which were far from reassuring: "It is tempting Providence to go." "My wife and I went under the fall; she only got half-way." "Go by all means, don't be timid." "It is well worth while," &c., &c.

There seemed to be two very decided views of the question; but in any case I was in for the expedition now, and would not turn back to the possible jeers of my more prudent friend.

Having mildly asked if I must take off my dress, I was told to take off everything, including boots and stockings, and substitute the following costume:—jersey and drawers of red flannel, trousers and blouse of yellow waterproof, with hood for the head, coarse grey stockings, and uncouth felt boots which are tied firmly on to your feet. Out of the dressing-room and down one hundred and forty-six steps in a spiral wooden staircase, my friend being allowed to accompany me so far.

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When I looked at the blinding spray down the next flight of steps, I must confess that my heart rather failed me, for it seemed impossible to get through it without suffocation—the one chronic terror of my life.

33

Two gentlemen were returning as I went down, one of whom was clasping the guide's hand with the greatest effusion and saying over and over again, "You are the bravest man and the best guide I ever met in my life." This might be flattering to the guide, but was most depressing to me, especially as the men themselves looked more like drowned dogs than anything human.

The wooden steps were covered with green slime and horribly slippery. The guide said, "This is the worst part. Take a good breath and don't lose your head." So off I went, taking my courage in both hands.

Half-way down the guide stopped and turned me round to look up under the fall. At first one's eyes were too completely blinded by spray to see anything, but at last I managed a furtive glimpse out of the tail of one eye, and he seemed satisfied, much to my relief. On again over the slimy rocks, on to a still more slimy wooden bridge thrown between the rocks. There are several of these bridges, which have to be renewed every year after the damage done to them by winter snows and ice. The *débris* of the old bridges lies about amongst the rocks, suggesting shipwreck and other gloomy thoughts.

More rocks—more green slime—another bridge— VOL. I. 3 34 then round the rocks that stretch far into the river below—then a last bridge where all the winds of heaven seemed beating the spray into one from every point of the compass, and here, to add to our discomfort, a hailstorm set in. Out again into the open, and then the worst part of the whole performance: a clamber up the sheer cliff of rock, spray all round, water tearing and rushing about you, and only the slippery foothold of the rocks themselves between you and the howling whirling waters below. The guide was in front, quiet and strong and

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capable. There was nothing for it but to take a good firm grip of his hand at every climb, determined not even to *think* of the seething cauldron of waters below you. Still it was a nasty five minutes, and I was most thankful when we emerged on more level ground, and one final and much easier ascent brought us back, breathless and dripping, to the point from which we started, after an absence of some twenty-five minutes.

People often ask me at which side of the falls they should stay. I can only answer, both sides. If this is impossible, then I think my vote would be in favour of the American side and for this reason: From the Canadian side you certainly see the Horse Shoe Fall better as a whole, and it is undoubtedly the more popular fall of the two; but you have one superb view of it from Goat Island, on the American side. The rapids of both the Horse Shoe and American Falls are better seen from the American side, where you are nearer to them. The view of the Whirlpool Rapids is finer from the American side, and then Goat Island itself is such a delightful lounge for any spare half-hour on a quiet Sunday forenoon.

Speaking of the Whirlpool Rapids reminds me naturally of poor Captain Webb and his ill-starred attempt to swim across them. Looking at them carefully, as we did from either side, the foolhardiness of the attempt almost overpowered for a moment the sadness of it.

On the Canadian side, however, the rapids are less violent, and no doubt he hoped to be able to keep on this side, but the numerous rocks forced him towards the centre, and there the force of the current seized him with a ruthless hold, and hurled him onwards to his death on the American side of the rapids.

The Whirlpool itself differs so much from my preconceived notions of it. I had imagined angry waters beating against the rocks, and then being turned back into a fresh channel to find an ultimate outlet in Lake Ontario. Instead of this, it is a circular widening of 3—2 36 the river, the sides of which are clothed by lovely trees, deepening now into autumn foliage. The Whirlpool itself seems calm and placid enough after the tempestuous rapids

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already seen. No doubt the greater depth of the basin accounts for this, but the effect is almost tame, coming upon it from the stormy scene below.

We have had the usual Niagara tragedy during our stay here. Going over the Suspension Bridge to the American side one peaceful Sunday afternoon to make arrangements for our move there next day, we came upon a scene of wild confusion. Three inhabitants of the town (two of them German bakers and all under twenty-five years of age) had just gone out in a boat, to cross to the Canadian side above the rapids.

Although the spot where they attempted the passage was considerably above the rapids, they had not allowed sufficiently for the influence of the current, which caught their boat and whirled them right over the Horse Shoe Fall. The poor fellows were last seen, standing up in their boat without coats or hats, vainly trying to turn her round, as she was sucked onward to the terrible fall. The bodies will be carried by the force of the waters to Lewiston, several miles below the Whirlpool Rapids, and may not be recovered for seven or eight days.

37

As a relief from this tragedy, and a last glimpse of Niagara, I may mention two small swindles which amused me. One is called the Burning Springs, and entails a drive from the Horse Shoe end of the falls, over Cedar Island and across the Castor and Pollux bridges.

The spring has been lost and obstinately refuses to make its appearance again, although the people are stopping up all the fissures near, trusting to drive it back to its original outlet. Meanwhile they cheerfully take two shillings a-piece for showing the confiding stranger where he might once have seen it, and for offering a glass of sulphur water which he will do well to decline.

The other and more amusing swindle consists in the amount of Derbyshire spar imported from England, and sold here as Niagara spray crystallized into stone. This was offered to

us constantly before we had disclosed our nationality by speaking. If an Englishman can be taken in by such a palpable fraud, he deserves all the Derbyshire spar that he gets to take home to a confiding wife or children. But it is a little hard upon the natives who have had no chance of seeing or recognizing the original article. And so we turn our steps from Niagara with its deafening roar and its peaceful beauty, its swindles and its sublimity.

38

If any one will take my advice and remain long enough in the neighbourhood to grow callous to the former, and to let the latter sink into his heart and soul, verily he shall have his reward.

CHAPTER II. SOCIAL AND LITERARY BOSTON.

Our start for Boston from Niagara gave us two new experiences, one of which was later to become, alas! almost universal—I refer to the extreme uncertainty and unpunctuality of American trains, which reminded one constantly of past experiences in Spain. Some years ago, travelling from Cordova to Granada, I remember being much exasperated by the cool indifference of a railway official to my reproachful expostulation on finding that our connecting train was three hours late. “Eh bien! on peut toujours fumer son cigare,” was the quiet answer. For a country where women smoke almost as universally as men, this remark was perhaps less irritating than it would have been in England, but I little thought then of what the future had in store for me: blessed veil of the Present, that hid from my eyes a year's experience of constant travelling, where an unpunctual train should be estimated by days not hours. This refers of course more especially to the 40 Western States; but even in the East we soon ceased to chafe over a lost hour or two in any depôt.

On this occasion the delay lasted only for some two hours, and the chief practical inconvenience lay in the fact that the passengers had eaten up most of the provisions *en route* from Chicago; so we were turned out next morning at 6 a.m. to get food as best we might at some roadside station.

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By the way, this is another common experience which the devotees of American travel have never suggested to me. In such a large country, where trains are constantly from three to thirty hours late, the commissariat department is apt to break down under the strain. Any one who has been condemned to eat three meals a day at an American railway station may be safely fed on dried-up sandwiches or fossil buns at Swindon Junction for the remainder of his life and still be thankful.

Our other experience in regard to this journey was an explanation of the railway ticket "scalping" process over here. Yesterday a man offered to get us tickets from Niagara to Boston for \$9 25c. the night fare being \$11. There is enormous competition amongst the railway companies over here, and it frequently happens that one or other gets into serious difficulties. The 41 company in order to pay its dividends is forced to raise money, so they sell, say \$100,000 worth of tickets to a speculator at very much reduced rates, barely sufficient in fact to cover the expense of conveying the passengers. The man who buys them up gets rid of all he can at the recognized price, but as the time elapses over which the tickets are negociable he is forced to offer them at lower rates, and hence the great reduction which is often made upon them. To our English notions, fed from earliest infancy upon nontransferable tickets, this traffic seems very dishonourable; but on several occasions in the West, having had to pay as much for a ticket covering six hundred miles as I should have done for one covering twelve hundred miles, I have been urged to take one for the longer distance and get rid of it on the best terms I could for the latter part of the journey. This seems to be a recognized proceeding where opportunity makes it possible; and the moral of a principle does not differ according to its wholesale or retail application.

The terrible jolting and shaking of that journey from Niagara to Boston still lives in my memory, fresh and green, in spite of many later and similiar experiences.

I do not wonder that "car sickness" is a recognized 42 affliction in this country, and upper berths are specially to be avoided on this, as well as on many other accounts. An old lady

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of over eighty, unfortunately condemned to one of these berths, was enabled to exchange it for a lower one, thanks to the courtesy (I may say the unfailing courtesy) of an American gentleman. This old lady interested me very much; she was so grateful and cheery and contented, after all the fatigue and discomfort of two days' travel. She was returning to a Boston home, after a six weeks' visit to a son in Cincinnati, entailing a journey of two days and two nights either way. And this at the age of eighty-one! The son moreover was one of eleven children. She told me a great deal about the "Christian Scientists," a sect in Boston under the spiritual guidance of a certain Mrs. Eddy. They accept the Bible teachings, but of course with their own interpretations, as most of us do who accept them at all.

Their first principle is that pain and sin are synonymous and merely the result of mortal thought, having nothing to do with the immortal part of us, and therefore having no true existence, on the ground that the spiritual is the only real. According to their creed there is only one mind or intelligence, God, and the vital principle in us is an offshoot from this one mind; 43 but mortal error creeps in through the endeavour to raise up another and individual mind, which has no real existence, but which we assume to exist, and through this comes all error, all sin, all pain. They claim to cure "disease by getting rid of this mortal mind and closer to the Fountain Head—the one great and only Intelligence—and by ignoring the mortal intelligence altogether. Mortal body is only the result of mortal thought, the outward and visible sign of the inward but, according to them, not spiritual essence. As your mortal body has no business to exist at all, does not truly exist, so pain can exist only in the mortal imagination. Once grasp this truth and all suffering must disappear. Pain can only exist for you in proportion as you fail to apprehend this doctrine."

All this I heard, not from my dear old lady, who was far too simple-minded for such a transcendental flight, but from a professor of the "religion," later on in Boston; he was most anxious to teach me more of the tenets at a very considerable outlay of dollars on my part; but my curiosity was fully satisfied. Two things puzzled me in the matter. Firstly, why dollars should have any specific value in the eyes of a man who proposed to teach you a system which included amongst other things their non-existence; and 44 secondly, why he

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should have inadvertently complained of suffering from “severe neuralgic headaches” if the “mortal body” had been satisfactorily suppressed.

It seemed to me that a good bout of toothache would make sad havoc amongst the faithful; but the creed has a considerable following in Boston, as we discovered by attending a Sunday afternoon service in Chickering Hall. It is only fair to add that the famous American authoress, Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, received decided benefit at one time from the ministrations of a Christian Scientist lady doctor, who spent an hour a day with her for some weeks with excellent results. Mrs. Burnett said she had not felt so well for years, but unfortunately was tempted to overtax this unusual strength, with the natural result of a relapse. A second trial of the system in her case proved quite ineffectual.

It is quite conceivable that a strong mesmeric influence might have a most beneficial effect upon the overstrung nerves of a brilliantly gifted woman, constantly using and taxing too heavily an uncommonly active brain. It is equally conceivable that such an influence, dependent as it is on conditions of which we are still so ignorant, might fail on a second application, under possibly altered circumstances. In all this I see nothing dependent on any special belief, although the agent in this case chanced to belong to the Christian Scientist persuasion.

Boston was so dear to me at the time—is so dear to me still in remembrance—that I shrink from writing about it, lest I should do scant justice to such a happy memory, or fail to interest my readers in that which interested me so much. I had heard so much of the stiffness, formality and priggishness of Boston society: I found only kindness and cordiality, more freedom of thought, more mental “elbow room,” and hence more originality than amongst those of equal mental calibre in ordinary English society; and an enthusiastic appreciation of England and the English, that could not fail to win one's heart on the spot. I am well aware that I can only take a partial and therefore to some extent prejudiced view of the matter.

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Novelty is doubtless charming, and just as an American girl will often come back full of the kind and cordial hospitality of some grim English county neighbourhood where she has been fêted and made much of, so an English woman may be expected to see this part of America through rose-coloured spectacles. 46 Are they not forced upon her by each kindly American hand?

I suppose Boston is a little “superior,” and does make herself occasionally disagreeable towards her American brothers and sisters. Otherwise I cannot account for the rather sneering remark which universally met any enthusiastic words about our pleasant stay there: “Oh, yes, all English people like Boston,” as if that fact were one of which we ought to be mutually ashamed.

A little “superiority” on the one side, a little “sour grape” philosophy upon the other and the situation is intelligible enough to outsiders. Boston, in fact, is the “clever woman” of the American family, and as such to be inwardly respected but outwardly condemned.

Has not every woman blessed or cursed with brains the thousandth part of an inch above the level of fashionable mediocrity, known a similar experience? The grudging looks and words, the painful innuendos, “Oh, you are going a great deal too deep for me,” when you are making the most common-place remark; “Of course you must find us very stupid,” with an exaggerated humility that covers the most Pharisaical self-righteousness; “Thank God we are not 47 as this woman. We can find unflinching delight and ever-growing interest in discoursing of clothes or ‘coverts’ according to our sex.” Age cannot wither nor custom stale the infinite variety of cabbages and cauliflowers, domestic grievances, cod liver oil and measles, cooks and cupboards. Abjure the eternal contemplation of these, and you are forced *nolens volens* into the terrible ranks of that most terrible development of modern times, “the strong-minded woman.” “Then of *course* you approve of female suffrage, and lady doctors, and women speaking on platforms; and what will you do when men won't open the door of a railway carriage for you, or give you a seat in a crowded room?” and so on and so on *ad infinitum* . And all this on your devoted head because you prove restive

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under a *douche* of domesticity, or having hunted your fox through soup, fish and three courses, you venture on some subject of more general interest during cheese or dessert.

The critics may declare that this picture is now-a-days an anachronism. I can only say that they are much to be envied if that is their conscientious experience, and that their happy lines must have fallen in places far removed from the ordinary country house society.

Then comes the next stage, the ghastly stories of 48 clever women, who tell their cooks to put the whitebait into a mould and serve it with sweet sauce; who order “legs of beef” for dinner and “saddles of pork” for luncheon. If none of these things move you, make ready for the final blow! “Men *hate* clever women,” “Clever men never marry clever women.”

There may be two reasons for this—a clever man is not necessarily a *wise* man; he is very frequently a poor judge of character, and apt, therefore, to imagine that to secure a stupid wife is to secure a comfortable easy-going partner—a sort of domestic pillow.

Unfortunately for him, stupid people—male or female—are almost invariably extremely obstinate, and therefore most difficult to manage. You *may* make an intelligent woman shift her ground, however firmly she has taken up her position on it. A stupid woman is like an india-rubber ball. She may yield to pressure, but the rebound will come the moment the pressure is removed, and the battle has to be fought again, not once, but twenty times; and never with more than a temporary victory.

Moreover, there are two sides to every question, especially to one where the right of rejection is supposed to rest with the women.

Possibly, a really clever man is wise enough to know that a “clever man” is not always the most desirable partner in married life, and that a showy horse at starting will wear you out more by the end of a long day's ride than the comfortable old stager whom no one praises over much at first, but whose paces are far less fatiguing in the long run.

Still, this fearful “matrimonial crusher” is brought to bear, and to bear very effectually, in these days of an extra tight matrimonial market, and the wise virgins will trim their lamps

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accordingly, or even hide their light altogether under a bushel, if marriage at any price appear desirable in their eyes.

And so this long digression brings me back to Boston after all, for one great charm of America in general and New England in particular is this blessed boon of female freedom. A woman may talk and laugh here and express herself without this depressing consciousness of peril to her future prospects.

Most women are married in America. To be unmarried is exceptional, but rather distinguished than otherwise, certainly not a plea for pity as with us.

The greater freedom of intercourse between the sexes, the comparative absence of ill-natured outside comment, makes the relations between men and VOL. I. 4 50 women far more simple and gives them more chance of knowing something at least of each other's character and tastes before marriage.

There are more eligible men "on promotion" here, and the advantages of matrimony are not considered in America to belong exclusively to the weaker sex. Hence men are more courteous towards women, and take more trouble to please them.

After all, human nature is much the same everywhere. It is a question of supply and demand. Where men are at such a premium as with us, their value increases in proportion, and we can hardly wonder that they should be perfectly aware of this fact, nor condemn too harshly, although we may deplore, the feminine policy which accentuates it.

Hence the vexations, the heart-burnings, the tricks and subterfuges, the scheming daughters and spiteful mothers, that have furnished subjects for so many British pens. Female America is probably not more virtuous in these ways, but she is less tempted.

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The result is a much happier and more natural social life between young men and young women, and also the development of that most charming of all American productions—the American girl.

Mothers can afford to be kindly and generous ⁵¹ towards other women's daughters where the chances of collision with their own are so much reduced.

Here I pause with a trembling hand—I know so well the storm of abuse that I shall rouse by speaking the truth, as it appears to me, on this subject.

“Can anything on earth be more charming and admirable and delightful than a simple English girl?”

“Have I ever been on the Continent—to Rome, Dresden, or Paris? Ever, in fact, met those vulgar, noisy, twanging American girls who frequent such cities?”

Yes, I have done all this, not once, but many times, and can still write it down as my deliberate opinion, and the result of a pretty wide experience, that American girls as a rule are more companionable, brighter, more simple and less self-conscious than our own, and I attribute this fact entirely to the difference of their social surroundings and the causes at which I have hinted above

Having said so much in praise, I must with equal candour admit (and thereby alienate every American mother, I fear) that my experience of *children* in America is far less favourable.

To my mind they do not “begin to compare” with ^{4—2} ⁵² our own. The system of easy social intercourse which works so admirably in the case of those old enough to take their part in the world, is equally disastrous to the younger growth. The tendency is to sap all the sweet, unreasoning impulses of childhood, and to give us instead spoilt, capricious, precocious little old men and women.

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If the charm of American girlhood can only be obtained at such costs, I am quite willing to acknowledge that the price is high. But I do not see that the two things have any necessary connection.

The system of hotel life, and the scarcity and exorbitance of domestic service at home, throw children too much in the company of their elders and thus lead to a hot-house growth, whilst the spoiling is an almost inevitable condition of the “peace at any price” policy necessary in the presence of strangers.

The parlours cannot be turned into a perpetual house of correction, and where servants are so scarce, often so bad and generally so unreliable, a nursery is a difficult institution to keep up, when no longer a positive necessity of childish life.

In these ways an English household has the advantage, and our English children prove it; but an 53 American girl brought up under the most wholesome restraints of childhood would still find her social conditions on “coming out” so much simpler and happier in America than with us that the step from the one stage to the other would be more natural and far less terrible than that which spans the gulf between the unconscious child and the constrained, artificial, demure and too often sly or pert *débutante* in England.

Of course there are English girls as sweet and charming and simple as any across the Atlantic, but they are so in spite of social conditions, and thanks to a nature strong enough to resist the pruning knife of English etiquette.

People who know little or nothing of social life in America seem to imagine that licence not liberty marks the steps of young American girls.

None ever made a greater mistake. Mrs. Grundy exists, but she is a more kindly, less grim old lady over here; her mission is to protect, not alone to condemn, and the sheep dog seems to have less, not more to do, where Honour guards the flock.

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As my object is to write about Boston and America generally from the social point of view as much as possible, I trust these remarks will not be considered irrelevant to the matter in hand.

54

Sketches so slight as mine have no other value than the value of what is real, actual and personal in the impressions made upon any fairly intelligent mind by its surroundings. Hackneyed as these may be, the point of view is ever shifting. It is the same old play, but each man reads his own Hamlet in it. But the whole value of your sketch depends upon the hasty lines taken down on the spot.

Rub these out and you may substitute a highly-finished picture, far more admirable in workmanship, but it is not the same: you have lost the spirit, the essence of what you saw, and put something else in its place.

Now at the risk of being thought vague, discursive, mentally untidy, I wish to preserve the essence of my hasty notes, and this can only be done by a sacrifice of method and arrangement.

So I put my hand in that American rag bag—my journal—and try to smooth out whatever comes uppermost.

Settling down in Boston for a somewhat lengthy stay proved by no means easy work. The Boston season begins in November, and being comparatively short now that people go off in May or even April to their country or sea-side houses, the few winter months are crowded in proportion.

55

Then again in a country where hotels become homes to so many people, there is a marked difference between the accommodation possible for permanent and that for

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transitory guests. The latter must be content to take what is left, and this generally means small uncomfortable rooms in the noisiest and hottest parts of the house.

The principle of course is perfectly just, and for real transitories it is of less importance, as you can put up with a great deal if a week is to see you at the end of your troubles; but the system falls heavily upon those who may wish to make a stay of some weeks but draw the line at months.

This no doubt accounted for our great difficulty in finding suitable accommodation.

The two principal hotels in the best part of the town (the Back Bay), namely, the "Brunswick" and the "Vendome," were crowded and we turned from them at first in despair.

We made our earliest stay at the "Parker House," famous for its *cuisine*, and remained there just long enough to penetrate some of the mysteries of the latter; for the head waiter arranged an evening expedition for us amongst the pots and pans, ranges and coppers of the far-famed Parker kitchens.

56

It was like going over a small town.

The least pleasant discovery there was that they keep all the meat, poultry, fish &c. in lead-lined drawers, just like the drawers of a huge wardrobe.

In similar ones are kept the pastry, fish and cheese, croquettes, &c., all made one or two days previous to being used. This doubtless accounts for the fact that the fish never seemed perfectly fresh.

The famous "Parker House" dish is broiled lobster, which I ate and found excellent, in spite of many qualms of conscience. It seems a horribly cruel dish, but is it not as really cruel to eat cold lobster which has been boiled alive?

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Why do not the anti-vivisectionists attack these matters in their crusade against cruelty?

Broiled lobster, crimped cod, *pâté de foie gras* : it would be easy to swell the list, especially if “winged” birds and hunted foxes were included.

To sacrifice a rabbit's muscles in the cause of humanity under certain strict conditions may seem a matter of painful necessity even to a merciful man; but the very people who condemn most loudly the barbarity of vivisection would look very much surprised and annoyed if any one suggested a little self-sacrifice⁵⁷ where their own special form of “cruelty to animals” is concerned.

After the “Parker House” we tried a pleasant family hotel called “the Oxford,” near the Railway Station, and away from the business part of the city.

A suite of charming and most conveniently-arranged rooms seemed likely to compensate for mediocrity in food and an overheated house; but alas! the snake in the grass soon raised up his tiresome head.

We had not duly considered the fact that our rooms overlooked the station, all the front rooms being occupied as usual with permanent guests.

Night was made hideous by the groans and shrieks and melancholy ringing of the engines.

We expostulated to a most civil clerk, who was not a sufficiently good actor to be able to express any surprise at our complaints, but who had enough self-possession to assure us that in time, say six months, we should cease to be in any way annoyed by the horrible noises and might even miss them, should we have occasion to sleep elsewhere.

Not caring to make the experiment, the weary round of house searching began again and we went over several boarding-houses, recommended by friends in the place.

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Boarding-houses seem very much alike all the world over, cheap and nasty, with the occasional variety of being nasty without being cheap, as in my Quebec experience.

It ended by our returning to the "Brunswick" and putting up meekly with rooms that had seemed like garrets to us before our troubles had taught us resignation.

A very dear American friend of mine maintains that the chief characteristic of an American hotel is the exquisite sense of home which you experience on first entering it.

I must confess that after a twelvemonth's experience I am forced to disagree with her *in toto*. It is the very last feeling that a huge crowded caravanserai of this sort is likely to inspire.

At the same time I think the American hotel system has some striking advantages over ours. Of course I do not now refer to those monster hotels which have lately been opened in London on similar lines.

In America there are no extras. You pay your four or five dollars a day with the blessed consciousness that there your responsibility ends, no matter how much you may eat or drink.

There is no exasperating *bougie* question to be considered; you can calculate almost within a cent the amount of your week's expenses, and settling an American hotel bill is a most speedy, simple and almost pleasant performance compared with the woeful list of "extras" to be considered and often disputed over in England, or the great *bougie* battleground of a Continental *Rechnung* or "addition."

I notice amongst my earlier notes an account of an entertainment given in the "Meïonion Hall" here by Professor Carpenter, a celebrated mesmerist in these parts.

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The unsatisfactory element in all such public performances is the impossibility of knowing beforehand, how many confederates, or to put it more charitably, "previous acquaintances," the operator may have collected on the platform. Their names were not given, but the lot was pretty comprehensive, including young men and young women, middle-aged men and women, girls of fourteen and fifteen years of age and children of seven and eight.

If they were all acting, I can only say they acted remarkably well, and showed an amount of dramatic talent which ought to have been turned to better account than that of merely forming dummy illustrations of a fifty cent fraud.

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The "Professor" chose only a certain number out of those who presented themselves, presumably the ones more sensitive to his influence.

He told one poor man that he was sitting on a hot plate, and the horror depicted on the latter's face, as he tore off from his seat, rubbing himself in dismay, would have been ludicrous if one could have felt quite certain that the suffering was feigned.

He told the others that the stick he held in his hand was a serpent, and they instantly scrambled away and climbed up a fairly high balcony in the most agile manner, several elderly women joining in the gymnastics.

Then he took two boys of seventeen or eighteen, and made one of them see his own watch chain on the other boy (who had no chain at all). A violent quarrel ensued, and the first boy, incited to it by Professor Carpenter, rushed amongst the audience for a policeman, and brought up a man whom the professor also mesmerized, so that he also saw the chain on the chainless boy, but went off into a curious cataleptic sleep in the very act of attempting to remove it, and remained perfectly motionless until released by the mesmeric agent.

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Carpenter also made a boy stick a pin into his own 61 hand, which certainly drew blood without making him wince in the slightest degree. The boy's face was perfectly vacant the whole time, and gave no traces of self-control or endurance.

A little girl of seven or eight years old was one of the best subjects. She was told that her fingers were covered with molasses, and went about wringing her little hands in the most natural manner, and with tokens of violent distress and disgust.

Finally they all went up to one poor man who was told he was a fountain and there began pulling his nose to turn on the tap of the water and to wash their hands which they appeared to be doing with great satisfaction to themselves in the empty air.

One lady was told there was a mouse on the floor and rushed off shrieking, coming back in a really painful state of agitation, and with tears in her eyes. Yet this same woman had been quite brave about the serpent.

No doubt many of these people are old "subjects" and some possibly travel about with the professor and may be recognized on different platforms.

I do not know that this, however, is so conclusive an argument for fraud as might appear at first sight.

Possibly the professor keeps a reserve of good old 62 stock subjects upon whom he has operated again and again and thus gained complete power over them.

They may be quite honestly under his mesmeric influence, warranted never to fail, and always at hand to prevent a *fiasco* should the audience prove hopelessly "unsympathetic" in the mesmeric sense of the word.

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Probably he takes on a few new subjects every evening, some of whom may prove successful, but this question becomes less vital with a good reserve of trusty material in the background of the entertainment.

We all insist upon our *quid pro quo* , even when only fifty cents are at stake and few of us are sufficiently intelligent or scientific to prefer investigation for its own sake to startling results, even when we suspect the genuineness of the latter.

Probably this latter fact alone is worth the whole fifty cents in our eyes.

Nothing makes one feel so comfortably superior as to think one detects fraud where others are overcredulous.

Amongst other attractions, Boston is one of the most musical cities in America, and the Saturday symphony concerts became a very pleasant weekly experience of ours in the Boston Music Hall, a magnificent 63 hall with galleries running all round it and a fine statue of Beethoven on the raised platform, executed by Crawford, the sculptor, father of the celebrated novelist, F. Marion Crawford.

These concerts are conducted on similar lines to our own Monday Populars in St. James's Hall, that is to say, a good dose of the instrumental and classical orchestral, varied by a few instrumental solos on piano, violin or cello, and a couple of songs during the course of the evening.

On one occasion a fascinating young lady with a fine, clear, but not very sympathetic soprano voice, gave us some beautiful old songs by Pergolesi and Scarlatti.

She also furnished us with an amusing and romantic story which I can only tell as "twas told to me."

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Originally poor in all save beauty of face and voice, the proverbial good Samaritan appeared on the scene for her in the form of a wealthy distant connection who educated and finally married her.

Like many other pretty women, the fair cantatrice proved very extravagant and not altogether amenable, and rumour whispered of a possible separation.

They were living in Paris at the time, the land of scientific research; specially as regards aerial science. The husband, who may have been as economical as his wife was the reverse, and probably dreaded a lawyer's long bill of costs, cut the Gordian knot very neatly by going up in a balloon on a scientific expedition and never coming down again. His charming young wife does not seem in any hurry for the balloon to make its re-appearance.

In connection with the subject of music, I may mention having made the acquaintance of the well-known pianiste, Mrs. Hopekirk, a charming young Scotch lady with an equally pleasant and agreeable husband. In private life they are Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, but her professional name is Hopekirk I believe, and she is making it famous at this moment in Germany.

I went to one of her concerts in Boston, and enjoyed every moment of the long programme, which included the Appassionata sonata of Beethoven, selections from Chopin, Liszt, Bach, &c.

Her playing is most sympathetic and perfectly natural and simple; but the strain upon her of giving these musical afternoons without any assistance or relief must be very great.

Next on my list comes the account of a delightful afternoon spent at a private house in Walnut Street, one of the most fashionable parts of Old Boston, where we first saw several of the Boston alumni, with whom I was later to become personally acquainted.

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Foremost among them I may mention Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Dr. Everett Hall, the American author, and a well-known Unitarian minister, and Colonel Wentworth Higginson. The latter, who won his spurs in the American Civil War, has not indeed beaten his sword into a ploughshare, but he may be said to have carved an arm-chair with its aid. He is now the most peaceful of citizens, the most delightful of literary hosts and the chairman *par excellence* of every literary association in this New England "Home of Culture."

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes has been described so often and so graphically, that his numerous admirers on our side the Atlantic have little to learn as regards his appearance.

Like many others, I was surprised by my first sight of the small grey-haired man, with slightly retreating chin, who stood up to read his own poems on this occasion.

Is it some childish idea of due proportion that gives us this shock of surprise, when we find a big intellect in union with so small a frame? And yet some of the best fighting as well as the best thinking in the world has been done by small men. VOL. I. 5

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There is no lack of dignity about the "Professor of the Breakfast Table" as he stands up with bright, steadfast, searching eyes that see so much and so clearly, and the rather firmly-compressed lines of the mouth, that can, however, relax into such genial smiles and hearty laughter when tickled by any humorous notion.

He gave us first those exquisite lines on "The Voiceless," which have re-echoed through countless hearts, and won their immortality thereby.

"A few can touch the magic string, And noisy Fame is proud to win them; Alas for those that never sing, But die with all their music in them.

"Oh hearts that break and give no sign, Save whitening lip and fading tresses, Till death pours out his cordial wine, Slow dropped from misery's crushing presses.

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“If singing breath or echoing chord To every hidden pang were given, What endless melodies wore poured, As sad as Earth; as sweet as Heaven.”

Then came the famous “Last Leaf,” too well known to need quotation; then some stirring lines on the secession of the South from the North and entitled, “Brother Jonathan's Lament for Sister Caroline.” These were written before the first gun was fired, and have therefore all the value of a prophecy, as well as a poem.

To my mind the most graceful of his poems, and the one which Dr. Holmes reads most frequently, and 67 which is therefore more personally associated with him than any other, is the one addressed to “Dorothy Q.” (Quincy), and inspired by an old family portrait of his great grandmother, as a girl of thirteen in stiff brocade, and with a green parrot on her wrist.

The painting itself is poor and flat; but nothing can destroy the pretty, prim innocence of the “little maid's” eyes as they look at you from the canvas that has been so lovingly restored.

On this occasion the poem was read without the picture; but as a rule Dr. Holmes shows it to his audience, and this makes the lines far more telling and dramatic.

Later I had an opportunity of seeing it in his own study, and amongst many other treasures and relics of various kinds.

The little poem is so quaint and pretty and poetical, that I am tempted to give it here for the sake of some who may read it for the first time.

DOROTHY Q.: A FAMILY PORTRAIT.

“Grandmother's mother! her age, I guess, Thirteen summers, or something less: Girlish bust, but womanly air; Smooth square forehead, with uprolled hair; Lips that lover has

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never kissed; Taper fingers, and slender wrist; Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade— So they painted the little maid. 5—2

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“On her hand a parrot green Sits unmoving and broods serene; Hold up the canvas full in view! Look! there's a rent the light shines through! Dark with a century's fringe of dust, That was a Red Coat's rapier thrust! Such is the tale the lady old, Dorothy's daughter's daughter, told.

“Who the painter was, none may tell, One whose best was not over well; Hard and dry it must be confessed, Flat as a rose that has long been pressed; Yet in her cheeks the hues are bright, Dainty colours of red and white, And in her slender shape are seen, Hint and promise of stately mien.

“Look not on her with eyes of scorn, Dorothy Q. was a lady born! Ay! since the galloping Normans came England's annals have known her name; And still to the three-hilled rebel town, Dear is that ancient name's renown; For many a civic wreath they own, The youthful sire and the grey-haired son.

“Oh, Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q! Strange is the gift that I owe to you; Such a gift as never a king Save to daughter or son might bring. All my tenure of heart and hand; All my title to house and land; Mother and sister and child and wife And joy and sorrow, and death and life!

“What if a hundred years ago. Those close, shut lips had answered no! When forth the tremulous question came, That cost the maiden her Norman name, And under the folds that look so still The bodice swelled with the bosom's thrill? Should I be I, or would it be One tenth another, to nine tenths me?

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“Soft is the breath of a maiden's yes, Not the light gossamer stirs with less; But never a cable that holds so fast Through all the battles of wave and blast; And never an echo of speech or song, That lives in the babbling air so long! There were tones in the voice that whispered then, You may hear to-day in a hundred men!

“Oh lady and lover, how faint and far Your images hover, and here we are! Solid and stirring in flesh and bone, Edward's and Dorothy's, all their own; A goodly record for time to show, Of a syllable spoken so long ago! Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive For the tender whisper that bade me live?

“It shall be a blessing, my little maid! I will heal the stab of the Red Coat's blade, And freshen the gold of the tarnished frame And gild with a rhyme your household name; So you shall smile on us brave and bright As first you greeted the morning light; And live, untroubled by woes and fears, Through a second youth of a hundred years!”

Then Dr. Everett Hall gave us the sketch of a half humorous, half pathetic, and entirely charming little story of his own, called “A modern Psyche.”

It is a tale of thoroughly American life:

The little Cinderella of the family, the half sister, being left alone in a summer hotel whilst her sisters go to a dance in a neighbouring house, falls in with a certain Edward Ross, a young man travelling for a summer holiday and anchoring by chance at this seaside resort.

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They fall in love with each other and are speedily married; much to the inward envy and indignation of the “proud sisters.”

The bridegroom is all love and devotion. He makes only one condition; that Psyche shall never ask him any questions about his employment in life. “It will be much happier for them

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both if she agrees to these terms,” which of course she does, in a rapture of loving trust and confidence.

Two happy years of Boston life pass and then a little Geoffrey appears upon the scene.

Meanwhile the young mother has seen no one but the doctor and the minister, but is too happy to care or to speculate on the strange isolation of their lives.

But, alas! the serpent comes too surely into their paradise in the shape of the three sisters—Priscilla, Polly (more commonly known as “Bloody Mary”) and Agnes.

Poor little Psyche feels bound at last to send them an invitation to come and stay with her, but awaits their advent with feelings of unmeasured despair.

They come, and Edward Ross caters most generously for their amusement.

He takes them all over Boston; giving up a whole day to meet the special requirements of each visitor.

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Priscilla is literary; and *she* is introduced to the alumni of Boston—Dr. Oliver Holmes, Howells, &c., &c.

Bloody Mary is political in her tastes, and she is introduced to the leading statesmen.

Agnes scorns literature and politics; charity is her chief interest in life. So she is taken over all the various charitable institutions of the city.

Then come dinners at “Parker's” and concerts in the Music Hall, and all goes happy as a marriage bell; and Psyche sees her sisters depart with some inward relief, but a still greater feeling of thankfulness that all is so well over, and that, after all, thanks to Edward, the reality has been so much less terrible than the anticipation.

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Alas, within a fortnight of the return of the sisters to Painted Post (their country home) letters come from Priscilla to poor Psyche, hinting at the mystery connected with Edward's life, "wondering that a Christian woman can consent to live with a man of whom she knows absolutely nothing—who may be a forger, a gambler or a thief;" and so on, and so on.

At first Psyche indignantly throws the letters in the fire, and returns the very shortest answers; but, unfortunately, she does not show them to Edward.

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At length one more suspicious than the rest arrives, and the iron enters into her soul.

She keeps it, broods over it, wonders—"wishes she knew—hates to think Priscilla seems to know more than she does herself."

Finally she gets up in the night; goes into Edward's dressing-room and takes the letters from his pocket; finds his business address (999, State Street), but nothing to justify her curiosity and sad breach of honour.

There is a letter to a jeweller about a necklace of precious stones to be sent home by July 3rd (her birthday!).

A letter from a club, begging Mr. Ross to dine there, as he has not been seen for more than a year (he has stayed at home with her!).

Conscience-stricken and ashamed she is meditating a return to bed, when she upsets the candlestick, which falls with a loud crash!

She creeps back to bed in the dark, soothing Edward's anxieties (the noise having woke him) by saying she had had a dream and was trying to find a light.

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Next morning he comes into her room, looking half tenderly, half reproachfully at her, and holding up his 73 coat with a long spermaceti mark all down the back of it.

She is very penitent and implores forgiveness for her want of faith. She begs him not to tell her anything of his life—“she does not wish to know; and if she did know, wild horses should not drag it from her.”

“I know that, my darling; but they would try,” answers Edward gently; “you have been made wretched enough already by three she-asses.”

Then he tells her all; and the wonderful mystery is that he is editor of the leading Boston paper! This is why he kept his home address secret; that he might have her to himself for a few months at least.

Now, however, he says they must begin to entertain; to give social entertainments, literary dinners, and so forth.

Then came a most amusing description of the horrors of an editor's home life, when invaded by publicity; the men with introductions from China, Japan, Timbuctoo, the people with petitions, the people wanting his name on their committees, or her name on their charity lists, the hurried meals, the evenings spent in society, the days when they scarcely meet from morn till eve, the general hurry, worry, and confusion which 74 succeed the peaceful home life that poor little Psyche's ill-fated curiosity has banished for ever.

To the end of the chapter she is forced to play the *rôle* of the popular editor's wife.

One pities her so much that it is a profound satisfaction to hear that the “three proud sisters” who have worked all this woe, go off one fine day to a pic-nic and tumble over a precipice.

Colonel Higginson gave us two amusing papers of his own.

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One of these was entitled "Saints' Vacations," and suggested asylums for over-driven parsons' wives and committee women, where there should be no bells, no communication with the outer world, no possibility of serving on a committee or of offering a tract.

People are always suggesting "weeks in the country" for poor town people. Why should we not have "weeks in town" for the poor, dull, overworked country ministers' or country farmers' wives?

The other paper dealt with Emerson and the "Brook Farm" days, when he was a prophet amongst a number of ardent young men and women who wished to reform the world.

A kind friend gave us a pleasant opportunity of eating a real old-fashioned Thanksgiving dinner, on the 75 day set apart for this American institution, and which falls always on the last Thursday in November.

It was a real Puritan feast, no flowers on the table, no *entrées* or *petits plats* of any kind; *consommé*, turkey, venison cooked at the table over a brazier, chicken-pie, excellent ices, and mince-pies formed our simple but most substantial fare, and this dinner gave me the chance of meeting for the first time the charming and clever Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, whom I was to see so frequently later on, and whose memory remains with me as one of the clearest cut of all my Boston cameos.

We spoke of dreams on this occasion I remember; and Mrs. Burnett told me that ideas and plots for her books sometimes came to her in this form.

Apropos to "Through One Administration," which appears to me her cleverest, though possibly not her most popular work, she was amused and pleased when I told her that the account of the rush and incessant wear and tear of Bertha's Washington life had given me a sense of sheer physical weariness as I read about it.

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The development and deterioration of Richard's character in this book has always seemed to me, in its subtle yet powerful workmanship, worthy to rank with some of George Eliot's best sketches on similar lines.

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Like Tito in "Romola," Richard starts with all the advantages of youth and good looks, and a genial brightness of nature, which blinds one at first to the lamentable absence of "grit" in his constitution.

So long as things go smoothly, you notice only the genial charm of Richard Amory. Husband and wife travel on parallel lines truly, but with so little distance between the parallels that one scarcely realizes that they are not hand in hand.

But at the first breath of real test and temptation the distance widens, almost imperceptibly at first, then more distinctly, till at length the burning touch of trial has brought out the real strength of the woman's character in glowing colour; whilst the husband falls further and further from her, "to his own place."

Sad mystery of life! Does it truly furnish us with the stuff whence character is made or marred? Or is the photographer's negative a better simile—the picture there from the first, but the development dependent on the accident of surrounding conditions?

If so, is absence of temptation any real blessing? Is a battle won when it has never been fought?

I don't think Mrs. Burnett and I combined metaphysics with our mince-pies on this occasion; but it 77 would be interesting to know more of her views on a subject which she can paint with so masterly a touch.

Next on my Boston list comes a delightful afternoon spent in Dr. Holmes' study "on" Beacon Street, overlooking the Back Bay at the mouth of the Charles River.

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The study itself is a large and most cosy room, lined with books and with deep bay windows “giving” on this beautiful sheet of water; the houses in this part of the street being so close to the water's edge that my first exclamation on looking out of the windows was naturally, “How exactly like Venice!”

“I wonder how many people have made the same remark?” said the cheery little doctor, adding with a ready tact that soothed one's mortified feelings at being so unutterably commonplace, “and I am always so delighted to hear them say so.”

A kind friend in Toronto had sent me the introduction to Dr. Holmes, but I was specially fortunate in the fact that my chief literary ally in Boston was an. old friend of his; so we made our first visit together, and had consequently a most sociable and pleasant time with him.

It was a veritable chit-chat on “Shakespeare and the musical glasses.”

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Poetry came naturally first, Tennyson and Oscar Wilde. I hope the latter will appreciate the bracketing; but I must confess that we did not discuss him specially as a *poet*.

Dr. Holmes is too clever a man himself not to detect the powers of other men, under whatever garb of folly they may be concealed; and he does not therefore take the more commonplace American (and English) view of the apostle of sun-flowers, namely, that he was a mere buffoon sent across the Atlantic to charm the dollars out of the Yankee waistcoat pocket.

We had some interesting talk also on the subject of “Heredity,” about which Dr. Holmes feels very strongly.

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He mentioned "Elsie Venner" as a little book he had once written to illustrate his views on the question and seemed surprised to find that I had known it for many years, and that it had made so powerful an impression in England.

He spoke of children coming into the world, not as "blank sheets of paper," but as "scribbled all over;" and I think it is difficult to dispute these facts.

One can easily understand why they are not more fully recognized by us. Teachers and spiritual pastors 79 and masters shrink from accentuating, or even allowing, facts that would seem to diminish individual responsibility or discourage individual endeavour.

No doubt at first sight there is much to be said on their side.

At the same time they forget that a more brave and honest recognition of this mysterious law would tend to increase the feeling of responsibility amongst those in whose hands lie often such terrible issues of moral life and death.

Surely the recognition that your outbursts of passion, drunkenness, or any other vice, are possibly forging iron chains to bind down your innocent, unborn children should have a wholesome effect.

As for possible discouragement in individual cases, where the curse of some inherited tendency lies heavy; well, the burden itself is no heavier for knowing how it came there.

Virtue is in direct ratio to the presence, not to the absence, of strong temptations.

We can but do our best with such material as is given to us; and this danger of hopeless resignation has arisen, we must remember, from that terrible fallacy which teaches that virtue and vice are important chiefly as factors in some great system 80 of future reward and punishment; not as representing the oxygen or nitrogen of the soul's atmosphere.

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Had this latter truth been taught as persistently as the former error, there would be little more danger in the doctrines of heredity than there would be danger of a fish gasping on dry land and declining to find its way back into the water if it could; on the plea that the fisherman had thrown him there, and he must decline the responsibility and trouble of making any effort to return to his natural element.

There remains of course the temptation to question the justice of such heavy handicapping in life's race, as we often see, but the doctrine of heredity does not increase the burdens. It only points us to their probable causes and may help us to remove these, to some extent at least, in the future.

The question of justice has of course no practical bearing on the matter. We have to deal with facts as they are.

For the rest; according to our views of life, we shall either bow to the decrees of inexorable destiny or trust the presence of a Father's Hand, until a clearer vision of it shall be given to us.

Dr. Holmes touched on the subject with a lighter hand than mine, but I could see that it was very near his heart.

It was delightful to see such a genial, bright old age, with no trace of pedantry about it, but thoroughly simple and real; brimming over with fun and the light-hearted nonsense that no stupid person would ever dare to utter.

I brought away a pleasant relic of a very happy visit in an autograph verse of his finest poem, "The Chambered Nautilus."

"Build thee more stately mansions, oh my soul. As the swift seasons roll, Leave thy low vaulted past! Lot each new temple, nobler than the last, Shut thee from heaven with a

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dome more vast, Till thou at length art free; Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!"

A few days after this visit to Dr. W. Holmes, I went by invitation to one of the fortnightly meetings of the "Metaphysical Club," under the presidency of Mrs. Anagnos (now, alas! dead), the accomplished daughter of a still more famous mother, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, widow of the philanthropist of that name, who was so nearly associated with Byron in the struggle for Greek independence.

The Metaphysical Club formed the subject of a VOL. I. 6 82 good deal of good-natured raillery, even amongst the Bostonians themselves.

The name was considered pretentious, the proposed aims ambitious, and the performances, occasionally, so very much below the mark!

I can only speak for myself, and can honestly say that I thoroughly enjoyed the few meetings I had the pleasure of attending.

The club is composed of men and women, and these of widely differing opinions.

The strictly orthodox, Unitarians, Theists, Agnostics, meet and have each his, or her, say upon any question discussed.

The advantage of this over our own societies, where as a rule the inside members at any rate represent more or less closely one section of opinion only, is palpable.

Each question is viewed at once, on the spot, from such various standpoints that it is impossible for any prejudice to take root, without the certainty of much controversial cutting.

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On this first occasion the club met at the house of a very beautiful young American married lady, whose appearance was a direct denial of the cruel calumny that would have us believe that female intelligence and female beauty are always found in inverse ratio.

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At the same time, I must in all honesty say that in some way an atmosphere of culture does seem to affect female looks as a whole.

Certainly Oxford in old England, and Boston in New England have (with some brilliant exceptions) less to boast of in this way than many other cities I could name.

The natural conclusion would be, that cultured women spend less time over their toilettes than their more frivolous sisters; but I am speaking now of beauty as a raw material, and do think that it is conspicuous by its absence in both of the cities I have mentioned.

Does the burden of learning weight the atmosphere with something injurious to features and complexion? Or is the more ill-natured hypothesis the correct one, that girls take to metaphysics in despair of men?

I do not see how this latter view holds good with respect to a large unchanging population, though it may have some weight as regards our own Oxford, where female residents were formerly the exceptions, and have gone there of late years, in many cases, as a matter of choice.

The clergyman who edits the leading Boston Sunday organ, read a paper on this occasion, on the question of the general advisability of Sunday papers. 6-2

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The paper itself was rather dull, but the after discussion very good, and chiefly carried on by men; our lady president putting in a few soothing words now and then, when the combat threatened to become at all fierce.

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One man was very irate, denouncing Church, clergy, and every one who attempted to stem the tide of civilization, in no measured terms.

Dr. Harris, upon whom the mantle of Emerson is supposed to have fallen, spoke very well; showing how man must study other men in order to learn his own capabilities, and to take warning from their errors.

The first blind social instincts of human nature begin with the gossip of an ale-house, and may end there, if no better direction is given to the channel. The study of history is simply the carrying out of this principle on an enormous scale; showing how thousands of men have acted and sinned and erred and suffered.

Good newspapers are necessary as a means of educating, of extending our sympathies, of showing us what our neighbours are doing at the same time in various parts of the world.

The general consensus of opinion seemed to be that the Sunday newspaper “was here and meant to stay,” 85 and that the only question now was how to elevate and sustain the tone of it.

Art is, of course, still in its infancy in America, but Boston can claim a famous native portrait painter in Mr. Ben Porter, whose original studio was in this city, although he now spends much time in New York. He is a traveller and accomplished man, as well as a successful artist, and an exception to the general truth of the saying that a prophet has no honour in his own country, for America is wise enough to be generous to native talent, and keep it faithful to her.

I do not mention other artists whose pictures we saw here, as they are not distinctively American in nationality.

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At an evening exhibition of pictures at the Art Museum, we saw some very creditable ones, especially those of marine subjects.

Mr. Henry Blackburn, our English artist, is over here with his wife, exhibiting some of his own pictures. I had an interesting talk with the latter one afternoon on the subject of Thought Transference, she saying that where the bond of sympathy was at all close, as for instance, in the case of a very united husband and wife, the phenomena of thought reading were so constant, that they ceased to excite observation.

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For example, under such conditions, some idea or remembrance will come to a wife which has been absent from her mind for months, or even years, and the husband returning home the same evening will at once refer to the matter without any reference to it on her part.

This, no doubt, is constantly happening between people who are much attached to each other, and who are at all sensitive and sympathetic. It is always put down arbitrarily to "coincidence," but is more probably the working of some mental law, of which we are still ignorant.

We spoke also of apparitions at the time of death. It is scarcely overstating facts to say that five out of every ten people we meet have had some such personal experience, and yet the question is tabooed, and still remains amongst the unproved superstitions of the day.

The "Psychical Research Society" have indeed spent much time and trouble in the matter, and have given us two ponderous volumes of results; but an accumulation of unknown instances carries less weight to individual minds than one well authenticated case coming to us at first hand.

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Unfortunately, the fear of ridicule and the natural shrinking from publicity where often the deepest and most sacred affections are involved, will always lead people to withhold much valuable testimony on this subject.

I must break through my rule of mentioning no American painter who is not a true American by birth, in favour of an English artist, Mr. Wainwright, who has cast anchor at Boston for some years past. His well-known landscapes have lost nothing of the beauty and poetry of their colouring since he crossed the Atlantic, and the detail of his pictures is good whilst yet he manages to keep the freshness of effect, gained generally only by the sacrifice of detail.

Mr. Wainwright has been chiefly occupied of late in painting the wonders of Niagara. He looked at the falls for a week, before putting brush to paper at all, in order to see the flow of the water, which is most distinctive and peculiar.

He has thus completely avoided the "sheet of glass" look so usual in such pictures; and the sketches made on the spot, with so loving and so reverent a hand, have now developed into grand memories of this great wonder of the world.

A Boston institution which has interested me very much is the "Woman's Educational and Industrial Union," an excellent society from which I think the London "Ladies' Guilds" might take some useful hints.

The aim is to help women of all classes. They provide classes, lectures and entertainments for those who have leisure to attend them, and work, cooking, sewing and instruction in all domestic services for those who are forced to get their own living. All can meet together in these rooms, which form a sort of club for women of widely differing social standing.

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One day in the week various ladies attend, who give advice and help on any knotty point that is laid before them.

Sometimes it is a poor woman wanting help to recover wages, or a landlady unable to get her rent. If the lady cannot herself deal with the case, she takes it to some legal friend and gets the matter put straight for the applicant.

Of course these lady visitors are women of good common-sense and experience, and are generally able to deal with a case themselves, or to put the poor woman in direct communication with those who can do so, and whom the latter may safely trust with her interests.

Each case is investigated thoroughly. Sometimes the right is found to lie apart from the plaintiff, and then, of course, the case is dismissed.

Once a month the club meets for an "open evening" and some musical or literary entertainment is provided, often a combination of the two.

On the occasion when I was present, a paper was read by Colonel Higginson on the "growth of literature in America." The subject promised to be most interesting, but was rather spoiled by the unfortunate tendency to "odorous comparisons" complained of by the immortal Malaprop.

It is impossible for America to discuss its literature upon its own merits, which are so undeniably great, without having a side fling at poor old England.

In certain lines of fiction Howells, James, Mrs. Burnett (it is generous to throw her into the American scale) and Miss Murfrey (Charles Egbert Craddock) have given full proof of the strength and delicacy of the American pen, and we are all ready to worship at the shrines of Emerson, Longfellow or Nathaniel Hawthorne; but to compare the whole bulk of

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literature in America to that of England, and this rather, in favour of the former, seems to me unwise and weak.

It is untrue to start with, and no nation was ever so yet nursed into greater achievement on the pap of falsehood.

Again it would be obviously unfair to America to attempt any such comparison for another five hundred years at least. That our older country with its unbroken literary traditions should have produced more good literary stuff as a whole during the last three hundred years is surely not to be wondered at. Consider for one moment the difference of the conditions: the younger country spending its strength and energies at first in the bare struggle for existence and a good foothold; later in the struggle for independence, and then again for union. It is only within the last fifty years that America has had time to turn round and think of a literature or art on her own account at all.

The literature of which we English are most justly proud is, after all, the birthright of America as well as England. Is it not wiser to remember this and to be fired with the noble ambition of making an American literature in the future that shall be worthy of such a past, rather than pander to a blind and restless vanity by insisting on a comparison so unfair to themselves in its very nature; so absurd if decided in their favour? 91 Colonel Higginson said that in visiting the Athenæum in London and seeing the walls there lined with the books of every living author, it was delightful to him to remember that in Emerson, Whittier and Longfellow, the Americans had names as great as any English ones.

My friend and I were the only English people present and of course remained silent under this astonishing proposition, but an American lady took up the cudgels for us and asked whether Colonel Higginson had duly considered the claims of Carlyle, Tennyson, Thackeray, George Eliot, &c., &c. Our chairman admitted that Tennyson might rank before Longfellow and Whittier, but he maintained that Emerson was worth all the rest put together, a conclusion that no one seemed disposed to dispute.

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I think the liberal-minded American lady probably felt as the carter did when the back of his cart fell out on the top of a steep hill and the carrots rolled to the bottom.

He did not swear, for the first time in his life, because he “couldn't do justice to the occasion.”

We then had a discussion on rank and title and the absurd deference paid to these in England. Here came in a story of a young American lady many years 92 ago, who had the entrée into first-class English society, finding herself on one occasion at a grand dinner party with various dukes and duchesses amongst the guests. One benevolent old gentleman and she were the only two left to bring up the rear when the procession formed to leave the drawing-room. The old gentleman turned out to be the poet Rogers.

The gist of the story of course lay in the English stupidity which placed title before brains. Colonel Higginson being introduced to me later, I made bold to ask him how he would arrange our English dinner table.

Ought not character to rank even above literature? If so who was to be judge of the moral worth and standing, and would not the people who went into dinner last under such conditions be even more aggrieved where character formed the test, not mere rank, which is after all acknowledged by every one, and which has nothing really invidious about it?

Some one suggested that age might settle the question; that might answer with regard to the gentlemen, but I am afraid we should have all the ladies creeping into the background and declining to make a move.

Colonel Higginson spoke of the social conditions 93 of England as being so unfavourable to the growth of literature, such severe divisions existing between class and class, and so much less social mingling of the literary elements consequently, than you find in such a republic as America.

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This no doubt is to some degree true, but on the other hand we must remember the enormous competition over here, where every one wields a pen. Men have less time to ripen. They are forced into the market with their unripe fruit, their unleavened mental pabulum, or the ranks would soon close and shut them out altogether.

It seems to me unfair to mention Carlyle as a specimen of the melancholy and unwholesome morbidness induced by English social conditions.

Carlyle, with all his genius, was a dyspeptic old Scotchman, and never came to England at all until he was over forty years of age.

In illustration of the inferiority of the English language, and to show how its simplicity and baldness degenerate into slang, we had an amusing story of a young American girl staying in Kensington some four or five years ago. She made a bad stroke at a croquet match, and called out in despair, "Oh, what a horrid scratch!" Her young English friend corrected her 94 for using such a dreadful Yankee expression and suggested a "beastly fluke" as an improvement upon it.

The anachronism of any one playing croquet in Kensington within the last twenty years made me very sceptical about this tale; but I am afraid the untravelled Americans present on the occasion may go to their graves with the conviction that "beastly fluke" is one of the usually elegant expressions used by an ordinary English young lady in society.

It reminded one of the old schoolboy story of the wretched French tutor freshly imported who was invited to lunch at the squire's house, and primed beforehand by the boys to be sure to ask for "swipes" at table, as all English people of any pretension invariably used this word instead of beer or ale.

Miss Peabody, a venerable old lady of eighty-three and sister-in-law to Nathaniel Hawthorne, made some very sensible remarks towards the end of the meeting, when

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tea and cakes were handed round to us by young lady members, and some singing and recitation closed the proceedings.

I must now give some account of a meeting of the Round Table Club, one of the principal private literary clubs of Boston.

It is composed of a limited number of ladies and 95 gentlemen, and an invitation to attend one of the evening reunions is a favour to be greatly appreciated, for the meetings take place only once a month and always in private houses, and only a very limited number of guests can be allowed.

On this occasion the club met at the house of one of the principal families of social Boston. A handsome and charming hostess—a genial host—a beautiful house full of exquisite pictures, statues and *objets d'art*—a perfectly appointed establishment—these formed our pleasant surroundings on that evening.

Before the real business began I had some interesting talk with several Boston celebrities; amongst others with Mr. Aldridge, the editor of the “Atlantic Monthly,” a young and very pleasant man, who introduced me to his pretty and refined-looking young wife. We found some London artistic friends in common in the course of conversation, and were deep in the most fascinating subject of mutual acquaintance, when requested to leave a handsome library for a still more gorgeous room furnished with lavish hand, but in exquisite taste. The crimson silk hangings gave a warm tone to a lovely sitting statue of Sappho, life size, at one end of the drawing-room.

Here chairs were placed and we sat down to a very 96 simple and most interesting address on Russian peasantry and Tourguéniéff's novels, given by the accomplished French authoress, Madame Durand Greville. Tourguéniéff was a dear personal friend to both Monsieur and Madame Greville, who have translated many of his works into French.

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She spoke very touchingly of the great Russian novelist's kindness to every one, independent of nationality or sect.

A short discussion followed her address, which was given sitting down in her chair, in a most easy conversational manner, and in very fluent English.

Now and then she hesitated for a word, turning round in a pretty impetuous way with a *dites-moi, done*, to the chairman, Colonel Wentworth Higginson, who proved an unfailing resource on such occasions.

A young Englishman who spoke like a Lancashire American said it was a pity Tourguéniéff was forced to live so much in Paris, as he "lost touch" of the very peasant life he described, and that his sketches lacked something of their value. In consequence of this a young Russian rose up to refute this idea, saying that he considered it a great advantage to Tourguéniéff's writings that he should have had sufficient distance to give a good perspective.

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So the small war raged for a time. Diametrically different opinions were advanced with perfect courtesy and good temper until as the discussion waxed rather warm, Colonel Higginson cleverly carried it from the ground of argument by giving a striking description of Tourguéniéff's personal appearance; to the truthfulness of which I can answer, having seen him take his honorary degree at Oxford some years ago.

The meeting was adjourned about nine-thirty p.m., and we went downstairs for tea, coffee and light refreshments, and a little more social interchange of ideas before going home.

Monsieur Greville was now introduced to me, a very charming man with an unbounded admiration for his talented wife. He did not, however, emulate her example by venturing on the slippery rocks of conversational English, so we conversed in French.

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A bright winter's afternoon at Cambridge spent in visiting the Harvard University, hangs next in my mental picture gallery.

Harvard has been described so often that we know it in England almost as well as our own Oxford. The red-brick buildings have little beauty in themselves, with the exception of the new Law buildings designed by Richardson, the architect of Trinity Church, Boston. VOL. I. 7 98 The Memorial Hall, erected in commemoration of the students and graduates who lost their lives during the civil war, has a melancholy interest attached to it over and above its value as a fine specimen of architecture.

It was very depressing to walk through the long corridor lined with small tablets bearing the names of so many young men cut off in the very flower of their youth, and a pleasant relief to come upon the stately dining-room, the walls of which are lined with portraits of the various Harvard alumni, past and present.

The students dining here only pay eighteen shillings a week for full board, so the fashionable young men prefer to get up small dining clubs amongst themselves, and to patronize some local boarding-house.

Cambridge is somewhat flat and monotonous, but peaceful and academic in its atmosphere. In summer, when the stately elms and other trees growing here in profusion are in full leaf, it must be beautiful as well as peaceful.

We had a pleasant afternoon tea at the house of Professor James, brother to Mr. Henry James, the novelist. His wife, a beautiful and accomplished American lady, gave me some interesting information about California, and strongly advised us to include Oregon and the Columbia river in our travels later on.

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I heard also a weird story of a young lady who went to California last spring and boarded at Monterey (on the Pacific coast) with a lady recommended to her by a fellow traveller.

There is an immense contraband trade in opium on this coast. The Chinese smuggle it on shore and leave it there for their spies to pick up. Sometimes of course it falls into alien hands. On this occasion the servant of this Monterey lady found a lump on the shore which she could not lift alone, for it is as heavy as lead. She rushed back to her mistress, and they both returned in all haste to the spot, where they seem to have had a free fight on the shore for the possession of it! At length an amicable arrangement was made to divide it equally, and they forthwith dragged it home between them and buried it in the garden. The only other servant in the house was the usual coloured "hired man," and he, finding out their secret, threatened to inform against them unless a second division were made in his favour. The conspirators were forced to agree to these terms. The young servant-girl eventually sold her share of the plunder in San Francisco, at the rate of eight dollars a pound.

Longfellow's house is of course the one chief point of every Cambridge pilgrimage. The long drawing-room 7—2 100 leading out of his study looked specially pretty on this occasion, being entirely hung with thanksgiving decorations in the form of wreaths of lilac and green leaves.

On the stairs stands an old-fashioned clock, over which we became of course very sentimental—of course the original "old clock on the stairs;" unfortunately we found that although that special turn on the stairs formed the original site, the real old clock had been sold some years ago!

One of Longfellow's daughters married a few months ago the brother of Mrs. Ole Bull. Another daughter is Mrs. Daira, and the eldest still lives on in the pretty cosy green and white house which was the poet's home for so many years.

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Coming away from it, late on that winter's evening, we had a view that I shall never forget.

The house faces due west and Longfellow bought the opposite fields to keep his villa sacred.

The sun had lately set behind deep purple clouds which wreathed and faded away to our right into every shade of green and purple, toning down into a curiously bright and insistent shade of turquoise blue.

The grand old trees stretched their beautiful bare limbs upwards against this most perfect background, 101 and overhead the silvery crescent of a young moon hung above the dark angry clouds of purple edged with flame, whilst the evening star shone down upon us, bright and calm and peaceful. To be greeted by such a scene on many an autumn or winter evening would well repay the purchase of many fields.

At a second meeting of the Metaphysical Club we had an essay written and read by Mr. Crouch on the "Unconscious Life."

It touched first upon the charm of unconsciousness in children. All the best work has been the outcome of unconscious moments, although the result no doubt of what has been lived through and studied previously. Some people are always digging themselves up by the roots to see how they are growing, always tormented by conscience or consciousness.

The nineteenth century is pre-eminently an age of self-consciousness and introspection. Daily and weekly papers are all so many looking-glasses hung up for us that we may see our own features.

Mr. Crouch ended by a beautiful quotation from Emerson's essay on the "Over Soul," showing how a power outside of and above ourselves, independent of all creeds, is really the great informing and pervading medium through which man becomes a law to himself

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102 —is ever straining after the highest and best, or suffering at least the remorse and loss of not doing so.

We had the usual glorification of Emerson with reference to this extract. No doubt the great American philosopher has clothed a true and beautiful idea in very beautiful and appropriate language, but it seems to me difficult to beat St. Paul.

“One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all!”

St. Paul speaks of God—Emerson of the Over Soul. Are not the terms convertible?

Some years ago I remember being very much struck at a meeting of the Theosophic Society, in Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, by the burst of enthusiastic applause which greeted a communication made in the first instance by a Thibet anchorite, who had lived up in the mountains without touching meat for some fabulous number of years, apparently for the purpose of receiving this inspired message. It was supposed to have been communicated by him to a mysterious “Mahatina,” who passed it on in turn to some of the “faithful” in India, and thence it was brought over to England to be administered with all due discretion to a select circle of fashionable “inquirers” in London.

Having heard this lengthy prelude, I listened 103 with breathless expectation for something that really “looked like business,” as a finale to an evening of rather vague and disappointing generalities.

The whole gist of the inspired message seemed to be that we were not to be so wholly wrapped up in our own spiritual development as to become careless of and indifferent to the higher development, mental and spiritual, of our fellow creatures. St. Paul had given the precept more tersely but quite as strongly when he said, “Look not every man to his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

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I conclude that each of us had a Bible at home, but we had put on our evening clothes, we had driven many miles and listened to an intolerable amount of commonplace speechifying in order to reach this conclusion. And yet many amongst this cultivated London audience seemed to be listening to such a doctrine for the first time!

Are old truths so much more palatable for being served up with Thibet sauce?

I must confess to a wholesome horror of “readings” and “recitations” in general, but I listened with great interest one afternoon in Boston to a Shakespearian lecture given by an old man of eighty-four.

The paper itself, though good, was not specially original, but the fire and vigour of his reading were very remarkable at such an advanced age, and he had a charming way of asking his audience for their opinion on any knotty point which kept us on the *qui vive*, and gave a fresh element of interest to the proceedings.

In this manner we discussed the “we fail” of Lady Macbeth, in the well-known scene where husband and wife are discussing their murderous projects, and Macbeth says tremblingly, “If we should fail.” Mrs. Siddons always rendered it, “well! then we fail—we take the risk.”

Our venerable lecturer said that but for this high authority we should be inclined to read it with incredulous scorn: We fail? who have never failed in anything? He thinks that Lady Macbeth, with her shrinking, fearsome husband before her, would not be likely to allow the possibility of failure.

In my own poor judgment the interpretation of Mrs. Siddons seems to allow of no questions. It is quite in character with Lady Macbeth's dare-devil nature, as also with the context, “But screw your courage to the sticking point and we'll not fail,” which certainly would imply that she had contemplated the possibility of failure.

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Perhaps Mrs. Siddons could understand more easily than a man the reckless impatience with which such a woman would meet the objections of a timid spouse, bad enough but not bold enough for the deed, and how at such a moment the impetuosity of intense aggravation might overpower the policy of even a clever Lady Macbeth.

A handsome, very slightly “coloured,” melancholy-looking young man sat near me during the reading, and later on I heard his sad story. At a time when the Southern colour prejudices were most rampant, a well-known Southern judge had a young quadroon girl for his mistress, and this young man was their son.

Two benevolent and conscientious members of the family adopted and educated him, starting him in a career where his intelligence and steadiness were likely to win success.

Time passed, and there came to Boston a pretty, intelligent, and, as events showed, most energetic white girl, daughter of some country minister, who was thirsting for knowledge, and who actually went for two hours every day to a *café* in the city in order to secure her board and enough money to be able to carry on her studies by attending the various classes in Boston.

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A friend of mine found her there, was struck by her beauty and intelligence, heard her story, and interested herself to raise a sufficient sum of money to enable the young lady to give up her attendance at the restaurant, and to live at a quiet boarding-house whilst her education went on.

She made such good use of her time that an excellent post as teacher had just been offered to her when, to the surprise of every one, she announced her approaching marriage with the young man already mentioned.

Many tried to dissuade her from it, solely on account of this colour prejudice, but she was very much in love, and quite determined to take the step. The poor young fellow had

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been fascinated by her from the first, but had concealed his feelings most honourably on account of this gulf of race between them, and was on the point of leaving Boston as his wisest course, when she showed him how completely his affections were returned.

They were married, and for a time all went happily. Then a child was expected, and the friends were naturally anxious, fearing that the colour, so slight in the father, might (as it often does) come out more strongly in the next generation. However, fortunately a little white baby appeared on the scenes, and one might have hoped that here all risk to their happiness ended.

Alas! now comes the sad part of the story.

The infatuation which the woman had mistaken for love passed away, and her colour prejudice which had lain dormant re-asserted itself more strongly than ever for the violence done to it. Soon after the birth of the little child she left her husband, returning to her own home, taking the child with her, and leaving him to the wreck of his solitary life behind.

English ladies who are likely to make any stay in the United States during the winter season, and enter at all into society there, will be interested to hear something of the peculiarities of custom with regard to ladies' dress over here. A "winter dress" in the house is unbearable. The rooms are so hot, the passages so thoroughly warmed by stoves, that I found it impossible to wear anything heavier than an autumn gown of cashmere or silk in the house.

Outside, of course, with the thermometer often below zero, you require any amount of wraps, but these should be in the form of warm but light mantles, that can be easily removed on entering a drawing-room, not the tight jackets and ulsters that cling to you like stubborn facts.

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Had any kind friend given me a hint about this before leaving England, it would have prevented the carrying about of many useless garments. One really handsome afternoon dress, made quite high to the throat, but rather more elaborate than the ordinary visiting dress of an English lady, is absolutely necessary for any one going into social life here. A light dressy bonnet is generally ordered to complete such a costume, which is then suitable for ordinary afternoon or evening receptions, for the theatre, or for any evening concert in Boston or New York.

The *demi-toilette* dress, slightly open in front, which we should wear on these latter occasions, would be quite out of place here.

Dining one evening in New York, with friends who were going to take me afterwards to their box at the Philharmonic concert, I remember one of the ladies of the house, who had not intended to make one of the party to the musical entertainment, appeared in a handsome gown, cut very slightly open in front. On finding that the illness of another member of the family would necessitate her coming with us as a substitute, she changed her costume for one equally charming, but made quite high to the throat.

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An English woman would probably have tucked a handkerchief round her throat to fill up the few inches necessary, and wearing no bonnet on her head, the one dress would have answered as well as the other; but an American lady has her concert or theatre costume with suitable head-gear complete, and the one cannot be divorced from the other.

At the opera all this is changed. The very fullest evening dress is *de rigueur*, white satin and diamonds being conspicuous on such occasions.

Another curious custom, to our ideas, is the fashion of dressing in full *demi-toilette* even at an afternoon reception, when such a reception is given in your special honour. The rest of the guests come in ordinary afternoon dress, but the lady or ladies for whom the

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entertainment has been organized are expected to come early and remain late, to assist the lady of the house in entertaining her guests and to proclaim the presence of the lioness on the occasion by appearing as the ladies of the house themselves do on such occasions, in evening dress, ornamented with natural flowers.

The first time a reception was given in our honour at Boston my friend and I did not know of this custom and dressed as we should have done for an afternoon 110 “at home” in London; but we profited by experience the second time, much to the inward relief of our hostess, I am sure.

At one of these receptions I had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. James Freeman Clarke, the well-known Unitarian minister in Boston, whose book on the ten pilgrims of the world is so widely read. He is a dear old man, full of bright, pleasant social chat. On such occasions it is impossible to get much deeper than this, for when eighty or ninety people are waiting to be introduced in turn, the conversation in each individual case is apt to become rather hommopathic in quantity; a bigoted allopath might add in quality also.

Rather a touching little incident occurred at this special reception, showing what a strong and generous feeling of affection and admiration towards the English lies at the bottom of most New England hearts.

After standing through the ordeal of “presentation” and “conversation” from four till seven p.m. it seemed time to be thinking of home, when a middle-aged, bright-faced woman came up and was introduced by a name well known in connection with the War of Independence.

After a few civil words I was moving off with some 111 conventional remark about the lateness of the hour, but a hope that we might meet again some day. “It is not at all likely,” she said in a resigned voice, “but of course I must not detain you, only they have brought me from Cambridge to see you and I have been waiting all the afternoon for an introduction.” Of course I sat down again after this for a few minutes of most pleasant talk

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with my companion, who is a descendant of a famous soldier who fired one of the first shots for American independence.

A luncheon with a young American lady and her Scotch husband, who had come over in our steamer from England, gave me the opportunity of seeing a Boston boarding-house and of going, later in the afternoon, over one of the most famous "High Schools for girls," where she had herself graduated with high honours only a few years ago.

So far as the boarding-house was concerned it merely accentuated the universal fact of troublesome and distracted mistresses.

We were waited upon by the fourth parlourmaid who has appeared on the scenes since my friends arrived three weeks ago. A few days before a cook and housemaid had also come, and the poor mistress fondly hoped she had at last found two treasures. 112 Next morning by eight o'clock both the treasures had calmly left the house, giving no sort of warning; they did not care for the work and "did not wish to have any words."

The poor woman was after all more fortunate than a Boston lady of my acquaintance, who was parting with a cook for incompetency, but, in a perfectly friendly manner as she believed. Unfortunately the cook took a different view of the matter and retaliated, not by harmless abuse, but in a far more efficacious manner by mixing up a quantity of cinder dust with several pounds of excellent mincemeat prepared in anticipation of Christmas.

As these and similar casualties are of constant occurrence, we can hardly wonder that so many American ladies shirk the responsibilities and annoyances of housekeeping, and take refuge in hotels.

The High School which our friend, a former pupil, took us to see is a splendid building. There are nine hundred scholars in all, including two hundred in the classical department. The system seems excellent.

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There is a large laboratory fitted up with everything that girls can require for their chemical experiments. Each girl has her own slab with drawers to keep her apron, instruments, &c.

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Hot and cold water are turned on, and a long, large pipe runs all round the upper part of the room, with frequent ventilating chimneys to carry off the bad air and insure a pure and even atmosphere.

The building itself consists of three stories, these being divided into class-rooms for recitation, study, teachers' rooms, and so forth.

Only the "janitors," who keep the place in order, sleep on the premises, all the teachers living in their own homes.

Each class-room is filled with wooden desks slightly slanting and the size of an old-fashioned davenport. Before each desk is placed a chair for the pupil, and her school books, ink, pencils and papers are kept inside it.

The course lasts for about four years, and there is a pretty fashion that each class, on graduating, should present a picture to furnish the room where that special class is held. Each girl who graduates need give a trifle only, for the classes are large. A good engraving or oil painting is bought with the amount collected, and hung upon the walls of the room, inscribed with the date of presentation.

The public hall here is a magnificent room, supported by columns, and containing very good models VOL. I 8 114 of various classical statues all round three sides of it, a large platform filling up the fourth.

When we entered, the hall was quite crowded with wooden benches. The whole school assembles here in the morning for prayers; later, the benches are removed, and the immense space can then be devoted to calisthenics, gymnastics, &c.

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Every Wednesday evening one or other class has a reunion or dance in this charming hall, so the "sweet girl graduates" seem to have a very good time on the whole.

At the very top of the house is a large studio with excellent north light, set apart for the artistic portion of the school.

Work begins at nine, and lasts until two p.m., when all go home; but, of course, these hours do not include the preparation for classes, which is done at home, and may take from three to four hours more, according to the ability or industry of the scholar.

Each class-room has its own library, but there is also a valuable general library downstairs, from which pupils are allowed to take books home by merely entering their names.

This excellent education is entirely free; paper, books, chemicals, everything being provided,

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The best families in the place send their girls to such schools; in fact, only delicate or rather stupid girls seem to go to private schools here.

At first sight it seems unfair that people who can afford to pay should take advantage of such a school, but it would be difficult to insure so good an education elsewhere, and no doubt the richer people feel that the high educational rates they pay should entitle them to some return.

I purpose to devote a short chapter to Boston churches and Boston ministers later on, but I find a few notes here on a very pleasant visit we received from Dr. Phillips Brooks, the well-known Boston divine.

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I had been in the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, a few months before, when he was the guest of Jowett, the master of Balliol, and received an honorary degree from the University.

An Irish friend, who sat by me on that occasion, and who is very much prejudiced against English looks, amused me by her contempt for Lord Alcester and several other men who received a like honour at the hands of the Vice-Chancellor, adding, "Why, that American is the only man worth calling a man amongst them all."

Certainly Dr. Brooks' splendid physique appeared to 8—2 116 great advantage in the crimson silk folds of the doctor's dress. Soldiers or sailors may be small and insignificant without any detracting from their prestige. We think of Napoleon and have come to associate pluck and energy with a small frame; but where the Church is in question I think our views are modified, and that a commanding presence gives a sense of manliness that carries its own weight, more especially when there is innate manliness of spirit to match the outward form, as I think every one who has the privilege of Dr. Brooks' acquaintance must admit is the case with him.

In talking over Oxford days and the "Commemoration" in question, Dr. Brooks reminded me of a little incident which I had forgotten, and which seemed to him interesting as being so typical of the English character. "Bully as long as you can and dare, but give a hearty, generous cheer to the spirit that won't brook your bullying ways."

A young undergraduate stood up to recite some Latin verse with a white flower in his button hole. The usual clamour set in, shouts and cries of "Take it out, sir; take it out!"

The young man held some whispered counsel with a friend, who evidently preached prudence, for the 117 obnoxious flower was removed, and he was allowed to continue his reading in peace.

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Later in the programme, another young man had to give a recitation in Greek prose; he also had provided himself with a “button-hole” for the auspicious occasion. The scene was repeated—more cries and shouts—fairly good-natured at first, accompanied by a little good-humoured raillery, “Take it out, sir; never mind, she will give you another one when you go home.”

By degrees the shouts became louder and less good-humoured; the boy's obstinate resistance was beginning to tell upon the tempers of the crowd of young Englishmen who packed the theatre from top to bottom.

Fiercer grew the cries, until at length all self-control ceased and a howling, shouting mob were shrieking and screaming with all the concentrated power of some four hundred pairs of British lungs, at this one small pale youth who stood there as firm as a rock, going on with his recitation in pantomime apparently, for not one single syllable of it could be heard above the din of angry shouts.

Up to the very last moment the unequal contest went on; but when at last, to our great relief, the prize 118 poem or prose had come to an end, and the young author bowed and stepped down with pale and compressed lips, but perfectly self-possessed and composed, such a ringing cheer came forth from these same British lungs as I never heard before, and the bellowing, roaring wild beasts were converted at a touch—the touch of plucky defiance—into a generous, hearty set of enthusiastic admirers.

On the afternoon of Christmas Eve we went by kind permission of Dr. Brooks to the Christmas tree, which is prepared annually and placed in Trinity Church.

Three tall fir trees are placed in large boxes in the chancel besides *the* tree, which was glittering with lights and tinsel and covered with gay flowers and toys of every description. It was quite a fairy-like scene, and the idea of incongruity with the church surroundings

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faded by degrees as one looked at all the happy children's faces turned towards the pretty sparkling tree.

It seemed to me that a ceremony born of so much love and kindness was perhaps not so inappropriate after all to the House where we worship One, who was pre-eminently the Friend of little children.

On this occasion the children of course had the best seats, and there were so many of all ages and sizes 119 that we grown-up people sat very far back, and could only with difficulty catch a few words of the little address given by Dr. Brooks after the first carols had been sung and a few prayers read.

He spoke to the children very simply and prettily of Christmas as a person “who had looked so often into the eyes of children that he had remained himself a child through all these centuries.”

After the last carol was sung, several young men came down the aisles bearing large packages for distribution. These were generally given to the teacher of the class, who opened them and discovered a number of neat packages inside, prepared for and addressed to her various pupils.

About a dollar is spent upon each child, I am told, but this cannot be the limit; for I noticed one happy possessor of quite a large perambulator. These parcels had all been hidden behind the central tree, and when they were removed the work of stripping the tree began.

One of the prettiest sights was to see Dr. Brooks, looking so big and broad, take a little toddling child of three or four years of age in a crimson frock up the altar steps to choose her own little doll from the tree.

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Christmas time brings not only Christmas trees but also the terrible necessity for choosing Christmas cards and Christmas presents in the whirl and turmoil of a monster American store. Some of the dry goods stores over here are on an enormous scale, quite like a little city.

Instead of the long avenues, alleys and roads of counters that we find at our own "Whiteley's" or "Marshall and Snelgrove's," you have in one of these stores an enormous open space, supported on innumerable pillars and forming a very fine hall. Counters run all round, and up and down such a hall. Above these counters is storage for more goods, and above that again, long wooden pathways fenced in by rails on either side, where you may see a number of little girls receiving the goods purchased below, which are put into wooden scales and hoisted up to them. These wares are then packed up above, the change returned, and the whole concern is lowered down to the original shopkeeper below who sold you the article, in less time than I have taken to describe the process.

In most of the shops the money you give is put with the bill in a little round box which travels at great speed along various wires until it reaches a cashier who stops it; takes out the money, receipts the 121 bill and returns the latter with the change in the same manner.

At other large stores the young girls who sit over the counters as I have described either hand parcels and change by the miniature elevator already mentioned, or come down from their wooden "eyries" by the steps which occur at intervals.

At one Brobdingnagian establishment for "dry goods," in Boston, there is a delightful room called the "Bronze Room," away from the din and noise of the shop and yet close to the most central part of it.

This room is charmingly furnished in artistic style with dark bronze and green painted wood, handsome bronze Japan paper and dados; a large alcove with plush and velvet cushions, and a dim religious light streaming through stained glass windows where young

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men and young women can refresh themselves by a little harmless flirtation after the sterner duties and fatigues of shopping.

A wide and beautiful old fire-place with open fire and handsome bronze “dogs,” and a huge central table provided with writing materials, complete the furniture of the room.

An inner room contains a lavatory, with cold and 122 hot water turned on, and fitted with all toilet necessities.

A visit to the old State House on Washington Street (now turned into a museum) reminded us again most forcibly of that terrible torment, the Boston tea tax. Here is the very hall where the council met to expostulate on the tea tax and the stamp duty, which were really the instigating causes of the American rebellion.

A little bit of genealogy which I struck out here for myself interested me, and may interest some others.

Looking at the picture of a Governor Bellingham, I puzzled over the connection with Ireland, which had not begun in those early days, and yet the Bellinghams are now-a-days a distinctly Irish family. It struck me suddenly that there is a Lincolnshire branch of the family. Now as many of the first settlers here came from Boston in Lincolnshire no doubt a Bellingham emigrated with them, and this governor would be a descendant, if not the original man who came over.

I could dwell much longer over these jottings of “Bostonia,” but will not risk wearying my readers. One more talk, one more day described and we will 123 pass on to other cities, which can be dealt with more rapidly.

The talk was with a well-known American general, who has travelled and lived much in England, and is therefore capable of giving an international opinion, the subject being wife-beating.

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He maintains that this crime is almost unknown in America, and attributes the fact to the more temperate habits of the labouring classes, these in turn arising from good sanitary conditions, wholesome wooden frame houses, &c., &c.

I conclude that in speaking of temperate habits he referred to the Eastern states only, for we all know that spirits are drunk to any extent in Central and Western America. We spoke also of unhappiness in married life, and of how this increases in proportion to the higher civilization and the introduction of more numerous tastes, and therefore of more numerous possibilities of disagreement. My friend's opinion was that the freer thought and action in America led to more divorce, but that this was no proof of a lower rate of matrimonial happiness than in England.

In England men and women have more of the “grin and bear it” philosophy, owing to a stronger tradition and a sterner Mrs. Grundy.

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Here , when the chain begins to gall, it can be cut with far less risk to their social status.

A bright clear winter's day, with snow lying deep on the ground, found us in the train *en route* for Concord, a thriving village, some twenty miles northwest of Boston.

Macaulay's famous “school-boy” can tell us that on the Concord Bridge was fired the first shot for American independence. Close by is a nameless mound under which the British soldiers who fell on that memorable April 19th, 1775, are buried. Some generous American had remembered his fallen foes and placed wreaths above their graves when the last anniversary of the victory was commemorated. The faded flowers still lay there as we passed.

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Mr. French, a famous young American sculptor living in Boston, has made a grand statue of the "Minute man" which now adorns the bridge. The minute man (a sort of yeoman volunteer) is resting on his ploughshare and eager for the fray.

Concord has been made not only "glorious by the sword" but "famous by the pen." Here lived Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne, and here is still gathered together in the bright summer days the Concord School of Philosophy, when the works of all 125 great American philosophers past and present can be studied.

The school meets for five weeks, during which time the various members are billeted in the many pretty rustic cottages around.

The meetings, which take place twice a day, are held in a very small wooden frame house which seemed scarcely big enough for even the philosophical "elect," but so many addresses and discussions spread over so many weeks allow a choice of attendance to everybody.

It must be a very pleasant time for people interested in such matters, and it gives a chance of meeting and exchanging ideas to many busy men and women who would not otherwise be brought together, where distances are so immense.

Moreover, Concord in the summer must be delightful. It looked so picturesque and bright in its snowy-white garments, and we jingled over the ground so merrily in our sleigh, that I could not have wished to see it under pleasanter auspices; but I have no doubt that philosophy might be the better for a little more warmth. Emerson's house is a small, square white and green wooden house; not unlike Longfellow's outside, although much smaller and less imposing. Here, however, the resemblance ends.

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Longfellow's rooms are so cosy and genial, whilst these are entirely wanting in anything like beauty. Horse-hair sofas, straight-backed chairs, covered with atrocious "chair backs,"

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a hideous round table in the middle of the room, and a pebble-covered album of deepest Margate dye, formed an *ensemble* that needed all one's veneration for the great man to become even tolerable.

The redeeming feature of the room lay in some very good engravings, and there was an excellent picture of Carlyle over the hall door.

A sweet-faced, grey-haired woman of middle age received us, Miss Ellen Emerson; and a pleasant married daughter came in later.

The widow is still alive, but is now very infirm and rarely leaves her bedroom. I saw a photograph of her taken with some of her grandchildren, a most interesting face with very dark eyes.

The Old Manse where Hawthorne originally lived, is a melancholy looking place; but his later home, the Wayside House, is very picturesque. It is built amongst a belt of pines, and has a pretty central tower room where he sat and worked, and which must have commanded a lovely view.

Close by is the home of the Alcotts. Miss Louisa 127 Alcott, author of "Little Women," &c., is too well known by English readers to need comment of mine. Her name reminds me of an amusing story which is told of Dr. Alcott and her late mother. The latter at one time being very ill, and thinking she was dying, advised her husband to marry again, "for the sake of the children," mentioning a suitable person by name.

"Well, my dear, to tell you the truth, I had thought of her myself," replied the accommodating husband; upon which the indignant wife very shortly recovered.

Professor Harris, already mentioned in these pages, lives also at Concord, and we called upon him and had a very pleasant chat about Art.

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He showed me his idea, in a photograph, of the original pose of the celebrated Venus of Milo. He thinks that she originally formed one of two figures, the second being Mars, and that she was represented unbuckling his armour; the allegory being that the conquests of peace come only through war.

Speaking of Raphael's San Sisto Madonna, I was relieved to find that Dr. Harris had at one time, at least, felt the aggravation that I always experience at looking at the self-conscious pose of the St. Barbara in that grand picture. He thinks, however, that Raphael's intention was to represent her as overcome and overpowered by the vision of the open heavens; whereas the sad look in the child's face seems a prophecy, the sight of the cross in the distance.

My next chapter will contain some slight sketches of sermons preached by three typical Boston ministers. I know no better method of placing the development of American theology in the hands of my readers.

Short as the chapter will be, it has seemed to me better to separate it from the main portion of my Boston sketches, so that no one need feel that he has been cheated into a sermon on false pretences.

Some may choose to skip the Theology, others the spiritualism; neither the one nor the other shall be forced down unwilling throats without all due warning.

CHAPTER III. BOSTON THEOLOGY.

Although the Unitarian creed has the largest following in Boston, I am inclined to say a few words in the first place about a very handsome Presbyterian church built in the finest part of the city, close to Trinity Church, where Dr. Brooks officiates.

The "old South Church" has been removed to this fine site from the more crowded part of the town, where the congregation held their services for many years. Very

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handsome Sunday school classes for infants above, and for older children below, are built in connection with the church and under the same roof. Above the church itself are fine rooms for reception and dining rooms, where a meeting of the members of the congregation is held once a month. Supper (which is cooked out) is served here, and tea and coffee are made in a little kitchen close at hand; then addresses and music are given in the drawing-room, which forms part of this suite of rooms. VOL. I. 9

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To our ideas, it seems curious to have all this social life going on inside a church, and savours of a dissenting chapel; but even in Episcopalian churches here you often find Sunday schools attached to the principal building, with committee rooms and study for the pastor, where he can receive members of the congregation and transact business without fear of interruption. This old South Church has for its pastor a remarkable man, a Scotchman. Twelve years ago only he came as a poor boy from Aberdeen; glad to get work here in a paint shop at two dollars a week. A lady happening to meet the boy in a street car, was struck by his appearance and intelligence, and told him to come and see her. She and her husband became so much interested in him that they undertook his education, and sent him to Harvard University, where he had a brilliant college career, becoming finally minister of a Presbyterian church in Connecticut.

When this handsome church was built, it was offered to Mr. Gordon, but he would not leave his own flock till he saw his way clearly and conscientiously; so for two years a locum tenens was appointed, but the place was kept open for him, and at length he came, much to the joy of the congregation. He now lives in the pretty parsonage house adjoining the church, and 131 his former benefactress, now left a widow, lives with him, for he is still unmarried. It is a pretty ending to the story, that her childless old age should be brightened by the companionship and love of this adopted son.

The Unitarian religion, as I have already observed, is the speciality of Boston in the way of creeds. I know no city where religious thought is freer, more active, more eccentric, fanciful

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and shifting. The Bostonians remind one of the Corinthians of old, by the manner in which they run after any new thing in the way of religious theory. Theosophists, Christian Scientists, Positivists, Humanitarians, Spiritualists or Swedenborgians, all find a hearing and a following here. But below all these various excrescences of theological thoughts is a good firm strata of Unitarianism. So I will first give a few notes from what may be considered a typical sermon from the Unitarian point of view, preached by Mr. Savage, a leading professor of that faith, before going on to the development of theological thought with which I have more personal sympathy.

He chose two texts conjointly, John x. 30, "I and my Father are one," and John xvii. 21, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, *that they also may be one in us.*" 9—2

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Mr. Savage began by saying that if you take one text and all it means, you are bound to accept the other text with all *it* means, viz.: Christ the perfect man, one with God, shadowing forth the possibility of perfection to all mankind; the true example and pattern, the *flower of spiritual humanity*. He then drew a very reverent and perfectly true sketch of the "*Scheme of Salvation*" as held by the orthodox church. A world lying in wickedness, God wishing all men to be saved and sending His Son in due time after choosing out and preparing one nation (the Jews) for His coming. He traced Christ's birth, the annunciation of the Virgin Mary.

Commenting on the curious fact, that although Joseph and Mary knew the child was God Incarnate, they were yet surprised and wondered at His wisdom in the Temple with the old doctors. Then came a sketch of His baptism by John, His preaching, His enemies; how all turned from Him, the Rabbis and Rulers accusing Him of sedition, even His own disciples losing faith, because they expected to see Him finally a triumphant earthly King. Then the fury of the crowd, His capture and crucifixion. What a failure His life would seem viewed from this point! God Himself come down and hanging on that tree, and not 133 a third of

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the human race ever to have heard of His death and agony, and out of that third what a small remnant (according to many good Christians, what a *terribly* small remnant!) to be saved! The rest all failure!

Although we might praise God's mercy for sending His Son to redeem even a few, how should we feel when we remembered that according to this creed, He launched the whole human race on the Sea of Life, *knowing* that shipwreck awaited the greater number of them? Suppose Gladstone sent an expedition of 5,000 men into the interior of Africa, as he sent Gordon to the Soudan, knowing that the majority must perish after terrible sufferings and tortures, from hunger, thirst and the sword. Suppose that later we sent another force to the rescue, with the result that a small remnant were saved after much trial and trouble, and returned to England, wearied and worn out but *safe*.

Should we raise hymns in praise of his mercy? Possibly we might if we believed that he was in ignorance of the necessary fate of the first expedition, not otherwise. The parallel is easy to draw for ourselves.

One thing Mr. Savage insisted upon which I have always felt and shall always feel most strongly: that 134 *Might is not Right*—that because God is omnipotent He is *not* (in all reverence be it said) at liberty to create a race which His omniscience must foretell Him *will* be in preponderating numbers damned through all eternity, or of which the future fate can be anything but a bright and glorious one.

Then came a picture of the Unitarian creed—Christ, the Perfect Man, reflecting the light of the Father for the benefit and example of His Brethren; His pure soul reflecting the Divine Presence which encircles Him, and showing how, when the Divine and Human are joined together, the Flower of Humanity buds forth—Christ making enemies for Himself, as all great and single-minded leaders of thought *have* done, raising opposition and hatred, but clinging to His Truth; crucified, but in the Death Agony still faithful to the truth which his whole life was one sacrifice to teach; at length almost tempted to feel that God Himself

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had forsaken Him, but still steadfast and unwavering—Humanity touched; informed and perfected by Divinity; true to His Truth to the very last and thereby gaining his Kingdom over men for all generations—hence His Crown and hence His Sceptre!

Mr. Henry Carpenter, the brother of our own Bishop of Ripon, is also a Unitarian minister, and has a 135 quaint old church in Holiss Street with an enthusiastic congregation.

The music here, as in most American churches, is excellent, solos, duets, and quartettes entering very largely into the programme.

These musicians are very highly paid and are great powers in those churches where the musical portion of the service is of such paramount importance. A sulky soprano or a discontented tenor can make or mar a service under such conditions.

In Mr. Carpenter's church a prayer comes first, then a solo, trio, or quartette very beautifully sung; then a chapter from the Bible is read with a hymn to follow, and finally the discourse, which is given by him standing at a small desk and in ordinary frock coat.

When I was in the church the subject was "New words from an old Paradise." Mr. Carpenter is very dramatic in manner and poetical in language—a true Celt by nature and, as far as eloquence goes, a worthy nephew of the late Dean of Exeter, whom most of us remember better as "Canon Boyd."

On this occasion he spoke of the facts lying behind the myths which rise up like clouds before them from the dim past.

He traced very powerfully the origin of the Tribes 136 from the peaceful Arcadian shepherd living in the Kashmin valleys & North-Western districts of India in pre-historic times. How simple at first were his wants and habits! Then by degrees came trade and with it the development of wants and tastes; then emulation; and finally the great tide of civilization setting in, which has moved ever onwards from east to west. Mr. Carpenter apparently

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would not agree with Mr. Baden-Powell in his recent book on the "Records of Creation," at any rate, so far as tracing the probable site of the Garden of Eden goes, for the former reads the whole story as an allegory; the two trees of Life and of Knowledge symbolizing the choice given to every one of us— *Life and Ignorance* or *Knowledge and Death*. He thinks it is the very instinct of manhood to choose the latter. The same choice came to Achilles—to spend his years in ease and repose or to go to Troy and live the life of a soldier and die a soldier's glorious death, and he chose "glory and a short life" rather than long days and mediocrity.

We all have the choice—Ignorance, which *is not Innocence* , few temptations, to accept blindly any creed offered, or to taste of the Tree of Knowledge and to fight out the fight for ourselves.

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Having praised man for choosing the Tree of Knowledge and explained that with due regard to the instincts of manhood he could not have done otherwise, Mr. Carpenter went on to show the necessity for self-restraint.

If everything were lawful there could be no morality. The Tree of Knowledge had Beauty (pleasant to the eyes), Wisdom, Nutrition, but no *moral law*. For that we must look to the other tree, the Tree of Life.

He spoke also of God's command, "*Thou shalt not eat* ," and here seemed to me to lie the weak spot in the logic of the discourse.

If man in obeying his highest instincts *had* to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, it would certainly have been impossible for a just God to lay an embargo upon that act. Mr. Carpenter spoke very powerfully of the necessity for evil; of how it must co-exist with good since one grows out of the other.

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He spoke also of the hopelessness of hot-house morality. You may case your child round with glass, but one day the strong winds of life will come and shatter that glass into a thousand pieces, and then the poor weak, fragile flower will stand a far worse chance than the more sturdy plant which has been allowed to *know* but taught to *resist*.

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The Pharisees of the world came in for some hard hits. Those who worship—not *morality*, but *ceremoniality*; who are always quoting that much-abused text, “Come out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing;” who are for ever drawing away their garments in holy horror of sinners, and saying, “be ye separate,” and “cast out the unclean thing,” forgetting that they themselves are the unclean thing from which to be separated.

First separate yourself *from* yourself, and then you may brush aside your garment like the priest and the Levite, saying, “I am holier than thou.”

He seems to have a most enthusiastic congregation, who are justly proud of their pastor's oratory and dramatic power. There is, perhaps, no expression in the English language so humiliating as that of “popular preacher.” To be called a “fine woman” might be almost as degrading, but I think the “popular preacher” should feel the more aggrieved of the two.

Thackeray has furnished us with such a terribly true caricature in the shape of the Rev. Charles Honeyman, with his scented handkerchief, his diamond ring, and his shapely white hands, that this picture instinctively rises before us when we hear the condemning words. 139 Perhaps we are not always sufficiently charitable towards those who labour under such a curse. To be a popular *speaker* has also its weight of temptation, in that awful power of swaying men's minds, and possibly blinding their judgments, often as much through some trick of voice or manner, some undefinable mesmeric influence, as through any unanswerable argument in the words themselves.

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But the orator, although his influence for the moment may be paramount, knows that he will have to reckon with a host of critics and cavillers even amongst those who are now listening spellbound to his accents when the subtle magnetism has lost its sway over them, and individual judgment has once more mounted to the throne of individual intellect.

But with a popular preacher the case is widely different. Having made choice of our particular theological mixture, we are apt to leave our spiritual health and well-being in the hands of our special spiritual guide with a confidence as absolute as that with which we give our body in charge of some equally trusted medical man. Moreover, there is no appeal. We can change our spiritual doctor it is true, but as long as we remain under his teaching he speaks to us as one "having an authority," and with no 140 paralyzing consciousness of being forced to weigh his words with reference to the next speaker. When the gift of oratory is added to these conditions, we have the *popular* preacher. When strong mental power crowns the whole, we have one of those "men of the century" who leave an indelible mark on the theology which has glowed under the burning touch of their genius.

Such a man the Americans own in Dr. Phillips Brooks, of Boston, and such gifts raise a man very far above the mere level of popularity.

Strong spiritual insight, a wide grasp of intellect, a powerful command of language, an absolute honesty, and that blessed boon of freedom of speech, have combined to give Boston something better than a popular preacher; namely, a strong manly hand able and willing to clear away some at least of the terrible difficulties of life, and to help his fellow creatures to a firmer foothold.

Most readers will associate the name of Dr. Brooks with the magnificent church (Trinity) which was built for him some ten years ago in the most open and picturesque part of Boston, near the old South Church and the Museum of Fine Arts.

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A curious bit of old stone tracery forming now 141 one of the windows of the covered entrance on the north side of the church has a history of its own. It came originally from the ancient church of St. Botolph, in old Boston, Lincolnshire, and was sent by the vicar as an appropriate gift to young Boston. The window was first offered to another church, whose congregation, however, developed Unitarian tendencies to the horror of the orthodox old Lincolnshire clergyman, who recalled his gift, and made it over to Trinity Church on the distinct understanding that it must find yet another home should either pastor or people in the future cut adrift from their present doctrinal anchorage.

The fact that the original vicar of St. Botolph, in Lincolnshire, a certain Mr. Cotton, migrated over here amongst the first settlers in 1622, and was an ancestor of Dr. Brooks, makes the gift of the window to his church peculiarly appropriate.

As this chapter is specially dedicated to those whose theological digestion can stand a certain amount of theological teaching, I will not apologize for choosing a few notes out of the many jotted down from memory during my stay in Boston.

To listen to sermons notebook in hand is as impossible to me, and would yield me about as much 142 profit or satisfaction, as to go to a German rendering of a Shakespeare play with the English edition held close to my eyes all the time; a sight, by-the-bye, which may be seen on many an evening at the Dresden theatre.

Dr. Brooks, therefore, must not be held responsible for the baldness of style and poverty of language with which I have clothed his ideas. When the powerful agency of a great man tremendously in earnest is of necessity absent, perhaps it is just as well not to attempt to pour hot water on the essence of theological meat.

The first notes I give are upon the text in Mark vi.20. "For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him, and when he heard him, he did many things and heard him gladly." We hear constantly of the effect of wickedness upon

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goodness , the danger of temptation from bad example and an atmosphere of vice, and there is much truth in this view. But there is also a truth no less sure and defined on the other side— *viz.* , the effect of *goodness* upon *wickedness* —the curious, illogical, inconsistent feeling, half fear, half fascination, which we see roused by the presence of goodness, in most wicked men.

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Herod was one of the worst of a bad race—cruel, licentious to a degree, but he was fascinated by the goodness he could not follow. He was thrilled by the mesmeric influence of a good man near him. He even heard John gladly, rejoicing as it were in his holiness; perhaps thinking that in some mysterious way it might charm the demon of sin away from himself. But the influence had its limits, for after fearing John, admiring John, hearing him gladly, at the instigation of a dancing girl, Herod *murders* John.

Here we have the influence of goodness and the *limitations* of that influence clearly defined; Christ before Pilate, Felix before Paul, Herod before John, are all examples of the same thing.

How do we account for this influence, even when (as often is the case) it is shown not by admiration or fear, but by scorn and jeers?

My brothers, if you only knew how superficial, how unreal that sneer is, how it is wrung from a man by the very qualities he admires and envies, you would care less for the scorn of the ungodly! It is the unconscious tribute of vice to virtue, shown in one way or the other; the very feeling of the vicious man *that he is capable of virtue* , that vice is *not* the true end and aim of his being—this is what enrages and angers 144 and yet saddens and depresses him in the presence of the Ideal for which he may have ceased to strive.

For example, *I* have no feeling but admiration for the work of an artist, however excellent. It raises no regrets, no self-reproach. It is work quite outside my province and therefore I can look and admire without a pang. But mortal man knows that goodness is his natural

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life and birthright and therefore the presence of it is a reproach, and he either admires with fear and trembling and yet is willing to fight for the reputation of a man he believes to be holy against all the world, or, if of lower nature, he tries to drag down and depreciate, to scorn the virtues to which he will not aspire.

When this strange mixture of feeling, half scorn, half fear, passes from him, then indeed he has given up his birthright and that soul is lost.

Conscience is only the *Consciousness of the Higher Life*; when that is dead the end has come.

But this fascination and fear of vice for virtue is not only because it shows us a life which we ought to be living, an example which we, in virtue of our manhood, are *capable* of following.

There is also a second reason for it— *viz.* , the conviction *that we are on the losing side* so long as we 145 turn from it—that we have not the laws of the universe with us, even if we do not distinctly recognize the fact that they are opposed to us. We are going against the stream, which *is* set towards righteousness however much vice may seem to predominate.

But this feeling of vice for virtue has its limitations. It cannot save the soul—more is wanted; only the grace of God, submission of our will to His, can do this work. The other feeling always falls short and fails us at the crisis, as it did with Herod and Felix and Pilate. Some may say, “Then is there any good in such a feeling at all?” Yes—great good. It keeps the heart in a state of possible redemption. It keeps us awake to the fact that the higher life *is the one we are created for* , and that, falling short of this, we fall short of our birthright and are failures in God's universe.

It also strengthens the weak brethren who are leading that life and striving to win others to it.

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So long as that fascination and fear and almost love for goodness exist in the heart of a wicked man, there is hope of influencing him through these, to seek for the love and grace of God, which can alone complete the work in his soul.

Again, let us remember in each one of us there is a VOL. I. 10 146 Herod and a John; the one fearing the other; fascinated by him and yet constantly rebelling and striving against him; the two natures at constant warfare in the same soul—the consciousness of the higher life, the dragging down of the lower life, and the only solution, the only chance for peace is when we manfully make our choice between the two, which shall be our master and, by submission of our will to God's will, decide, once and for ever, that our lives shall be a struggle upwards, by His grace helping us.

Then alone shall we find peace and discover also how weak in reality has been the evil which has held us so long in its apparently iron grasp!

This truth of the *capacity* for righteousness in the human nature made after God's own image, is always present in Dr. Brooks' teaching.

It has been too much choked up for many of us by the cringing Calvinistic creed that would deny all inherent *capacity* for righteousness, and which seems to imagine, through some curious process of reasoning, that we do more honour to our Creator by affirming the utter failure of means to an end shown in His workmanship (which has therefore to be patched up by a miraculous and spasmodic exercise of His power in the case of a few chosen souls), than by taking up a manly reverent position, which can leave no possible room for self-righteousness when truly held and appreciated at its full worth.

This same great and so often neglected truth runs through another powerful sermon, which Dr. Brooks preached on the text, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

He reminded us of how few *realize* their responsibilities to the great human race at large.

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Benevolence is considered an exceptional gift or grace belonging to the few; not the normal condition of every man as a man, who is spiritually a complete man.

Most of us look on the Church as a means provided for saving our souls; not as a society, a band of Christians owning responsibilities to the world at large. One talks of certain men as "Pillars of the Church." All the charities as a rule are confined to a few who recognize these responsibilities and are looked upon therefore as exceptional beings.

Our great mistake lies in not expecting more from our natures.

We are so apt to say, "Yes, it is beautiful; but it is not possible for me."

It is possible for every human being; for each one of us possesses something of the Godlike, only we fail to estimate the value and worth of the palace we inherit. There is more danger of this than of overestimating our capacities.

It is as if you looked on benevolence and due responsibility as a beautiful voice, a gift to the exceptional few; whereas it is in reality like a pair of arms, the rule, the normal condition; failing which we are in so far deficient in our humanity.

Surely the most selfish man must sometimes have a consciousness of this fact, just as an armless man might have faint sensations of loss in his shoulders whence the arms should spring.

It is utterly impossible for us to shut ourselves off from our fellow-creatures.

It is not as if we could say, "I will take no responsibility, I will do no good, but neither will I harm any one." If we *are* not doing good, we are doing harm positively and practically. In the great moral atmosphere around us, we are adding either oxygen or hurtful gases all the time.

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Some home is desecrated by the sin of a daughter, seduced away from it.

A man may say, "I know nothing of the girl or of the house; I never heard of either." But if his own life has not been pure and true he has vitiated the 149 atmosphere in which that house is built, and is so far to some extent responsible.

It is the great *moral* atmosphere which restrains men from deeds of violence and robbery and cruelty in these enlightened days. We all know this and reap the advantage of it.

Why then should the doctrine be considered visionary and sentimental when looked at from the reverse side? Again, a man commits suicide—you may say, "I don't know him. I never heard of him. Here at least I have no responsibility."

But if *your* life has not tended to show the beauty and usefulness of living; if it has made life seem less worthy, if you have been *blasé* or cynical or selfish, if you have encouraged by your own life the idea that it is merely given for our gratification, and ceases to have any value the moment, our personal enjoyment in it ceases—then you have vitiated the moral atmosphere around you in which that poor fellow lived. You have helped him to his destruction instead of to his salvation, though you may never have seen him nor heard his name.

This theory of moral atmosphere, of moral hygiene and moral contagion was brought out most forcibly, and the sermon ended by a solemn reminder that God 150 would require the life of our brother at our hands, as surely as in the case of Cain and Abel.

Dr. Brooks' delivery is so rapid that he must be the despair of reporters, and a faithful rendering of his sermons can only be possible when the original manuscript is in the hands of his publishers.

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I am tempted to give some very meagre notes upon another subject, because it goes straight to the very fountain of all spiritual life and includes a few remarks of a very helpful and practical nature.

The key-note is in those words of King David, "All my fresh springs are in thee."

David in spite of all his sins was a type of Christ in virtue of this one characteristic point in him; this daily living and drawing from the springs of God. It gave a freshness and impulse to his whole being. We draw our inspirations from different sources and from various depths.

Some of us act simply from the impulses of the moment, and are swayed entirely by our immediate surroundings. That is drawing our spring from very near the surface. Others go a little deeper. They act according to rule and established tradition.

"This and that have always been established as good 151 precedents of conduct; we cannot do better than abide by them."

Others go deeper still—to Principles—the First Principles of Humanity.

But far beyond and deeper than all these come the Springs of *the Living God*; the going *now* at this moment for inspiration, for help, for guidance, straight to Him and finding there the Well of Life.

This is the only corrective to the monotony of Life. To-morrow the same duties await us as those of yesterday; but they need never be actually the same if we have this conscious Life with God every moment of living. We can never then do two things precisely in the same way. The material of our work may be the same; we may bring to it the same brains, the same hands, but through this ever-present, living Inspiration, it must be a different and a higher development of ourselves that we throw into every duty, however insignificant.

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We make our Human Life too much like the march of a great caravan across a desert, or the course of a ship going out from one harbour and making for another: but meanwhile with no help or refreshment, save the equipment with which it set forth.

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God is behind us, perchance, in the past.

We have a dim hope of finding Him in the future; but meanwhile we must live in remembrance and anticipation; on Principles and Traditions.

We feel the desert sands of middle life under our feet; the boundless ocean around, without Life or help for our poor craft—A harbour perchance in view, but no hope nearer than that; whereas in truth, God is round us, near us, *with us now*.

The waters are there, under the sand, at this very moment waiting to gush over the dreary road, needing only the dig of a heel to make them flow.

It is so sad that life should be so unaided, so self-contained, when God is with us everywhere, full of help and comfort.

When I hear that a man who has had some great trouble “is pulling himself together and bearing it like a man,” it seems to me so unutterably sad—for instead of this dreary solitary misery, self contained and self supported, he might now have the sorrow lifted, and eased, and shared. As with individuals, so with Churches. They go back to the old traditions—to the old principles—to the old manifestations of God; forgetting that He is with us now, today, as much as ever He was in ages past— 153 He reveals Himself every bit as much now as he did then.

He is a Living God; a Living Spring to be turned to at every moment of our lives, ready to let the waters of healing and cleansing overflow into every nook and corner of our Spiritual Being.

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As Dr. Brooks has a firm and reverent belief in the Divinity of our Lord—a fact which does not stand out prominently in the preceding notes of sermons preached to a congregation who are well aware of his views on this question, I have thought it advisable to give as a suitable finish to the chapter, some notes written after a Christmas sermon on the well-known but always beautiful and heart-stirring Christmas words:

“Unto us a Child is born.”

Dr. Brooks spoke first of Christ's life, and work, and death, and of the constant struggle of the Human and Divine towards each other.

Christ in His Life gave us the perfect picture of what Humanity (God in Man) is intended to be, and ought to be.

It was no impossible ideal, no unnatural life.

We are divided between admiration for it and a deep undefined impression of its being something so far removed from us, so miraculous: whereas, it alone is 154 real nature; any lesser life is *in so far* less “human” according to the real meaning of the word—“to err” is *not* “human.”

Sin and error are blots, excrescences on our human nature, not its natural outcome and essence.

Dr. Brooks made special mention of the poverty of Christ. How we strive and strain after money and success, and yet the most perfect life ever lived showed that money was utterly worthless in itself, not a thing to strive for at all.

Imagine if the Redeemer of the world had been a rich man, how this would have added to the feverish race for gold!

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Had we had the example of a rich Redeemer, how then Heaven and Hell would have banded together to make us slaves to this thirst for Riches.

Then we must consider the *usefulness* of Christ's Life. It was lived absolutely for others, not even for Self Culture. Although He knew and confessed that by losing His Life, He gained it, yet that was not the end; it was merely the necessary result.

In these days we hear of and talk so much about *Self Culture* , more especially here in Boston.

So many grieve and are distressed because the iron 155 necessities of life prevent their having time to cultivate their talents and become learned.

How cheering to remember that the grandest and most successful of all lives never had time to think of Self Culture or Self Development at all, except so far as we get a hint of the highest of all culture in those words, "For their sakes, I sanctify myself."

Lastly he spoke of the *Age of Christ*. It was such a short life. Many of us grumble, "If we only had time, life is so short. We can do so little. Why try to do anything?"

Look at Christ's life: it barely touched the earth. It was cut off so young, and yet it left an immortal fire upon it, which has gone on burning through eighteen hundred years.

Most of us live quite long enough—long enough for the selfish development of our own lives, our own talents, our own fears and hopes and petty interests. It is the fire of living we want: *A moment of fire will do more than years of apathy.*

The clouds rest upon the mountains all day long, and leave them just as they were, only a little more wet. But the flash of lightning comes, and touches the earth for a brief moment, and rends and wakens up with a fire that breaks down boulders and crags of 156 rock. Yet it has been the work of an instant, but an instant touched by the fire of God.

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We have all stood by the grave of some young life, cut off, as we think, prematurely. But the lightning has done its work, no doubt, and the young poet or philanthropist has touched the earth for a brief moment with his song or his plan. *He* may be forgotten, but the fire that he has kindled will burn on.

So was it, in the highest degree of all, with Christ. So let us strive that it may be with each one of us.

CHAPTER IV. SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

It is with considerable difficulty that I have brought myself to write upon this much vexed question of spiritualism.

To have left it out entirely would have been to have left out one of the most remarkable parts of my year's experience.

I cannot expect from my readers a blind acceptance of phenomena that rest solely upon my own good faith in the first instance, and my own powers of critical observation in the second.

I am crippled by an overpowering conviction that I should myself pay small heed to the words of a stranger on such matters should they chance to go against any preconceived opinions of my own on the subject. Moreover, I am not prepared to offer any theories on the question. I approached it with an entirely unbiassed mind. I am perfectly aware that the powers of observation and judgment of a layman 158 can never approach to those of an expert. I am also aware that every sense we possess is capable of being tricked and deceived by any clever conjuror, and that the old saying, "I will never believe it till I see it," is the weakest possible argument, since optical illusions are so rife and so easily compassed.

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I can only tell in plain language what were some of my own experiences during a fairly exhaustive search into the mysteries of clairvoyance and spiritualism on this side the Atlantic, adding that amongst all my sceptical friends (intelligent or the reverse) I have not *yet* heard any explanation that could satisfactorily account for what came under my notice without introducing elements so improbable and impossible that the faith necessary to accept them is far greater than the credulity exacted by the most fanatical believer in spiritualism.

Before proceeding to speak more in detail of personal experiences I should like to say a few words on the chief sources of the opposition to a belief in spirit intercourse. In the first place comes the universal impatience of anything we cannot understand. Not long ago I read a very severe but true remark upon this well-known human failing. The writer rather cynically observed that if men were told that the whole problem of the universe would be explained to them in a quarter of an hour, they would still be bound to form some theory about it meanwhile, so great is our dislike to ignorance or uncertainty.

The heterodoxy of one generation is the orthodoxy of the next. We all repeat this formula like so many parrots, but few of us realize it in the present, although we can all see it in the past. Each new garment in which Truth clothes herself seems to be positively the "last appearance." We cannot believe that this in turn may be cast aside in favour of some fresh apparel. This is more pre-eminently the case with regard to our religious opinions.

Most people would seem to regard religion as a sort of compliment paid to their Creator.

To be "religious" is, in their estimation, as much a matter of individual selection as to be a good singer, or a good German scholar, or to play the violin.

Under such circumstances it is no wonder that we feel bound to bolster up our religion with any sort of cant or falsehood, on the principle that the end justifies the means. If religion is to be looked upon as an adjunct and ornament to life, instead of being its true

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essence and meaning, it is small matter of surprise 160 that we should view with horror and distrust anything that threatens the overthrow of our special creed or following. No wonder Theology turns so cold a shoulder on Science. Theology as it is taught in our “schools” may well dread so powerful a rival. This must be the case until we are sufficiently spiritual to realize the things of the spirit as we realize the practical matters of daily life, and until we are manly enough to face the following proposition:—Religion is either the one possible clue to the mysteries of the universe, the one central Truth round which all other Truths must cluster and in which they must find their key-note, or it is a sentimental sham, promulgated by a clerical trades union of various elements but identical aim through long ages of the past, and finding its warmest justification in being an ingenious expedient for keeping social order and well-being by preaching the terrors and rewards of a mythical Heaven and Hell.

So many of us have been brought up on the old orthodox lines of a belief in a *local* and *immediate* state of Misery or Bliss—in a condition of instant perfection attained through some mysterious Alchemy of Death, that shall act as a solvent to the evil, and liberate the good in us at the moment of dissolution, thus forming suitable denizens for the 161 pure spiritual ether of that unknown sphere we call Heaven. To such believers I can well understand that so-called “spiritualism” must present insuperable difficulties.

In a vague way, they may profess to believe in the ministering angels “sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of eternal life.” But we shall generally find that such people draw the line at *angels*, and obstinately refuse to consider the possibility of any spirit who has ever lived upon earth being disturbed from his or her rest, to act as a ministering spirit to those still dwelling amongst us—an endless future of palms and harps and crowns; a repose almost as monotonous and colourless as the Nirvana of the Buddhist is the only Heaven which many of us can understand or even conceive. The old Scotch lady, troubled with rheumatics, who objected to the idea of “sitting on a damp cloud and shouting hallelujah” for the whole of her celestial existence, is considered a very flippant and discontented old woman, and many of us are looking forward to a state

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of existence that would be perfectly intolerable unless we could insure and reconcile the immortality of our individuality with the total loss of all our energy and all our capacity.

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We see that Progress and Development are Nature's watchwords in all her works; but with many of us the grand truth of analogy between Matter and Spirit finds but deaf listeners and blind observers. Religion comes in, not as a Development, but as a Catastrophe.

Priestcraft, whether it sells indulgences, hears Confessions, stirs up revival Conversions, or thunders out Perdition and Damnation from the lowest of Calvinistic pulpits, is alike a trades union, and has conspired to deprive us of God as our Father, and of His Love and Care as our birthright, by virtue of our very existence.

In place of this it has given us the arbitrary rules and dogmas of a hundred opposite and antagonistic creeds.

Then again good people in all ages have found peace and happiness in the honest pursuit of Truth and through living in conformity to Conscience, even when only the faintest glimpse of Truth's radiant presence can be seen, and when the Conscience (or Consciousness) can necessarily only reflect the dim rays that pass over its surface.

Even such peace may well "pass our" earthly "understanding." Can we wonder that those so 163 blessed should consider that they have arrived at a final standpoint from which it must be impossible to dislodge them? Can we wonder that others, seeing so fair an example, should protest with trembling eagerness that they can receive nothing which shall even *appear* antagonistic to a creed that brings so much peace and such fair lives in its train?

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It seems almost cruelly cynical to point out that a like peace and a similar beauty of life have accompanied the *honest* holding and practising of almost every creed the world has known.

To believe that the moment of dissolution is the moment either of final destination for the Soul, or of an inactive and colourless rest until some future judgment day, is of course inimical to the very first principles of spiritualism.

To all who think thus, I would say, "Leave the matter alone—probably it holds *for you* no vital or necessary truth. It will only distress or anger you to consider the subject at all. To you it is indeed foolishness. Be content to consider yourselves superior to any such belief. If there is a Truth underlying the undoubted deceptions and impostures of professing Spiritualism, it is a 11-2 164 Truth that is bound to live and develop even without your assistance, and one which your most scathing contempt and scepticism cannot discourage or retard by any appreciable measurement of time."

A hundred years ago the idea of a railway or a steamer would have been looked upon as blasphemous conceptions of witchcraft. Fifty years ago it was considered absolutely impossible that any train could cover more than ten miles an hour.

To-day we travel from London to Swindon at the rate of sixty miles an hour. We have floating steam palaces plying between New York and Liverpool and yet the world jogs on much the same as ever.

We have accepted the fresh developments of scientific truths. We have assimilated all recent discoveries (gas, electricity, telephones, &c., &c.) to our mental digestions, and are prepared to meet further demands upon our faith in the future with the same dogged distrust and senseless scepticism which have greeted every discovery since the world began.

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Copernicus with his revolutionizing theory of the universe, Galileo with his planetary motion, Columbus with his tale of a boundless continent, Harvey and Watt 165 and Stephenson and Wheatstone, the noble army of scientific martyrs, have met with much the same fate; only the prison and chains and stake of the past have been replaced by the scorn and jeers, the inane stupidities and exasperating attempts at wit without reason, logic, or intelligence, of our own day.

So much for the attitude of mind with which most people approach any new idea which threatens a re-adjustment of their pre-conceived notions at religion, morality, or science.

When Copernicus discovered the system of the Heavenly bodies which once for all gave the lie to the idea that our small planet was the central point in the universe; when Galileo, released from his prison to be tortured into conformity to the level of scientific mediocrity, stamped upon the ground, uttering the immortal words “ *E pur se muove* ,” which disposed of the accuracy of the Biblical account of Joshua and the sun, religion was supposed by many good and pious people to be shaken to its very foundations.

The many who set up their Bible, to worship it as blindly as any poor savage ever worshipped stock and stone, must expect these cruel shocks now and again.

They may cry out in vain, “Perish Science and Progress, but leave us our idol intact.” The Great Divine 166 Law will work on through all the world's economy. Science will march forward with more and more rapid strides in spite of all their protests, and God, the Father in Heaven as well as the Law-giver on earth, will prove in time, even to the blindest of His children, that His truth being eternal, all other truths must of necessity be subject to it and in harmony with it.

To adore Him, to have faith in His love and justice (often in spite of appearances), all this is necessary to our “soul's salvation,” simply because it is the only atmosphere from which the soul can draw spiritual nourishment and consequently spiritual life.

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But, believe me, He does not require our patronage! and what else but patronage is it to say, "No, I won't investigate this or that, because it goes against the Bible?"

If the theory is proved to be founded on false premises, the Bible is untouched. If the theory is placed beyond dispute, we have got to re-adjust our interpretation of a Book which is in great part a history and to be read as such; and in great part an inspired message truly, but delivered through the mediumship of humanity and to some extent bounded of necessity by its limitations. Is it impossible to put the Bible in its own most honoured place, a spiritual telescope arranged and adjusted by Divine wisdom to the strengthening and extending of our spiritual eyesight; to be *supplemented*, not superseded, as our eyes become stronger and capable of receiving a still clearer vision, until that blessed time arrives, when the veil of mortality having been cast aside, God shall be able to reveal himself, slowly it may be, but more and more surely, and at length, "in His light, we shall see light?"

Is this not a truer and grander spiritual philosophy than that which would teach us that God's last word of help and instruction has been spoken, His final revelation of Himself already made, and that He leaves us to assimilate such teaching as best we may, in a world where spiritual growth would be at variance with every known law of the Creator, and religion would be a crystallization and excrescence, instead of the noblest instance of the working of a universal Law of Progress, first the bud, then the flower, finally the fruit?

Approaching the question of Spiritualism from this standpoint, it still presents many difficulties and many possible dangers. I think, however, that some people at least had better face these boldly and honestly, instead of putting the matter aside as an unprofitable folly and superstition on the one hand, or a temptation to unlawful intercourse with the spirit world on the other. Under the earlier Mosaic and Jewish dispensations, intercourse with spirits was undoubtedly condemned.

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The fact that witches were cursed and burned is little wonder, because at a time when such spiritual traffic was forbidden, those whose psychic organization enabled them to indulge in it, would naturally open the channels of communication with rebellious and disobedient spirits.

The case of the witch of Endor may be supposed to contradict this hypothesis, but her own amazement when the true Samuel appeared looks very much as if she had expected some lying spirit who might have deceived Saul by personating the prophets of the Lord.

That intercourse with spirits should be forbidden during the childhood of the human race appears as reasonable and as much to be expected as that a father should take a knife away from his little boy or forbid him to play with the fire.

Knives and fires are helpful enough when we have learned how to use them. It may even be necessary to learn caution and serve our apprenticeship to knowledge by cut fingers or singed eyebrows, but we try to guard our younger children from such dangers.

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If the fuller light of the Christian dispensations brings no relaxing of this old command it is difficult to understand why rules should have been given to us for regulating such spirit intercourse and averting any possible danger from it, as, for instance, in these words, "Try the spirits whether they are of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

It is more than forty years ago since the Fox sisters heard the memorable raps which have led to so much discussion, to so much folly and deception, but which have set rolling a stone that has gathered to itself many other pebbles, all rolling in the same direction and beating against the door which has hitherto separated the physical and psychical in ourselves, and has separated us still more effectually from any possibility of intercourse

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with the ministering spirits and that great host of spiritual beings by whom we are so constantly said to be surrounded, although unable to see them with our bodily eyes.

In speaking more in detail of the chief objections to a belief in spiritual intercourse, apart from the great initial question of right and wrong, I shall make myself the mouthpiece of the spiritualist's point of view, 170 in order to save time and unnecessary explanations and repetitions.

I do not, however, wish to be considered as identifying myself with his theories and conclusions, as a year's investigation would not justify my taking up such a position, even were I prepared to do so.

People are so much in the habit of talking of "spiritual" in its higher but more limited meaning, of what, for want of a better definition, we must be content to call *religious*, that they forget entirely that spiritual in its original and more legitimate sense is simply the antithesis of physical.

The spiritual as opposed to the material nature, the power of grasping and realizing the unseen, seems as much a simple natural gift as black eyes or fair hair. To some of us this power is as natural, as much beyond the province of doubt, as our bodily eyesight or our ability to count the tables and chairs of the house we inhabit.

When this spiritual *capacity* is touched by the fire of God, it is like putting a match to tow or oil, instead of trying to light up some slowly combustible woollen material. Both are possible, but the process is much quicker in one case than in the other. As one set of muscles is generally developed at the expense of the 171 others, so in many cases a scientific education exacts a training and development of the material senses at the expense and to the exclusion of this spiritual capacity. In all probability the man, whose natural bent is physical science, has not much spiritual muscle of this kind to lose. He has other work to do in the world, and his spiritual development may have to wait until that is accomplished. Hence arise so much confusion and bitterness of controversy and so many

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unjust accusations of self-righteousness on the one hand and obstinate scepticism on the other.

The spiritual capacity is no more a virtue in itself nor an evidence of individual superiority than the possession of a banking book or a fine head of hair; but a child who possesses it is *in so far* more reliable and able a judge on matters connected with the spirit life than Huxley or Tyndall or any other noted scientist would be without it.

To say this is no more an idle assumption than to say that a commonplace youth who has his eyesight will, on some occasions, prove more valuable than a blind genius.

Let us then imagine an intelligent sceptic in these matters, with a well-developed spiritual nature and insight, and consider some of the objections he is likely to raise.

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First of all comes the old stock sentence, "What good has such a belief ever done?" This is indeed more frequently put in the form of dogmatic assertion. "Spiritualism has never done any good, *therefore* it cannot be true."

People have rung the changes upon these two sentences until we have come to accept them as final without daring to question their truth.

But must not each one answer such a question according to his own individual experience?

We are told that spiritualism has never enabled us to guess the number of a certain bank-note lodged in the Bank of England, nor to name the "Derby" winner. Has our Bible furnished us with means of doing either one or other? And yet we do not disbelieve it on this ground.

As there are good and bad men and women in this world, and men and women in various stages of mental and spiritual development, so spiritualists believe that there are spirits

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for good or for evil also in varying stages of mental and spiritual growth. To imagine that a spirit becomes omnipotent or omniscient the moment it passes from earth life is the fallacy upon which so much of the misunderstanding of the higher spiritualistic teaching is based.

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That a spirit should be able to communicate with us at all and yet not “know enough” to be able to name a Derby winner is conclusive evidence of fraud to many of us.

But how do we know that such matters are within the province of the knowledge of disembodied spirits? Why should they know more of such matters than we do ourselves? Is it not more reasonable to infer that they would, on the contrary, have “lost touch” of much that may have interested them on earth?

We may gain much help and comfort from the possibility of spiritual intercourse with those we loved here, who may now be permitted to watch over and guard us, even when they cannot “put us on to a good thing” in racing or railway speculations.

Until we are in a position to affirm that no solace or help has ever come to any of us through the agency of those who have passed away from us, it is impossible to say that “no good has ever come of this belief.”

Next comes the question, a double question indeed: is it conceivable that spirits should be disturbed from their blessed repose to come at our beck and call?

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How can we reconcile the frivolous, sometimes even blasphemous, messages that are given with our idea of what would be a fitting attitude of mind for a disembodied spirit in a higher stage of existence?

As regards the former question, so far as my experience goes (and I cannot speak beyond this) spirits do *not* appear nor communicate at the “beck and call” of any one who chooses to address them. The desire for intercourse seems to come invariably from them; for in

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several instances I have not chanced to be even thinking of those who have appeared to me or who have been described as being present.

A strong affection or interest seems a necessary condition of their coming to us. Unless this strong wish or love exist on their side, I have seen nothing to lead me to suppose that they can be forced to appear or communicate against their will. This disposes therefore (to *my mind*) of the idea of disturbance of an eternal repose, instigated by us at our own will and pleasure.

That spirits, if allowed, should *wish* to make their presence known to us has never presented any difficulty to my mind and therefore I am less competent to speak on this matter than others might be.

“Have they nothing better to do than to come and talk to us? How degrading! How unlike all we have pictured of their blessed condition!”

But if angels are content to “minister” to us, considering it no degradation but a glorious mission, why should the spirits of those we have loved and lost be less eager to help and sustain us?

“I cannot bear to think that my mother or father or brother is not *at rest*, that he or she should be hovering about me still, even were it possible for me to be cheered by a sense of his or her presence.”

This remark I have heard twenty times at least. But I think the idea arises from that deeply rooted vision of palms and harps which John in his Revelation was permitted to describe.

It is impossible to exact a literal interpretation of a heavenly vision which can only come to us through the medium of earthly words and must be limited by earthly ideas. But allow that some day, some such glory as that described by the apostle John should encompass us. Does this prove that no progress towards it is necessary? We may show a little boy

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the picture of a great admiral or a great general or a famous lawyer, telling him that some day he may become one or other. If we are wise we do not choose that moment to describe all the long, weary road he must first travel; all the lessons to be learnt and wept over—the punishment, and training that are inevitable. We show him the ultimate possibility, and trust that this bright picture may remain in his mind's eye, to cheer him along the weary road he must go.

To dwell upon all this now would only be to discourage and make him hopeless. He has his reading or arithmetic to do to-day, why begin to confuse and worry him with the algebra and Euclid, Latin and Greek that will come later?

Is it not conceivable that God should treat us as we treat our children—show us a picture of almost inconceivable glory in the Future; but otherwise draw the veil down to that which concerns us most nearly in our earth life?

Now the position of educated and thoughtful spiritualists seems to be that this veil is now being lifted a little; that the child is being allowed some glimpse of the further training that awaits him, and the revelation comes naturally as a severe shock to most of us. If the child we have pictured thinks that “Reading made Easy” is the whole stock in trade necessary to manufacture him into a great soldier or a great lawyer, it must be a shock to find how much more remains to be learnt. To my own mind, there is no doubt at all that these “days of unbelief,” as they are called, are in reality days of re-adjustment, of fuller spiritual light and development.

We are constantly told that “religion is on her trial, nowadays.” How can that through which alone we live and move and have our being be “on its trial” in any sense of a possibility of being superseded?

Hypocrisy and Cant and Priestcraft are on their trial, because men have learned to think for themselves, and to refuse to be hocused into any sort of religious acquiescence that does not represent an honest and manly desire to use God's gift of reason within its due

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limits, acknowledging the enormous space beyond that can only be covered by faith in the Heavenly Father.

The vast number of new sects, Theosophy, Modern Buddhism, Christian Scientists, Spiritualists and the whole machinery of Psychic Research, all tend to show a gradual lifting of the veil between ourselves and the spirit world. Some see in all this only the restless curiosity of an over-civilized race, longing for some fresh dainty to tickle its palate.

It is wiser and truer, I think, to see in it the gradual VOL. I. 12 178 upheaval of Thought that marks any further development of spiritual training.

The Theological Ant Hill has had a good many pokes and stirs of late years, and the scene just now is one of wild confusion, the ants hurrying hither and thither, disturbed and anxious, in search of some firm foothold. A metaphysical ant might even argue that the end of the world had come; but the solid foundations remain as before. It is only one little hill that has to be re-adjusted and built up again.

Imagine now, that our "intelligent sceptic" admits that the education of earth may not be final; that there may be other progressive stages of spiritual insight and development, that all things tend nowadays towards the discovery of hitherto unsuspected psychic powers in ourselves which may be utilized for such spiritual intercourse as I have referred to: the question still remains, is not such intercourse dangerous and liable to abuse? I have no hesitation in saying "most dangerous and most liable to abuse."

If Spiritualism, or any other creed, is to come between us and our Creator and Father, to be considered an end in itself and not the means to an end, we have in it at once a most tremendous engine for evil. But every creed has had this danger attending 179 it. The irons intended for concentration and support have always had a tendency to cramp, confine and weaken the muscles they are primarily designed to strengthen.

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Society is in itself helpful and necessary; but we all know how social intercourse may be abused, and may serve only to develop what is frivolous or even wicked in us. We do not, on this account, shut ourselves up from it entirely and become hermits and misanthropes; nor do even the most God-fearing amongst us say “God can help and comfort me Himself,” “to get comfort and help from any friend is to dishonour Him.”

We accept the help and happiness of earthly love and friendship as a supplement to the Father's love and care and as the gift of a kindly Providence. Neither do we exact omniscience from our friend, however wise and helpful he may be. We do not ask him to name the Derby winner, and refuse to have anything to say to him if he fails. We go to him in confidence for what he can give us of loving help or counsel. We are content to abide his convenience for the conditions and time of our meeting. We do not insist upon thrusting ourselves into his presence whether he is at leisure or no; neither do we obstinately refuse to 12—2 180 accept any conditions that his friendship may impose upon us.

If our friend says “I can talk to you better in the twilight,” we do not instantly insist upon lighting every candle in the house. If he should chance to be in Edinburgh or Ireland and we in London, we realize that it is necessary to put ourselves out a little in order to effect a meeting. We must take a train or get into a steamer, and we do it without a murmur; we do not say “I don't believe my friend exists at all, if he does, why cannot I talk to him now, here, this minute? What nonsense to be obliged to take a special train to go to him, through some particular line of country!” Not one of us would dream of treating an earthly friend in this foolish fashion. Yet this is just the unreasonable position we take up with regard to our spirit friends, and it arises, I think, from this preconceived notion that if they are not omnipotent and omniscient, at any rate, *they ought to be so*. They should be independent of all conditions. If a spirit friend can communicate with one sort of temperament, he ought to be able to communicate with every kind of temperament. If he can come to me in a darkened room when I am feeling quiet and harmonious, he ought to be able to come equally well in blazing light when I am 181 talking and laughing and

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surrounded by every sort of conflicting and possibly antagonistic element. Failing to do this, he is a fraud, and that is the end of the matter.

These are the lines upon which most discussion of the subject rests. A more touching, more reverent, and more difficult objection remains in the agonizing cry of some poor mourner, "If such things are possible, if the desire to come to us be the chief condition, why does not my husband, or my wife, or my child send me some message of loving remembrance from the spirit world? Why must we go to some low uneducated medium, even for the chance of any such message?"

It is only possible to hint at an answer to such objections in a very tentative way.

Where our ignorance of necessary conditions is so great, it would be absurd to attempt to dogmatize, but I would offer a few suggestions.

To begin with, this first objection has been invariably raised, in my experience, by those who have never, in any methodical way, attempted to lift the veil for themselves. They would give all they possess for a touch of the vanished hand, or a sound of the dearly-loved voice, but perhaps they think such investigation or experiment wrong and degrading.

The idea of being indebted for such a possible communication to some half-educated and perhaps vulgar third person, is utterly repugnant to them, and in all probability they may not possess the spiritually sympathetic temperament which would enable them to dispense with such help.

This brings me to a question propounded earlier in this paper and still left unanswered.

"How can we reconcile the frivolous, sometimes blasphemous, messages that are occasionally given with our idea of what would be a fitting attitude of mind for a disembodied spirit in a higher stage of existence?"

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The higher stage to *that spirit* may still seem a lower level to some of us. He that was unjust may be unjust still; he who was frivolous or blasphemous or earth-bound here may be all this in spirit life—let us hope, in a less degree, but spiritual progress has all the ages of Eternity for its development, and may be very slow as we count Time.

Either the moment of death is charged with miraculous powers of transformation, or the Spirit Land must have the good and the bad, the frivolous and 183 the earnest, those who may still blaspheme and those who have learnt to bless, amongst its teeming numbers.

No doubt like clings to like in spiritual as well as physical chemistry, and so the holier spirits on leaving earth life may rise at once in their spiritual development, to some circle beyond the possibilities of earthly intercourse.

This again *may* account for an absence of communication in some cases, without reflecting upon those who can and do come to us.

It is easier to communicate with an archdeacon than an archangel, but when we say this we cast no slur on the spiritual development of the former.

That the lower forms of spirits should hover nearest the earth, should be the most eager to return, and should be frivolous, or even wicked, in their conversation when they do communicate is only to be expected. That mediums should be generally found amongst uneducated and undesirable men and women is most unfortunate, but it is only the necessary result of present conditions.

The fear of being laughed at and the fear of doing wrong are two tremendous factors in bringing discredit upon spiritualism and keeping it out of the knowledge 184 and appreciation of those who could best advance a true conception of its noblest uses and possibilities.

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So, hitherto, with few exceptions, it has been relegated to the ignorant and vicious, *who may possess equally the temperament which makes mediumship possible* and by constant cultivation of it are enabled to ply a trade that may often be honest, but is quite as often fraudulent, and a cover, too frequently, for every sort of vice.

Even those mediums who wish to be honest are much tempted; their patrons are for the most part an unintelligent, curious, gaping throng, utterly inharmonious, impatient of any sort of condition, scenting fraud at every turn, stupid, sceptical, carping, the very worst possible frame of mind for any spirit demonstrations. And yet, they have paid their dollar or five shillings as the case may be, and they mean business.

The medium must either produce a spirit, or a slate writing, or be denounced as a cheat, and lose all chance of dollars for the rest of her life.

Is it wonderful that she should sometimes assist matters by a little fraud?

I believe this is frequently done when a result can be obtained in no other way; and those of us who have 185 experienced the utter impossibility of getting any results when a circle is not in perfect harmony, can best appreciate how constantly this must be the case, where strangers meet each other in a public circle for the first and often last time in their lives, in the very mental attitude of sceptical but eager curiosity which is the most antagonistic and fatal to any reliable satisfaction of such curiosity.

There is moreover another reason why, the psychic nature being equal in both, an uneducated person makes often a better medium than one of superior mental calibre. It is the difference between packing in an empty box and one already nearly full. Going over the Clarendon Press at Oxford one day, with the late Mr. Richard Hall, and noticing the compositors at work, setting up the type for Sanscrit, Hebrew and Arabic books, I said to him, "Now, do those men know anything of the languages they are setting up in type?"

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“A few do, unfortunately,” he answered, “but most of them are absolutely ignorant; and we much prefer. that it should be so, otherwise they are apt to make mistakes by having their own ideas on the subject, and not blindly following the manuscript.”

A blank sheet of paper is certainly a better medium 186 for the transmission of our thoughts than one already covered with writing.

In like manner, spiritualists tell us that an unintelligent person makes a better medium than one more cultivated, who is apt to mix up his own theories and ideas and prejudices with that which is transmitted through him from spirit-land; he himself being perhaps quite unconscious of the colouring given to it by his own individuality.

This is, I think, a fair answer to the equally fair objection that it is degrading for spirits to be forced to communicate through such undesirable channels.

At the same time, I believe, that if seven or eight earnest, intelligent inquirers could fulfil the necessary conditions and meet together constantly, a trained intellect, *on guard* , could suppress its too powerful individuality, and if such seven or eight persons possessed, in addition to honesty of purpose, necessary mediumistic temperament, sympathetic, not sentimental, I should expect them to attract to themselves spirits of the highest order with which earthly communication is still possible, and the results ought to be very beneficial and helpful.

To be clever or intelligent, or sharp at detecting fraud is not enough, though all these qualities may be 187 helpful to us in keeping our judgment cool. But the sympathetic temperament I have spoken of is an absolute necessity so far as my experience goes, and this is not found to any great extent in more than ten per cent. of the people we meet. In fact, I think it would be truer to say that we do not find it fully developed in five per cent. of our acquaintances. If I say this, in discussing spiritualistic *séances* , people are apt to

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answer, "Oh, yes, you mean some one who can be easily humbugged!" Of course I mean nothing of the kind.

We can all detect the presence of that mysterious magnetic influence which some few possess, which attracts dogs and children and men and women alike. We cannot argue about it or even exactly define it, but there it is, and we have no sort of doubt of its influence.

A strongly gifted mediumistic nature has always something of this subtle atmosphere of attraction around it. This may exist with greater or less mental power, with strong judgment and keen capacity for observation, or the reverse. It is quite independent of the presence or absence of such other qualities, and may or may not co-exist with them.

There is perhaps some physical as well as psychical reason for what is an undeniable fact, with which the most obstinate materialist must often reckon in daily life, though he may deny it in words.

Anyway this seems to be the most successful "stuff" for the manufacture of a spiritualistic medium, and many clever men and women are absolutely devoid of it.

Such a man as Professor Ray Lankester, for example, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for some years, and for whose great abilities I have the highest possible respect and admiration, might as well hope to empty the Atlantic with a tin pail as to receive any satisfaction regarding a matter where all his trained powers of material investigation are out of court. He can detect a fraud and seize a surreptitious slate pencil. But this is negative and does not cover the ground of my argument. Material things are to be apprehended by the material senses of touch and sight. The spiritual must be spiritually discerned. It is an entirely different province and requires different organs.

Thankful as we may well be to the quickness of the material eye that detects fraud and imposture and holds them up to just contempt, I do not think we are logically justified in

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concluding that nothing 189 *but* fraud and imposture are possible, since our detective friend has been unable to penetrate beyond these. It is surely conceivable that a highly trained material eye may detect the material fraud which can deceive hundreds less gifted, and yet that same superior vision may be powerless when taken outside of its own special department.

On this hypothesis, the present antagonism between Science and Spiritualism must rest until the two can amalgamate, or until Science can drive the latter in all its varied branches altogether from the field, which she has not yet succeeded in doing.

Having put down some of the possible aspects of Spiritualism from, I hope, an intelligent—at least, from no blindly superstitious—point of view, I will briefly mention a few personal experiences that occurred to me in America.

In doing so I am very much crippled by the necessity of making my narrative absolutely truthful and yet of avoiding hurting the feelings of friends or relations by entering into the necessary details upon which the whole value of the story depends, so far as a history of events at second-hand can be said to possess any value at all.

Some of my most interesting experiences are of 190 too private a nature to bear publicity; but I will write as fully as may be, altering no essential fact but replacing sometimes by other names the original ones given to me.

The names themselves have no intrinsic value; the exact circumstances under which such names were given are all-important.

Should any reader have sufficient interest in the subject to care for more particulars, I should be happy to furnish them privately.

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It is only fair to begin with a few hasty notes written down after the first “materializing *séance*” which I attended in Boston, and which will show better than any later words of mine the spirit of cynical scepticism with which I approached this subject.

For some years past I have admitted to myself the bare possibility of spiritual intercourse, but had drawn *my* line at spiritual materialization; I am not even now prepared to admit myself convinced of the genuineness of this phenomenon, nor of its lawfulness if genuine. I only wish to show that although I came away from this first *séance* having seen nothing to shake my conviction of fraud, I was to receive later, under far less favourable conditions, 191 experiences for which I have hitherto been totally unable to account, except on the hypothesis that they were genuine.

For the enlightenment of the uninitiated, I may state briefly that the theory of materialized spirits is as follows:—Under given conditions of perfect harmony and strong mediumistic power the spirits of those who have passed away are supposed to be able to materialize a form, more or less solid and perfect; using the magnetic atmospheres of the sitters present for this purpose and remaining visible to our eyes and sensible to our touch so long as the power they have borrowed from us is sufficient to keep them in a state of material cohesion.

When such appearances are made in an intangible form it is easy to suggest optical delusion by the aid of cleverly arranged looking-glasses, phosphorescent light, and a hundred other artifices; but in all my American experiences the figures came more or less freely outside the cabinet, walked round the room, and even allowed us to touch and shake hands with them. The question therefore could not be met by any suggestion of tricking the eyesight.

The next hypothesis would be that such figures were dressed-up human beings; and the possibility of 192 this being the case would depend upon individual conviction, which

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in turn must rest upon a few common-sense observations of the surroundings and possibilities of each separate case.

If these figures are human beings dressed up, how many of them could be concealed at one time in the cabinet or alcove used on the occasion? I ignore purposely the question of possible access to such cabinet or alcove, taking it for granted that such elementary conditions would be investigated at the first start.

But allow that these “frauds” *have* been carefully concealed behind the curtains, how many who appear are of similar or identical height? how many of them present marked differences in height and demeanour to each other, and to the medium who is sitting out of our sight? To put it more plainly, in what proportion to the possibilities of accommodation do these so-called spirits appear? How many “dressers” would be required to get the whole crew ready for exhibition, allowing that the differences in height, demeanour and appearance of the “frauds” and their simultaneous apparition have convinced us that six or seven persons at least must be engaged in the imposture? What amount of light was thrown upon the room when these figures appeared? Did we touch them, and with what result? How far did their appearance coincide with the possibility of human features “made up,” or a cleverly designed and adjusted mask? Lastly, and most important of all, did any of these figures come specially for us, and did they, without hint or assistance, give us any proof of their sincerity by showing any knowledge of the sufficiently marked but comparatively unimportant details of our earthly connection with them? I say “comparatively unimportant” advisedly. If it were worth while to put an expensive and elaborate detective machinery in motion (from 2,000 to 10,000 miles away from our home) for the sake of a few weekly dollars, it would certainly be easier to discover the fact that one's father was a forger, or one's uncle a murderer, than to master petty family intricacies of money or marriage questions. The latter evidence therefore gains in value in direct inverse ratio to its intrinsic importance. Whether I should have received more satisfactory personal evidence, had I gone to the Boston *séance* in a different spirit, I cannot say; I think in all probability it might have been so. At any rate, if I tried

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the “detective theory” I should VOL. I. 13 194 more reasonably have expected some knowledge of my antecedents in a city where I spent nearly three months and entered into a good deal of social and literary life, than in the more cosmopolitan city of New York, where we were “transients” in the strictest sense of the word, not remaining long enough for any social purposes beyond meeting a few friends of earlier days, and where, moreover, we attended our first *séance* at the beginning of our stay, not towards the close of it, as was the case in Boston.

However this may be, I went to the “Sisters Berry” at Boston in a very antagonistic frame of mind, determined beforehand that the whole thing was a swindle, and accompanied by friends who were even more sceptical than myself, if that were possible.

Here are my notes upon the subject, written down within a few hours, and given without any touching up or alterations now; although, read in the light of later experiences, they bear, to me, unmistakable marks of the prejudiced spirit in which I made this first investigation at the house of a materializing medium.

We were ushered into a room, where some twelve or fourteen people (chiefly men) were sitting. In 195 the adjoining room was a cabinet, made of thick planks of wood and hung with green calico; the intervals between the planks being quite large enough for any thin person to creep through.

We were allowed to investigate the cabinet before sitting down in the room where it was placed; but this, of course, proved nothing, as there was a folding glass door behind the cabinet, which would allow of any one passing into it unobserved, as we were all placed in a second room, *facing* the cabinet.

In a few moments (the medium having gone into the cabinet) a white figure appeared at the curtains, and then a shadowy man's face; but the gas (controlled entirely by the master of the house) was so low that we could discern at first only dim forms. Of course

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he declared that the spirits could only materialize in very dim light, as they had so little strength, merely what they gained from the medium herself and the circle of sitters.

An old Egyptian now appeared, and a man in the circle, who had been sitting near my friend Miss B—all the evening, went up and spoke to him and then asked “that the lady who had been sitting near him” might come up also, which she did; but she said that she could distinguish no 13—2 196 features, and only feel a warm, damp hand passed over hers.

Miss W—was next called up by the spirit of a young man who wished to embrace her, but who was finally proved to be the departed friend of the lady who sat next to her; Miss W—came back furious, declaring that it was a horrible coarse-looking creature, unlike any one she had ever seen in her life.

Mrs. P. (another friend) made valiant efforts to investigate the figures who came forth from time to time, but was invariably waved back by the master of the ceremonies.

“Will that lady kindly sit down? This spirit is not for her. It wishes to communicate with its own friends and she is disturbing the conditions and forcing the spirit back into the cabinet.” There were evidently many old stagers there, who flew up like lamplighters on every possible occasion, with exclamations of, “Oh! Uncle Charlie, is that you?” “How do you do, Jem?” &c., &c.

One old lady in a mob cap and a black gown, who careered round the room, was introduced as a certain “Sister Margaret,” who had taught in Saint Peter's School in Boston. She was supposed to return to talk to a former pupil, who gave her spiritualistic experiences 197 in such remarkably bad grammar, as reflected small credit on Sister Margaret's teaching of the English language, at any rate. This girl's story was that she had always been most anxious to see her teacher, who had appeared to her, but not in the garments she had been accustomed to wear in the school—a sort of sister's dress. After wishing very fervently one night, Sister Margaret appeared dressed in her mob cap and

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gown, saying: "Don't you see my dress? I come in it at your wish." "Yes," answered the girl, "and I thank you for gratifying my wish. Since which time," she added, "I have been a firm believer in spiritualism." A young French girl in draggly black garments and a shock of thick black hair then came forward and rushed amongst us, trying to find some one to talk French with her. My friend, Mrs. H., went up first and then I was told to go up and speak to her, which I did. I took hold of her hands and grasped them firmly for a moment. They seemed to me ordinary flesh and blood, but I am bound to confess that they appeared to *lengthen out* in a somewhat abnormal fashion when the pressure was removed.

Her face was very cadaverous and she spoke in a quick, hurried way, as if time were an object. She said she understood a little English, but could not 198 speak it. Her mother had been French; her father an Indian, "*un brave homme.*"

I longed to ask her how long she had been dead but did not know how to put the question politely and without hurting her feelings. It seemed to me that a good deal of embracing and kissing went on. One old grey-headed gentleman was constantly walking up towards the cabinet and being embraced by a white figure, whose arms we could just see thrown round his neck in the dim light. So, perhaps, he got his dollar's worth; but the rest of us found it a somewhat dull affair, something like very inferior *tableaux* seen in a very inefficient light.

The only excitement was the chance of some disturbance before we left, for Mrs. P. became more and more indignant with the gross imposture, which culminated when at length she was called up and told that a "young man wished to speak with her."

She asserted that it was "the most horrible, grinning, painted creature," who hissed into her ears.

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The master of the house begged her to be patient and to try to learn what the spirit wished to say, but, with a very emphatic “ *No, no, no!* ” she resumed her seat amidst a general titter of laughter.

At the last, we were told that three little girls, whose 199 mother sat near the cabinet and came from Maine, were trying to materialize, but found it difficult to do so, owing to the absence of children in the audience.

The mother seemed very anxious to see them, but suddenly the gas was turned up and the *séance* declared over—a very abrupt finale to a piece of unmitigated humbug, I should say.

Mrs. P. said to me, coming out, “Well, no doubt we are not the first and shall not be the last victims of such gross fraud.”

The man heard it and asked her what she said, which she repeated in a firm, slow and composed voice. He was very angry, but evidently did not wish to have any disturbance, so contented himself with saying very rudely, “We expect people who come here to behave like ladies, *even women*. ” It was impossible to resist the suggestion that he would hardly expect *men* to behave like ladies, under cover of which Parthian dart we returned home, much disgusted by the whole performance.

The next notes refer to a *séance* which I attended in New York, a few days after our arrival there. We knew nothing beforehand of the medium, and, in this instance, the English lady with whom I was travelling went alone with me to the small flat in an unfashionable 200 quarter, where the *séance* was held. Some eight people only were assembled in the room, which was extremely small. All were perfect strangers to me, but a fancied likeness in one lady present to a picture I had seen of Mrs. Beecher Stowe led me to ask if it were she, and I was told that my surmise was correct.

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There was no cabinet on this occasion; in fact the available space would scarcely have allowed for one. A curtain was hung across a tiny alcove, just the ordinary "arch" found in most rooms. The wall behind the curtain was the wall also of the outer passage which we had passed on entering the room. When I went behind the curtain with the female medium before the sitting began, there was only just space for us both to turn round in. The carpet on either side of the curtain was one piece. There was absolutely no room for any trap-door machinery, even could such have been worked successfully in the perfect silence in which we sat, within two feet of the alcove. The room itself was about the size of the small back dining-room of an ordinary London lodging house, say in Oxford or Cambridge Terrace for example.

The medium sat amongst us at first, only going behind the curtain after a few moments, when she was what she called "under control."

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A little child of hers, who died some years ago at the age of four, is supposed to help the spirits to materialize, but is never seen outside the curtain I was told. If she came out herself she would not be able to help the others to do so. I mention these things in the words in which they were told to me, offering no comment of my own, but putting the case for the moment as spiritualists would put it. To do this, and then to give a faithful and unprejudiced account of what took place, seems to me the only fair way of treating such a subject.

The sitters began (almost in the darkness) singing "Nearer my God to Thee," in loud but harmonious voices. Asking why music was an invariable accompaniment to all spiritualistic phenomena, I was told that it was necessary to get the circle "into harmony" before any results could be obtained, and amongst strangers music formed the best means of doing so. When the attention of the audience is too thoroughly fixed upon the spirits they cannot act so easily. It must not, however, be supposed that the materializations went on only when we were singing. This might point to a possible "trap-door theory," although in a city

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where flats abound (rooms, not human beings) there would still be the difficulty of getting your downstairs neighbours 202 to look kindly upon such proceedings. But, as a matter of fact, we were often sitting in absolute quiet when fresh "spirits" appeared.

I can corroborate the assertion that too much concentration of thought upon them is considered unfavourable by the spirits, for on more than one occasion I heard a voice from the curtain or cabinet saying: "Do get the people's minds off us. We can do nothing whilst they are fixed upon us so intensely," as if thought in spirit life almost corresponded to some physical obstacle on the earth plane.

An old Indian woman, who died at the age of 110, and "Nelson Seymour" (who appears to have belonged to a sort of Christy Minstrel company over here) are the chief "controls," the materializations being made by the agency of the little child of whom I have spoken already, and whose little baby voice could be heard before every "manifestation."

Several white-robed spirits came out from the alcove quite into the room, and talked in whispers to those friends who recognized them, and went up to speak to them.

The first spirit who came (the daughter of an old gentleman sitting near me) intimated through him that she would like me to go up and help her 203 materialize the white veil, which all wore in turn, and which, though perfectly transparent, is considered a necessary shield between them and the earth's influences; on the same principle I suppose that we put on blue spectacles to protect us from the blinding rays of the sun.

She came out from the alcove, held both hands in front of her, turning them backwards and forwards, that I might be satisfied that nothing was concealed in them. The soft, clinging material of her dress ended high up on the shoulders, so there were no sleeves to the garment. I stood close over her, holding out my own dress, and as she rubbed her hands gently to and fro, a sort of white lace or net came from them like a foam, and lay upon my gown. I touched it with my fingers. It had substance, but was as light as gossamer, and quite unlike any material I ever saw in any shop. The very

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softest gossamer tulle that old ladies sometimes produce as having belonged to their grandmothers is perhaps the nearest approach to what I then lifted in my hands, but even this does not exactly describe it. When long enough, she took up the veil, unfolded it, covering her head with it, and saying very graciously, "thank you," to me.

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Other spirits now appeared for the other people in the room, who conversed with them in low tones. All these had evidently materialized before and could consequently speak with comparative ease. One, called the "angel mother" (the mother of the medium), came and answered questions on the spirit-life in a loud, American voice, prefacing every remark, whether to man or woman, by an affectionate "well, de-ar." Her answers showed a good deal of shrewdness, but not much depth, and were often rather wide of the mark. "Nels Seymour" cracked jokes all the time with a gentleman among the audience in a good-natured but flippant and very unspiritual-like manner, and even the ladies joined in the undignified punning and "play upon words" that went on all the time.

The little child's voice came in as a relief every now and then. She spoke broken, childish English, but used the expressions of a grown-up person. She described several spirits as "chying" (trying) to come but not being strong enough: amongst them she mentioned a "gentleman in uniform," who "was trying to come to me, but he had never materialized before and could not manage it. There were some family or money matters which he wished to put straight."

Not at the time recognizing the description, I felt little interest in the matter and was becoming rather tired of the performance and rather drowsy, when my attention was once more aroused by my being told that a very beautiful female spirit, with a diamond star in her forehead, had appeared and asked for me, saying she had been a friend of mine on earth and wished to communicate with me.

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This was conveyed to me by the little child's voice, the spirit herself not having yet emerged from the curtain, but the medium's husband looked behind it and told me of the diamond star, which, he said, was some sort of "order" in spirit life.

Having no idea who the friend might be, I begged for some further particulars before going up to speak to her. "She passed from earth life some five or six years ago and in Germany," answered the medium's husband, who had conducted the conversation behind the curtain. This was less vague, and now, for the first time, a suspicion of the spirit's identity crossed my mind, but I would not go up until a name had been given, and I asked for this before leaving my seat.

My travelling companion, a recent acquaintance, had never heard me mention the lady in question, who had died in Germany at the time specified. The little child said the spirit would give the name through her, and 206 the process was a curious one. Instead of mentioning the whole name or each letter of it to her father, the child *described* each letter to him as you might describe the lines of the large capitals in a child's reading book. The father guessed the letter from the child's description, and asked me if the first one given was correct. It was; but I did not tell him so, merely saying I should like to have the Christian name in full before giving any opinion.

In due time the six letters (*Muriel* , we will call it) were correctly given, and I had then no further excuse for refusing to speak to the spirit who had asked for me. I went up to the curtain, and she appeared in front of it. I have been frequently asked, "Should you have recognized her as your friend had no name been given?" With every wish to be perfectly truthful, I find it difficult to answer this question for the following reason: "None of the 'materializations' I saw were exactly human in face. There was no idea of a mask or a clever 'get-up,' but if one could accept the theory of a body hastily 'put together' and assumed for a time, the result is exactly what might have been expected under such conditions." My friend, in real life, was very pale and had exquisitely chiselled features, and these were of the same *cast*. The height 207 was also similar, and an

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indescribable atmosphere of refinement, purity and quiet dignity, for which she had been remarkable, was also present with this materialized spirit. More than this, I cannot say; for no materialization I have ever seen could be truthfully considered *identical* with the human original.

I did not feel frightened, but I did feel embarrassed, and naturally so, considering how unwilling and grudging my recognition of her individuality must have appeared. She seemed conscious of this, for almost immediately she mentioned her hands, holding them out for inspection and saying, "Don't you remember my hands? I was so proud of my hands." Now, as a matter of fact, my friend was noted for her beautiful hands, but she was too sensible and clever a woman to be conceited about them, and had too much good taste ever to make their beauty a subject of remark even to an intimate friend like myself.

Moreover, the hands now *en évidence* , although well shaped and with tapering fingers, were as little identical with a human hand as the face was identical with a human face.

Casting about for something to say to her, my first thought was for an only and dearly-loved married sister of hers, also a friend of mine, and I mentioned the 208 latter in a guarded way, saying, "If you are in reality my friend, have you no message for *your sister*?"

In a moment and without the slightest hesitation she answered, "Tell poor *Jessie* ," going on with a message peculiarly appropriate to the facts of the case, but of too private a nature for publication; almost immediately and *with no shadow of suggestion from me* , she added, " Poor *Jessie*! she suffered terribly *when I passed away so suddenly.* "

My friend had died in a foreign country, under peculiarly sad circumstances. She was young, beautiful and accomplished; a prominent social figure in the well-known capital where she had passed several winters. Her death was so sudden that there was not even time to put off a large afternoon "at home" arranged for the day of her death; and moreover

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this married sister happened, by a most merciful chance, to be spending a few months with her, out of England, at the time.

These were all special facts, referred to by her, but which would not have applied equally well to the death of any other friend, even supposing such a death to have occurred abroad.

The spirit spoke feebly and with difficulty, “not having much strength,” as she told me.

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I asked if her father (who had died a few months before) was with her. “Not yet,” she said gently, “but I know he has passed over.” She then kissed my hand and faded away before my eyes, not apparently returning to the curtain (close to which I stood), but “vanishing into thin air.”

Some ten days later, my friend and I went again to an evening *séance* at the same house—different people were present on this occasion. A stupid “unintelligent” sceptic woman put us all out of harmony on this occasion by making inane suggestions, always declaring that “she would not for the world interfere with the conditions,” but doing so all the time. The “angel mother” came again and rather lost her temper, I thought, with an aggravating and illogical man in the circle, who hammered on about Faraday’s opinions on the spirit world, without much idea of what he was talking about. “Nels Seymour” *appeared* as well as spoke this time. He took my hand and kissed it; but he does not leave the cabinet as he is the “control.” It was eleven years on that day since he had “passed” over, so he called it his “birthday.”

A very beautiful female spirit materialized and offered to sit on my lap; an offer I closed with at once. She was some five feet eight inches in height, and VOL. I. 14 210 apparently a large well-developed woman. Anticipating the possibility of her resting her feet on the

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ground and so disguising her real weight, I moved my own feet from the ground the moment she sat down, which was easily done as my chair was a high one.

She remained for several minutes in this position, resting of necessity her whole weight upon me, which was about equal to that of a small kitten or lady's muff. There was an *appreciable* weight, but I have never nursed any baby that was not far heavier.

The veil this time was materialized in the usual way, my friend going up to watch the process.

My spirit friend appeared again, and more strongly this time. At a public *séance* where so many are eager to communicate with their friends, it is impossible to monopolize more than a few minutes of the public time and consequently any communications are as hurried and unsatisfactory as a conversation with an intimate friend in the public reading room of a hotel would be.

The "gentleman in uniform" who had been spoken of as trying in vain to materialize, made a more successful attempt this time. "He wants to come so nicely in his uniform. He nearly got it all right once, but he has tumbled all to pieces again," said the little child's voice in tones of ludicrous distress. I tried to console her by saying that as I knew nobody likely to come and see me from the other world "in a uniform," I was not much disappointed. However, presently a "male spirit" was announced for *me*, with the additional information, "He gives the name of Henry. He says you are his niece, and that he was your guardian." Expecting from these words to find a man between fifty and sixty years of age, I was much astonished to see in the dim light behind the curtain (he was not strong enough to come out into the room) a little boy, apparently of twelve or thirteen years of age. I disclaimed at once any possibility of an uncle of mine of that name assuming such an appearance. Then a sudden thought struck me. Years ago, before my birth, a little boy-uncle who was in the navy had died of fever in Jamaica. Naturally he could not have been my guardian. Moreover his name was not Henry but "Francis." Still he was an uncle and a young boy.

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Anyway it was worth while making the suggestion, especially as I felt pretty sure they would grasp eagerly at such a "straight tip." So I said quietly, "It is quite impossible that the name could be Henry, I know no one of such a name. It might possibly be *Francis*, please ask again." 14—2

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Quick as thought came the answer, given through the medium's husband, who put the question, and in most decided and impatient words: "The name is HENRY. He is your uncle, and was your guardian."

The man, seeing me look still incredulous, said, "Had you no uncle and guardian of that name?"

"Yes," I answered. "I had an uncle of the name who *was* my guardian, but he died as a man of 58, whereas this is apparently the spirit of a young boy."

"Not at all," answered the man. "The size is often a question of strength, and does not necessarily denote age. Your uncle says he has never materialized before. He cannot come more strongly the first time."

I must confess to a curious feeling of antagonism when I attempted to talk to the "uncle" in question. To begin with, he spoke (taking on the medium's conditions, I suppose) with a strong American accent, and in a very dictatorial and rather self-assertive way.

I had known comparatively little of this uncle in real life, as he died when I was only sixteen years of age, but I had reason to know that he was a man of considerable social gifts and of courteous and polished 213 manners. These latter had certainly deteriorated by the mediumship through which his remarks were conveyed.

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Asking if my father (his brother) were with him, he said very decidedly, “ No ,” adding, “It is the same with us as with you. Your father and I did not get on well in earth life, and we should not be more sympathetic here. Our views were very different.”

Now this was absolutely true, the one having been a thorough man of the world and the other a most devoted Christian. At the same time there was no ground for the idea that the two brothers were not “good friends” so far as such friendship was possible between two natures so different. My curious feeling of antipathy was, however, naturally increased by this remark, and I did not feel very anxious to continue the conversation.

Trying to find some more fortunate subject to discuss, I remembered a near relation in whom this uncle had taken a special interest, and said, “Have you no message for—?” mentioning, not the *name* , but the relationship between them, and adding, “Do you know that he is married since you passed away?” “Yes,” was the quick and decided answer. “He would not have married Muriel” (mentioning an uncommon 214 female name without hesitation or suggestion from me) “if I had been alive!”

“Do you object to her personally?” I said.

“No, but I dislike the connection,” he answered in the same quick, abrupt way. “Don't let us talk of family matters here.” In spite of saying this he went on to add that he was watching over my interests, which were threatened with regard to some money matters. “Can I do anything about it?” I said. “No; keep quiet. Leave it to me. I shall be able to protect your interests,” he replied.

Presently I said to him, “Will you give me one more proof of your being really my uncle before you go away? Can you tell me my *second* Christian name?”

I had been told that there is always considerable difficulty about giving earth names, which seem to pass from their remembrance, and to be recovered with difficulty. Of course I had imagined that this was a specious argument to cover ignorance of the right answer.

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It is only fair to say that my "uncle's" behaviour on this occasion rather tallied with this assertion. He hesitated, then said, "I will try, but let us talk of something else first." Yet he had mentioned with ease the name of a person he had never seen, as I 215 have shown above. I felt sure he could not give me the name I had asked for, especially when, in a few moments, he complained of "being weak," and said "he must go." Determined to stick to my question, I said in a rather sceptical voice, "Then you cannot tell me my *second* name?" upon which, without hesitation, he whispered "*Katharine*" in a loud, determined whisper, and vanished as he spoke. The name and placing of the name were perfectly correct.

I may pass over a third materializing *séance* at the same house, to which I took some Boston friends, as nothing of any fresh *personal* interest occurred. An excitable Italian friend of mine who had never seen anything of the kind before, and came with much the same prejudice as I had felt at the Boston *séance*, disturbed the conditions very much by his attitude of determined antagonism, whilst his comparative ignorance of English and my feeble Italian made explanation hopeless. The whole circle was put out of harmony, and a dead weight lay upon us all. The materializations continued, it is true; but personally it was a great relief to me when my excitable friend left, which he did so abruptly as to bring down much abuse upon his absent head for having "broken the 216 battery and almost killed the medium" by his sudden departure.

This awful threat had so much power over the rest of the party that we sat out to the bitter end, leaving the medium at last still in her trance, with husband and son hovering over her in an anxiety which, if acted, showed first-class dramatic power.

This last experience rather damped our ardour for a time, giving an unpleasant association with the subject, and we had no intention of going to any other *séances* whilst in New York.

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I had seen quite enough to puzzle me, and further sittings in a public circle were not likely to increase my experience, as I had already seen, touched, weighed, and spoken to these material apparitions—if one may so call them.

Meanwhile, I had made the acquaintance of a very beautiful and charming woman in New York, to whom I had brought a letter of introduction.

She has had an interesting and remarkable history; is a woman of great mental power in addition to very remarkable beauty and is of the highest rank, being an Austrian princess in her own right, and having spent her youth in foreign courts.

Apart from these facts, which had been already told me by a mutual friend before we met, I knew nothing whatever of her family history, whether she had brothers or sisters alive or dead.

I had spoken to her of my spiritualistic experiences and she had discussed the matter with me from the standpoint of a thorough woman of the world, of strong mental power, who had seen too much of life to be dogmatic or narrow in her views, but too much also to believe in what is called the “supernatural,” before every possible *natural* hypothesis had been admitted and discussed as untenable.

Sitting in her pretty room the day before I left New York, we had talked for some two hours on various subjects connected with life and literature, and before the final adieux she said laughingly, “Well, have you been to any more *séances* ?”

I said “no” and that we did not intend to do so as our time was now so short. A few moments of careless talk on the subject ensued, and picking up a newspaper, I cast my eye over the usual list of “mediums, clairvoyantes, &c.” A half-defined wish to see whether any spirit friend would come to me in a totally different part of the city and under other conditions and surroundings, led me to copy out one of the addresses at haphazard.

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I could not prevail upon Madame R. (who is delicate and dreads the night air) to accompany me, but I took back the slip of paper to my hotel, thinking that if my friend cared to go we might take the cars to the other end of the city after dinner.

I found my friend rather indifferent and inclined, not to go, which was natural. Her maid was packing up for our departure, and would require a little supervision. It was our last night in New York, and we were both tired out. Moreover this lady, who is not magnetic in temperament, had no expectation of seeing any of her own friends, although she had of course both seen and spoken to those who came for me.

However, a good dinner at the excellent "Windsor Hotel" fortified us so much after our fatigues, that at the last moment we agreed to make one last attempt, no one, ourselves included, having known five minutes before that we should leave the house.

On this occasion we were ushered into a much more imposing drawing-room, and the lady herself was evidently some degrees higher in the social scale than our first mediumistic friend.

The arrangements also were quite different.

As we sat waiting for a few minutes (having arrived very punctually) Mrs. Gray looked at my friend, and 219 then described an elderly lady with grey hair who was standing over her, but of course invisible to our eyes. Almost immediately afterwards Mrs. Gray began rubbing her own knees and complained of pain in them, adding, "The impression of dropsy is being conveyed to me. This spirit seems to have suffered from disease of that nature."

My friend—who is very self-contained and unemotional—gave no clue to the fact that she recognized any one by this description, but as we were returning home in the cars she

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said quietly, "It is curious Mrs. Gray should have described that old lady with grey hair. I suppose she meant my mother. *She* had grey hair and died of dropsy."

On this occasion we were ushered into a fairly large room with a regular "cabinet" at one end of it, containing perhaps twice as much space as the tiny alcove I have previously mentioned; at this other house Mrs. Gray did not enter the cabinet herself, but her son, a boy of 18 or 19, went in and the materializations took place through him alone, his mother and father remaining all the time amongst the sitters.

The sitting began in total darkness, a new and most unpleasant experience to me. Moreover, under such conditions, an investigator has no possible means of judging to what extent the phenomena may be a cleverly arranged trick.

For instance, a "mason" appeared in a shining dress covered with masonic signs which at once suggested phosphorescent light.

Some figure (undistinguishable) rushing towards me in the darkness, I gave involuntarily a little nervous cry, upon which, quick as thought, the figure seemed to rush *backwards* into the cabinet, and a voice proceeding from that part of the room said, "That is too bad. You might have had a beautiful demonstration, but you have forced the spirits back by repelling instead of welcoming them." I expressed a due amount of regret, but said that I should continue to "repel" anything or anybody that rushed at me in the dark, and that if the lights were not to be raised, I should much prefer leaving the circle, as the conditions were very unpleasant to me and not in the least degree calculated to satisfy any doubts I might have as to the genuineness of the *séance*. Mrs. Gray received these remarks very quietly, and said that if I would be patient for a few minutes longer, the gas should be lighted, which was done, much to my relief, for the feeling of oppression in the total darkness had been very disagreeable.

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As soon as the room was lighted up, the “spirits” came out in such quick succession that it would have been *impossible* for less than two or three “dressers” to have got them ready, even could they have been concealed in the cabinet. On many occasions, *as one retired, another emerged*, proving that at any rate it was not the boy medium, who could not be in two places at once.

A spirit, dressed in some kind of white “sister's” dress, very shortly appeared, and Mrs. Gray asked if any one in the circle could speak German, as this spirit did not seem to understand French, Italian or English, and she herself only recognized German by the sound.

A gentleman volunteered his assistance, but apparently without much effect, and being a German scholar myself, I then offered to come to the rescue. The moment I went up to the figure, she came quite out of the cabinet and said to me in the most refined and excellent German (any readers who have studied the language know that there is as wide a difference between the highest and lowest type of German accent as there is between an educated Irish “accent” and an Irish “brogue”):

“I am the sister of Madame R.,” mentioning the 222 name of the foreign friend with whom I had been spending the afternoon.

She had evidently a strong, almost overpowering wish to make some communication to me for her sister, but the difficulty in doing so seemed equally strong. It lay beyond the question of language, for she spoke with sufficient strength and I could understand perfectly her well-chosen and well-pronounced words. But some insuperable obstacle seemed to prevent her telling me what she wished, and the despairing effort to do so was most painful. I assured her of my willingness to help her in any possible way, and made a few suggestions, but in vain. “Is it that you are not happy?”

“No, no, that's not it.”

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It seemed to be some sort of warning that she wished to convey. I asked if she could *write* it, and she caught eagerly at the idea. So I borrowed a pencil and some paper and placed them on a small table with a chair in front of it. She came quite close to the table, sat down and took up the pencil, but almost immediately threw it down again, saying in a most unhappy and despairing voice, "No, it is of no use; I cannot write it," and vanished as she rose from the table.

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Now had this been a case of fraud, and supposing that some woman had means of discovering the name of my friend in New York, what would have been easier than to write or give some commonplace message in a language of which she had already proved herself mistress?

Having returned to my seat, painfully impressed by this episode, I had no wish for any further personal experience that evening; but such was to be my fate.

Some twenty minutes later, a figure in white came forward very swiftly, and without a moment's hesitation pointed towards me, saying quickly, "*For you.*" I went up at once, recognizing in reality who it was, but determined not to admit this nor to give any sign of recognition.

The "spirit" looked at me for a moment with a sort of surprise, as we might look at any well-known friend who passed us in the street without a greeting. As I remained silent, she whispered, "Don't you know me?" "No," I answered stoutly, "I don't know you; who are you?" "Why, I am Muriel!" came the instant answer, mentioning the name of the first friend who had appeared to me, after spelling out her name, at the previous *séances* held in another part of 224 New York. On this third appearance my friend asked me to kiss her. I must confess that I complied with some amount of trepidation, which proved quite unnecessary.

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There was nothing in the least repulsive to the touch, although it was not exactly like kissing any one on earth, but an indescribable atmosphere of freshness and purity that always seemed to surround this friend whilst on earth was very apparent to me under these changed conditions.

My travelling companion was standing close by and can testify to the fact that this is exactly what passed, and that the name was given without the slightest due to it being suggested, and, in fact, only upon my obstinate refusal to recognize her identity. Now, until that day, we had never dreamed of going to Mrs. Gray's house, and had never even heard her name. Until past seven o'clock that evening we had not decided to go at all, and the *séance* began at 8 p.m., no single person in the room being present who had been at the house of the other medium some weeks previously.

As there were never more than seven or eight persons present at the other house on the three occasions when we were there, it was easy to remember 225 them individually. Under these circumstances it would be difficult to account for the fact of my friend's re-appearance on the ground of collusion between the two mediums, even if they knew each other, which I have no reason to suppose. Moreover, such collusion would not account for the appearance earlier in the evening of the sister of my foreign friend.

I can merely state these facts with strict truthfulness of detail, and leave others to start their own theories and form their own conclusions, making only one reservation. I must, once for all, decline to entertain the idea of an elaborate detective machinery being put into motion in this, to me, foreign country, in order to discover unimportant details connected with my previous life and previous acquaintances. We all know what detective expenses amount to, even when some marked incident in a life has to be followed up within a radius of two or three hundred miles; to trace the private friendships and family affairs of a stranger some thousands of miles from her own country would be simply ruinous.

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However strongly one may desire to suggest fraud at any price, I do not see why we should be expected to sacrifice every element of common-sense even in such VOL. I. 15 226 a praiseworthy cause. The old stock argument of the wonders of conjuring possibilities and the marvels of that "Home of Mystery," the Egyptian Hall, fails absolutely to account for *all* the ground of my experiences, although it might cover it in part. We must remember that Maskelyne and Cook have a large hall and platform at their entire disposal, and can consequently make any arrangements they like, whereas I am now speaking of small private rooms, our first experience taking place in a room so small that we could hear the slightest sound and where the lower rooms were occupied by other families, on the system of our own flats.

At this last materializing *séance* of which I shall speak, the spirit of an Indian girl came rushing out, jabbering a sort of "pigeon English" in a most excitable way. In a moment she had seized upon a good Roman bracelet of mine with rather uncommon fastening, pulled it off my arm without any hesitation, and flourished about the room with it on her own. I never expected to see it again, but later in the evening she came back and replaced it. I have asked several times why *Indians* play so large a part in mediumship here, and the answer has been that they seem to haunt the country which once belonged to 227 them, and that being intelligences of a lower and comparatively undeveloped nature, they are more easily used as messengers by the higher grades of spirits. It is as though we employed a coachman or commissionaire to carry a message to a friend, instead of expecting Mr. Huxley or Professor Tyndall or Canon Liddon to do us such a service.

I suggest this because the fact of these Indian spirits so constantly appearing to aid in materializations or act as writing "controls" is often urged as a conclusive proof of trickery.

In discussing such a theory as this one is bound to do so on the lines of argument laid down by the holders of the theory, so long as these do not appear absolutely untenable by a rational intelligence.

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“Joan of Arc” was next announced. She waved a French flag, which had been placed over the gas burners, I conclude, in anticipation of a possible visit from her. This spirit, after its first appearance, materialized to an immense height, standing close to me all the time, and under the full glare of the gas. Here also I saw for the first time what had been previously described to me, but which I had not yet witnessed, namely, the disappearance of the spirits in full light and without returning to any cabinet or curtain. I 15—2 228 have already mentioned this in referring to the sister of Mde. R.; but as Mrs. Gray walked round the room in *full light*, spirits appeared, grew and dwindled down again into the floor a few inches from me.

A curious little old doctor, in the dress of some fifty years ago, came into the circle and sat down by the master of the house and began to rub the leg of the latter, which he had been “treating” from spirit land for some time.

So much for a very slight sketch of some of the various “spirits” I actually saw, felt and spoke with. It is at present impossible for me to satisfy myself that the whole thing is a hoax, because no one hitherto has been able to suggest any possible explanation of my personal experiences in the matter, except conjuring and trap doors, which do not meet the difficulty of a *knowledge of names and family matters of comparatively small importance*.

Then comes the Detective Theory, which I have already discussed and dismissed.

Travelling in a country where I was an absolute stranger and with an acquaintance of recent date, who knew nothing whatever of my previous history or friendships, we are next reduced to the theory of 229 thought reading and a clever material adaptation of the image “read” in one's mind.

But in any thought reading hitherto achieved, it has been found necessary for the agent to fix his mind with concentration on the person or things he wished to present to the

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mind of the percipient. I have never heard of any successful thought reading under other conditions than these, which were markedly absent in every *first* visit I received. I lay a stress upon “first,” because when “Muriel,” for example, had once appeared to me, there was doubtless an underlying idea in my mind of the possibility of a second visit.

The next and more important question is, whether such materializations, if genuine, are *lawful*?

This is a question with regard to which I feel considerably more doubt than as regards the genuineness of the phenomena.

Spiritualists themselves are greatly divided on this point, I believe. There appear to be various phases of mediumship. Some profess to hear the spirits speak—others write under their control. Some again can see and describe an appearance which has no material basis and is entirely invisible to others in the room; and lastly come the materializing mediums, with whom we have just made acquaintance.

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It is perhaps only to be expected that each class of medium should exalt his or her special capacity and disbelieve in any other form of spirit intercourse.

I have, however, met confirmed spiritualists who do believe in the possibility and actual occurrence of “materialization,” but consider it unlawful.

This, of course, is a question that each one must settle for himself.

The fact that many spiritualists, and most people outside their ranks, consider such materializations unlawful where they are not fraudulent, does not of course prove that they *are* so.

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We are accepting to-day many things as lawful facts which were held to be profitless theories or wicked defiance of Providence a hundred years ago by the best and holiest men of the day.

Spirit materialization *may* in the future prove to have been one of these.

Meanwhile my own instinct is, I must confess, against it. Even looking at the matter from the spiritualist's point of view, I have a strong impression that such materialization is a lower form of spirit intercourse, only perhaps possible to those who are comparatively earth-bound.

This is of course no conclusive proof that it is 231 *wrong*, but to encourage such materializations may be to retard the higher development of the spirits of those we have loved here.

For aught we can tell, they might, under the constant temptation to come back to us, lose some of the higher influences possible to them in their present sphere, and so frustrate the intentions of the Heavenly Father, who has seen fit, for some good purpose, to remove them from amongst us.

Even under the highest possible conditions, materialization at present appears to me as though some boy moved into an upper form at Eton or Harrow were to neglect his own studies, in order to look over the lessons appointed for some younger brother lower down in the school. He might justify himself to some extent by the plea of natural interest and affection; but should his own advancement suffer to any great extent, I think schoolmaster and father alike would have good cause to complain of such conduct.

I come now to the final branch of my subject—Clairvoyance.

During my year's visit to America, I went at widely differing times and places to some eight or ten clairvoyants with the following results.

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I am quite convinced that where a life has been in 232 any way eventful or at all marked, any fairly developed clairvoyant can in some way "sense" your mental and moral atmosphere.

In some three or four cases, the notes taken at the time of such visits, paid several thousands of miles apart, might almost be read as descriptive of the same interview with different witnesses.

My travelling companion, who has led a very uneventful life by her own account, seemed to puzzle them very much more. There was apparently nothing to lay hold of, and in consequence only a shadowy indistinct picture was given to her; but in my own case the colours were put on freely, firmly and without the least hesitation, and in every single instance the sketch was singularly truthful, and yet would not have described the life of one other woman in two or three hundred.

I am therefore driven to the conclusion, that, spirits or no spirits, a good clairvoyant has some natural gift, cultivated by constant exercise, of what we may call "moral scent." Beyond this I am prepared to make no admissions. That there is a good deal of guesswork done, even under the supposed influence of "trance," is quite evident to me. I am not prepared to say that such trances are in no case genuine, but the 233 remarks made during them are frequently of a tentative nature, and the slightest good "hit" is followed up with as much ingenuity as Professor Owen displayed in putting together his skeleton from a single bone.

Still, allowing for all this, I have nevertheless received sufficient proof that clairvoyance is not all guesswork. Whether, where the future is concerned, they have any reliable powers, is, I think, doubtful.

For one case of well authenticated prescience we have a hundred mistakes. At the same time, I am bound to admit that in some three cases at such widely differing places as

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Philadelphia, San Francisco and Denver, the future was touched upon with me and always treated of on the same lines. I have not as yet been able to test their accuracy where this subject is concerned, and should be inclined to put it down to the fact that the same conclusion might suggest it where each one possessed (in some unexplained manner) the same *data* to go upon.

I have been told in some six or seven instances that my mother (who died when I was an infant) was my guardian spirit, and six times her name has been given to me; with some difficulty in one or two instances, but invariably without the smallest guessing or hinting on my part. This difficulty in giving a name was 234 experienced, it will be remembered, by a materialized spirit who came to me in New York, and yet, when given, it was done with great decision and without the slightest help from me. Such was also the case where my mother's name was given to me through clairvoyant mediumship.

One of my most successful clairvoyant interviews was with a Mrs. Parks at Philadelphia, a very pleasant good-looking healthy woman, quite unlike the usual cadaverous-looking medium with whom one is more familiar.

Her terms being rather higher than those usually asked in America (where competition makes mediums a cheap luxury), I demurred at first; upon which she said very brightly, "Well, don't come if you don't feel like paying that, but I never alter my prices. One thing however, I can promise you; I won't take your money if I cannot give you satisfaction. I may not be *your medium*. There is a great difference; some get satisfaction from one person and some from another. You will soon see if I am telling you the truth about your friends, and I won't take a penny from you if you are dissatisfied."

I left the house, promising to think over the matter and to come at a certain hour the next day, if I came 235 at all. Mrs. Parks did not at all press me to make the appointment more binding than this, and from my manner could hardly have expected to see me.

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I had a most satisfactory sitting with her next morning. She mentioned some of those nearest and dearest to me who had "passed away," and by whom she described me as being still surrounded.

After referring to my mother's presence and giving her name without any hesitation, she gave me several "messages" with reference to character which were singularly appropriate, and then finished up by saying, "Your mother does not wish you to go to mediums or mix yourself up too much with such people. It is not necessary for you to do so; she says you have enough mediumistic power for her to be able to communicate with you directly."

I could not help saying with a smile, "Well, Mrs. Parks, you are going very much against your interests in giving me that message. I am a perfect stranger to you in this city; I have told you that I am making some little stay here, and as you have given me so much satisfaction, I might have been induced to come and see you several times again before leaving."

She laughed and answered, "That is quite true; but I am an honest woman, and I am bound to give you the message that is given me for you, even when it goes against my own interest."

Mrs. Parks' house was most pleasantly situated and very well furnished, and her husband, who had opened the door for me, had one of the most pleasing and intelligent faces I have ever seen. She spoke of him and of her children with the deepest affection, and referred to the extreme happiness of her married life.

Seeing her bright, pleasant home, with every trace of comfort about it, and having received personal proof that money alone was not her consideration, I could not resist asking why she continued such an arduous life.

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“Well,” she answered, “the truth is, I do it, nowadays, against my own wish. My husband has always objected to it more or less. He was afraid it might injure my health, and for two years I gave it up entirely; but,” she added, “the spirits would not leave me alone. It seemed as if I *had* to come back to it; as if I were refusing to use the powers that had been given to me for the help and comfort of my fellow-creatures. I name a higher price than others, to limit my work and to keep away those who would only come from idle curiosity.”

She also told me that sometimes she had to give 237 orders beforehand that certain people should not be admitted on any pretext whatever.

“I can see their spirits round them before they reach the door very often,” she said, “and I would not have such people bringing such an atmosphere into my house if they gave me a hundred dollars for each sitting.”

There is one more incident I would mention, of so private a nature that I have much hesitation in speaking of it to a possibly unsympathetic public.

As, however, it concerns myself alone, and certainly throws a strong light on the spiritualistic question, I feel bound to write of it, trusting to the generosity of my readers to appreciate my motives for touching upon so sacred a subject.

I have already said, that six or seven clairvoyantes in different parts of America and at widely different times described my mother as present, giving her name in each case.

I must now add that, after a few moments' pause, they invariably went on to say that my father was also in spirit life, but apparently not so near to me, for they always seemed conscious of my mother's presence first, and said that a strong tie of *affinity* must exist in addition to the tie of relationship between us.

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In each case, where my father was recognized, the same remark was immediately made, "He is not so far on in spirit development as your mother." In each case I had indignantly denied this possibility. It is true that he had "passed away" some eight years later than my mother, but it seemed to me that the fact of his being an example of one of the most beautiful Christian lives ever lived would more than atone for this slight difference in time of separation from earthly conditions. Moreover, my mother's character has always been described to me as impulsive and fascinating, but far more faulty and less saintly than his, and I knew that no one would have resented more keenly than she herself the idea that she could possibly have advanced further in spirit life than one whom she loved so truly and revered so highly.

Without entering into these details, I had contented myself with remarking invariably, "That is an entire mistake. You are right in describing both my parents as dead and in giving my mother's name, but here you are entirely wrong." In each instance the clairvoyante would answer in almost identical words, "Well, that is how it is given to me. I cannot see it in any other way."

When this had occurred half-a-dozen times, I began to feel some surprise. It was certainly strange that each one broke down so hopelessly on a question which, it seemed to me, could admit of no possible doubt. If they could see some other things so truly, why should they be so utterly at fault with regard to this one point—all making the same mistake?

In the course of my travels, I found myself some months later at Denver, in Colorado. We stayed here at first only one day, to break our journey further up into the Rocky Mountains. Now the day before, wandering about Colorado Springs, my friend and I had come across a lady doctor by chance, and having asked some trivial question, were invited into her pretty little house, where we chatted for some half-hour on various subjects, spiritualism

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amongst them. We did not enter into any account of our previous experiences, but simply mentioned the fact that we had some interest in investigating the matter.

Hearing this, and that we were going on to Denver next day, this lady gave me the address of a young married friend who lived in that city and who had during the last two years suddenly developed strong mediumistic power, but who was not in any way a professional medium. She begged that we would call upon her if possible, and I took down the address, but 240 said it was very doubtful if we could make time to do so during such a short stay.

At the end of a long afternoon's drive over all the most interesting parts of Denver city, we called at the house mentioned, and found that the lady was not at home, and was not likely to be able to come and see us that evening as she was delicate. As we were leaving Denver next morning, this seemed to make a meeting impossible, but we left cards and a note to explain our visit.

To my great surprise, on going into the hotel office after dinner, I heard a gentleman inquiring for me by name, and found that he had brought his wife to see me. "I did not like her to come out at night, but she was bound to have her own way," he said, with the stolid resignation of the typical American husband.

The lady in question came into my bedroom upstairs, saying she preferred a room that was already "permeated by my influence." She said very simply, "I do not know that I shall be able to help you at all, but when I read your note I felt bound to come, although my husband tried to dissuade me from doing so. It seemed to me as if the spirits came with me all the way in the cars."

She told me, as all the others had done, of my 241 mother's presence, gave her name, and then made the usual remark, "Your father is also in spirit life, but your mother is further advanced than he is."

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She had been in a kind of trance whilst giving these and various other pieces of information.

When she returned to consciousness I determined to make an effort to penetrate the mystery of this almost universal misconception. I said, therefore, "Now, Mrs. B., I must tell you honestly that you have made one cardinal mistake, but I am bound to tell you also that five or six professional mediums have done the same." With this, I explained what she had told me in her trance with regard to the spiritual development of my respective parents, and asked if she could in any way account for the curious mistake.

"Wait a moment," she answered, "perhaps the spirits will explain to me." She looked up with a very intent expression on her face for a minute as though listening to some explanation which did not cover the ground of her own experience, and then said very quickly and in a monotonous voice, as though repeating a verbal message, "It has nothing to do with our earthly idea of 'goodness.' Spiritual life can only come to us as we are prepared to receive it. Your father was a minister of the Church of England. He VOL. I. 16 242 was a very holy man, no doubt, but he was in some way ' *creed bound* .' He was a man of strong creed; he clung to his creed here, and he cannot quite free himself from it even now, although he has advanced very much in spiritual perception. Now, your mother had a highly sympathetic, *apprehensive* nature. She can therefore receive spiritual light more fully and freely. That is why she has risen to a higher plane. It is not a question so much of character as of spiritual capacity, and in this she is the more highly gifted of the two. She is on a different plane, but she is able to help your father very much, and in time he will join her on that plane, and they will progress together." All this was said in a quick, decided way, and without the smallest hesitation. My accent, no doubt, proclaimed my nationality, but I should hardly have expected a young woman in the midst of the Rocky Mountains to know the exact meaning of the term "minister of the Church. of England." Yet the words were given, not tentatively, but with quick, firm precision, exactly as I have written them down. I may add as a sequel that my father was a well-known clergyman in

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his day, incumbent of Christ Church, Dover, a man of unblemished character and deeply beloved by all who knew him. He was also a rigid Evangelical, but one who shed the 243 light of a beautiful nature over that somewhat mournful creed, and who united with a strict fidelity to what he considered Evangelical truth the rarer charm of “speaking the truth in love.”

Before closing this chapter, I should like to mention one curious circumstance in connection with a clairvoyante whom I visited in San Francisco, whilst staying with friends in that city. The conditions were most unfavourable. I went with a number of young friends who were all in a very sceptical and rather frivolous state of mind. The medium was a poor one to start with. She was also suffering from severe neuralgic headache, and the performance promised to be very unsatisfactory.

I was told that she made a good many bad “shots.” So far as my personal experience with her went it was successful. Amongst other things, she described the spirit of a “young lady standing over me who had passed away in a foreign country some years before.” She picked out “Germany” as the country from a list of six countries handed to her, but was very vague and general in the personal description: “Medium height, hair not very dark and not very light.”

“That would answer to a good many people,” I objected, upon which she said a little impatiently as 16—2 244 though we were wasting time in quibbling, “Oh, well, it does not matter. The spirit tells me you know perfectly well who she is. She has already appeared to you in New York.” This could only apply to the spirit of the friend I call “Muriel,” who had come to me in New York some five months previously.

This San Francisco medium described “an uncle” as appearing over the heads of two of my young friends. She said he was surrounded by water, and appeared to have been drowned; also that he was extremely musical. They declared all this was positively untrue,

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and had no grain of foundation. The woman looked puzzled and a little mortified, but almost immediately turned to others in the circle, with better success let us hope.

It was only on our return home, when the young people were telling their mother of this “awful humbug” amid shouts of laughter, that the mother of the family said: “But, you know, my dear children, your Uncle Robert was drowned years ago, and of course he was a great musician. He wanted to have given up his life to art, only he was persuaded to adopt another profession.”

I give this as an instance of the carelessness with which, when we are *determined* to find fraud, we may ²⁴⁵ do so sometimes at the expense of truth. These young girls had doubtless heard of their uncle, but the fact had escaped their memories, and possibly they had no wish to recall anything which could cast a doubt on their preconceived notion that “the whole thing was a swindle.”

Here I must come to an end with my “plain, unvarnished tale.” I have added nothing to it for effect. I have taken nothing from it. I give the facts to my readers as they came under my own notice, and am quite aware that the whole fabric rests upon my own good faith and powers of impartial judgment.

Personal friends know how far I am to be trusted on both these points, and to strangers I can give no satisfactory guarantee.

A literary friend of mine (a well-known rising man, whose name for obvious reasons I cannot give) said to me lately in connection with this subject: “Of course the whole gist of the matter lies in the credibility of the witness. Had one of my own sisters told me what you have just read to me, I confess that it would have made little effect upon me, simply because I know they are emotional, excitable, and apt to be led away by their feelings; but I have known you for twelve years, and know you to be reliable and possessed of ²⁴⁶ good common-sense. Therefore, although I am by no means prepared to accept the doctrines of spiritualism as a sufficient explanation of your experiences, I do consider them

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worthy of a close investigation, and I cannot myself suggest any *intelligent* cause for such phenomena apart from what we have accustomed ourselves to call ‘the supernatural.’”

Many other people will feel the same who have not the personal acquaintance with me that would afford them any ground of confidence. The narrative must stand or fall on its own merits.

CHAPTER V. NEW YORK, WASHINGTON, AND PHILADELPHIA.

Looking over my American note-book I find that I have absolutely nothing to say about New York that has not been already said a hundred times before.

We know all about Castle Garden, Brooklyn Bridge, the system of street cars, the exorbitant price of carriage hire, the rectangular streets, the Vanderbilt mansions of sandstone and marble, the number of hotels, the uniform charges, the iniquitous washing-bills, the overpowering *menus*, the Delmonico Restaurant, the grand twelve and thirteen storied public buildings, the elevated railroad, Fifth Avenue, Madison Square, and Central Park; are they not all written in the books of every Transatlantic visitor of the last half century?

And have I not bound myself to write of nothing that has not some personal interest to inspire my pen, and so give me some slight chance at least of being able to interest others?

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American cities as a rule are so much alike, so devoid of any striking feature of interest, architectural or otherwise, that one is completely thrown upon the human element to repay one for the trouble and expense of visiting them at all.

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To some people this is all-sufficient. To others it is comparatively valueless, and these are they who cross the Atlantic to come back disgusted and captious and dissatisfied. They have spent their money and gone through a great deal of discomfort, and with what result?

To see a good many square miles of ugly buildings—to see scenery on a big scale, certainly, but, with rare exceptions, not so fine as they have already seen on the other side—to meet men and women with whom they have little or no sympathy, who appear to them unpolished, unfinished, odd and eccentric—such travellers are better at home. There is nothing over here to interest them.

I have been told, over and over again, that New York is exactly like Paris. I cannot myself see the slightest resemblance. Both cities have famous parks and rejoice in a brightness of sunshine seldom seen in smoky London, and, doubtless, this affects the spirits of the population in either place. Otherwise I see no greater resemblance between New York and Paris than between New York and Vienna or any other European capital which has the advantage of a pure atmosphere and bright sky overhead to keep the buildings clean and improve the spirits of the inhabitants.

I can quite understand the casual visitor to New York, who stays there only some three or four weeks, as we did, coming away without any very ardent desire to return, and unable to comprehend the charm that New York life undoubtedly possesses for some people.

To do this you must spend at least a winter in New York society and have plenty of money to enable you to enjoy it. I never knew any city where you could spend more and get less for it.

House rent is enormous, owing no doubt to the situation of the city on a long, narrow island where the building possibilities are of necessity very limited.

Street cars and elevated railways are cheap enough, and a *man* may manage a good deal of social life, literally “on these lines.” But a lady cannot stand about on muddy, snowy

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streets in her “rubbers,” waiting for a car to take her up and land her perhaps one or two blocks away from the opera or dinner party or evening *réunion* to which she may be going. Broughams are ruinous to our English ideas.

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Then again flowers form a terrible item in the expense of social life to those who are not rich enough to hold dollars in contempt. The universal custom of wearing natural flowers in the dress on every social occasion is extremely charming and an evidence of instinctive good taste no doubt, but the fancy is a costly one. Considerable management and self-denial are necessary to keep your simplest flower decoration within the limits of a dollar, and I have often seen four or five pounds given for a bouquet destined to last only a few hours and which would be hardly remarked amongst the galaxy of floral beauty to be seen any night at the opera or at an evening reception.

Young ladies, of course, expect to receive these floral tributes from their various admirers.

A young Englishman earning his two or three hundred a year would find ladies' society an expensive luxury under such conditions in England. Here you must readjust your scale of charges altogether. Look upon a New York dollar as about equivalent to a London shilling, where the *luxuries* of life are concerned; have a good stock of them in hand with a few excellent introductions, and then only will you be in a position to begin to understand the charms of New York life.

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A young Scotch nobleman whom I met in New York, staying at a house to which I had taken an introduction, told me he had never enjoyed himself so much in his life as during the two winters he had spent with these hospitable friends.

But then he was seeing the city under exceptionally fortunate circumstances. Bright sunshine, carriages and horses to command, sleighing and skating, pretty girls and society

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that can be respectable without being dull and stiff—all this forms an *entourage* that any young man from the old world might well enjoy.

That most Americans themselves would prefer life in New York to life in Boston, proves only that the cosmopolitan element finds more favour than the provincial in their eyes.

New York is pre-eminently a city of good food, good theatres, fine horses and pretty women. The sequence is intentional. Many men ask for nothing more than this, and to them New York, with plenty of money to spend, must be a paradise.

I believe there is some very good literary and artistic society to be found in the American capital, but you must dig deeper for it here than in Boston, and I think the more superficial social life of ball and opera, 252 bright flowers and charming toilettes, well-groomed horses and jingling sleigh bells is the more characteristic view of a New York winter.

Herein probably lies the fancied likeness to Paris which strikes some people so forcibly. One thing even my few weeks' stay in New York impressed upon me as a curious but undoubted fact; I refer to the very strong cord that separates the New York “knickerbocker” families, as they are called—the untitled aristocracy—from the rest of the world.

It is quite a mistake to imagine that there are no “wheels within wheels” to the Republican coach. In fact, it seems to me that the very absence of any marked social distinctions makes such people far more sensitive on the point than they would be with us, where in most cases their social standing would be patent to the meanest capacity.

Certain names are, no doubt, as well known in America as certain titles are with us; but an outsider over here, who comes across any member of a “real old family” may expect very soon to make the discovery that his acquaintance “is not as other men are.”

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One considerable drawback to enjoyment of life in New York lies in the disgraceful state of the streets. 253 London streets are far from immaculate, and we have much less difficulty to contend with in England as regards climate.

Where snow falls so heavily and lies so deep for many weeks in the year, varied only by the slush and mud of periodical thaws, it is obvious that ordinary paying is impossible, and ordinary precautions for keeping the streets clean are absolutely useless. Still, making all due allowance for this, I think in such a rich city, where the road taxes are so exorbitant, some better solution of the problem might be met than that of leaving matters alone, which appears to be the present policy.

An American friend of mine living in a handsome New York house which could only be approached by a series of hops, skips, and jumps through slush and snow, told me that "she could not trust herself to speak on the subject," it roused her to such indignation, and that in spite of the enormous sums paid to the municipality, to meet the heavy expenses of street cleaning and repairing, each householder was forced to employ private labour as well.

Our last view of New York, crossing over by the Desbrosses Ferry to Jersey City *en route* for Washington, was certainly a very beautiful one.

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A brilliantly blue sky and the softening charm of distance lent real enchantment to the view, and New York seen from Jersey City, with her splendid public buildings bathed in sunshine, looked certainly very imposing, and almost poetical.

The American steam ferry is an institution for which I have the greatest possible respect. The boats are large and commodious, and most clean and comfortable, a real luxury in the way of travel compared with the wretched squalor of our own.

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We do not, of course, require boats on such a large scale in England, but I have never been able to understand the stoical indifference with which English men and women for many years have borne the wretched discomfort of such an important ferry as that between the two towns of Liverpool and Birkenhead.

Now, indeed, we are at last independent of this most uncomfortable means of crossing the river; but for years the dread of a Birkenhead ferry boat on a wet day has been a nightmare to me when staying in the north of England; and when it was a case of conveying luggage as well as one's self, words fail to describe the horrors of the situation.

An American ferry is positively delightful. The 255 waiting-rooms at either end are large and well managed, there is no unseemly rush and crush, you go on board quietly, you can either sit on deck or go into a splendid saloon, safe from all chances of rain or wind, with ample ventilation, and remain there until you pass into an equally convenient waiting-room at the other end, where you take "the cars" to your destination.

Having timed our visit purposely to spend the last few weeks before Lent in Washington, we had great difficulty in finding any suitable accommodation at the very height of the official season.

At length we came to some sort of anchor at Willard's Hotel, an old-fashioned house where many senators lodge, and which has sent out every President but two, so the proprietor told us with much pride. I think it would have sent us out also, could we have found any rooms elsewhere.

This proprietor, by the way, was delightful on the subject of the *cuisine*. Having hinted gently that I hoped this would give us satisfaction, he gazed at me with a mixture of pity and chastened self-approval that almost approached to humility.

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"I don't wish to boast about it," he said, "but Willard's Restaurant happens to be simply the best, I 256 won't say in America, for you may throw Europe in as well and yet not beat it."

Alas! would that we could have indorsed the opinion at the end of our month's experience.

Washington is the most beautiful city of the Eastern states. I think no one will question this assertion.

To begin with, it has every advantage of natural scenery in its situation on the two branches of the Potomac river, the banks of which are clothed on the Virginia side with splendid trees. Just now (February) the foliage is not seen to advantage, but many of the trees are evergreens, and the beautiful colouring of sky and water sheds an exquisite light over all the woods alike.

The Washington monument (a pure white obelisk), rising some four hundred feet and placed in the most prominent part of the city, close down by the river side, forms one of the most distinctive features of Washington. It is the first point you see on approaching the city, and the last to disappear.

I could almost as easily imagine Washington without its famous Capitol as without this characteristic monument.

An English friend of mine says that Washington appears to him as a "splendid skeleton;" I should 257 scarcely have chosen the metaphor myself. Of course everything in America is comparatively unfinished, and this city, like others, has been laid down on such extensive lines that it must require years to fill them in completely; but if Washington is a skeleton, the flesh is being added very quickly. No one can doubt this who notes the marvellously rapid strides that she makes every year even in this land of universal progress.

The bones seem to me pretty well clothed already when one looks out on the magnificent public buildings that greet one on every side.

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First and foremost the Capitol, with its grand dome rising on the crest of the hill, from which the chief avenues in the city radiate out.

At the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue stand the beautiful buildings of the Treasury, with Ionic columns, modelled after the Temple of Minerva in Athens; the White House stands between these and the grand pile of buildings that form the State, War, and Navy Departments and is rather dwarfed by the presence of her magnificent neighbours on either side.

Then we have the fine white marble Post Office buildings, as imposing as all American post offices invariably are.

A short detour brings us to the spacious brick and VOL. I. 17 258 stone buildings of the Department of Agriculture, with their beautiful grounds and splendid collection of rare shrubs and plants.

Close by is the red sandstone pile of the Smithsonian Museum, with some fifty acres of pleasant grounds attached to it, which lead us to the Botanical Gardens and so back to our starting point, the Capitol.

Now a city which has such a circle of grand buildings that one can recall to memory at a moment's notice, without help of guide-book or note-book, must be already beyond the point of merely great possibilities.

One of our first drives in the neighbourhood of Washington was to the suburb of Georgetown to see the beautiful Oak Hill Cemetery, situated on the shelving wooded ground known as Montrose Heights. Here I met with a puzzle and later on with its solution.

John Howard Payne, who wrote "Brutus," but who is far better known as the author of "Home, Sweet Home," is buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

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The modern tomb raised to him in 1883 has his bust upon it and underneath a pretty little verse which runs thus:

“Sure when thy gentle spirit fled To realms beyond the azure dome, With outstretched arms, the angels said, Welcome! to Heaven's home, sweet home.”

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Close by is the original flat stone laid down to his memory at the time of his death in 1852, and mentioning that he died “in this city” April 19, 1852.

Now many years ago, when a very small child, I could remember having my sympathies awakened by the story of how the poor man who wrote those words, which have been sung in every capital of Europe, never had a home himself and died in a foreign land (Tunis), which no doubt appeared to me then a good deal more remote than the North Pole. Here, under my feet, appeared a direct contradiction of the tale of my childhood and all the childish sympathy seemed wasted!

The man was an American to start with, and had apparently died peacefully in his native county “in this city.”

Going to the cemetery another day with an American gentleman, I happened to mention the circumstance and was quite relieved to find that my childish memory had been the true one after all.

John Howard Payne died in Tunis (where he was consul), but when the body was removed to Washington the stone that had been placed over his Tunis grave was brought over intact, and has been laid down 17—2 260 in the Washington grave-yard with its misleading inscription.

It is unnecessary to enter into any detailed account of Washington society. It is far more cosmopolitan than Boston, far more political and official than New York.

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I met some very bright and pleasant people there, especially at the house of one of the noted Washington scientists who is connected with the Department of Agriculture. He and his hospitable wife and daughter introduced me to some most agreeable acquaintances in the city, and we visited in company with the latter all the chief receptions held by the “cabinet ladies,” as they are called—that is by the wives of the various heads of Government departments.

It is a happy idea that most of these should “receive” on the same day; for having donned your best gown and engaged a carriage, you can go from one to the other, taking the various official “at homes” in homœopathic doses.

Mrs. Whitney, wife of the Secretary to the Navy, has a lovely house filled with *objets d'art*, and in one of the end rooms of the handsome suite a large orchestra played dance music during the afternoon.

This was very pretty in the distance, and certainly 261 calculated to rub off any official stiffness, but hardly conducive to conversation at close quarters.

The magnificence of the Washington toilettes struck me more than anything else in connection with these receptions.

On this occasion the lady of the house wore a gorgeous gown of heliotrope silk covered over with white jet, and “received” with the assistance of a gentleman who stood by her side in the ante-room.

You give your name to the servant (a black man on this occasion), who repeats it to the lady of the house; then you shake hands, say a few words, and pass on to the other rooms, which are tastefully decorated with plants and natural flowers.

The beautiful Mrs. James Browne Potter, who has since made her mark in London society, was present at this first house, wearing the very loveliest bodice of maroon velvet and

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gold embroidery with a high Venetian collar that I ever saw outside the picture of a Paul Veronese.

Another beautiful Paris dress was of apple-green silk, dotted all over with tiny rosebuds; the sort of silk that Paris only seems to produce and which is said to “stand alone.”

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Any one connected with the house was dressed in a dinner or even ball dress, or at least in the very handsomest *demi-toilette* conceivable.

The guests wore bonnets and mantles, as was the case in Boston and New York. Refreshments were served in a beautiful dining-room with old-fashioned bow window and window seat.

The rooms became very hot, and the noise was very great. All the women looked fagged and faded, as though the social mill were turning just now at railroad speed, which is doubtless the case.

We drove next to Mrs. Endicott's, wife of the Secretary of War. A much smaller house this, but charmingly hung with pale blue and grey.

A pretty young daughter received at the door of the first room in the absence, through illness of her mother. So we went on from the War to the Treasury, then to the wife of the Postmaster-General. More gorgeous toilettes and fascinating hostesses, more noise and heat and crowd, more cups of tea, and finally a general collapse of mortal powers of endurance and a hasty retreat to our carriage and hotel.

If a house-to-house visitation is so terribly exhausting, what muscles of iron and nerves of brass must the poor “cabinet ladies” themselves possess, to go through 263 this weekly toil with smiling faces and an appropriate word for every friend or acquaintance.

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Truly they work hard for their daily bread. Many no doubt break down under the strain. I should think few “cabinet ladies” could stand their husbands' reelection to office; for of course we are only now contemplating a portion of *one* day's work out of their seven.

Social life in Washington for the weeks preceding Lent reminded me of the closing bars of a popular waltz at four or five a.m., with the carriage waiting and reproachful friends standing hooded and shawled in the passage.

The pace gets wilder and wilder, the band clashes out in one last burst of inspiration. You are weary and footsore—but time enough for all that at home! For the moment the excitement keeps you up. You are in the whirl, and must go on to the last. Some hazy notion of giving in floats through your brain. Not a bit of it! One last turn! The music grows louder, then falls gently, gently, slower and slower, until the last faint tone breathes over the heated flower-decked room.

How the feet ache now! Never mind, you have drunk the cup to the dregs. Now for the cloak-room 264 and the carriage! Jump in! Off go the horses, round go the wheels. You sink into a comfortable corner, and feel almost sorry to exchange it for a still more comfortable bed.

Let us hope that some such repose awaits the Washington ladies during the quiet days of Lent.

The sessions of Congress last from December to March and from December until June or July alternate years—odd and even years respectively.

The greater strain of the latter must be almost compensated by seeing Washington in its lovely spring and summer dress, when the foliage is out in the woods, and the boulevard shaded streets form a delightful refuge from the heat of the sun.

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We went one evening to the Grand Opera House, but not to see any local "star." Modjeska was giving Schiller's play, "Mary Stuart."

She played it in English, and her accent has marvellously improved since I heard her in London in 1880.

In the first scene, where Mary meets Elizabeth, who taunts her with being "common to all," and the former rises in her indignation and denounces the life and morals of the cowering, jealous old queen, Modjeska made a most magnificent appeal to the appreciation of 265 her audience. They responded certainly, but I think an English house would have been more enthusiastic.

It was as grand a piece of acting as could be seen, but the Americans are too apt to fritter their admiration on local pinchbeck, and so have nothing more left to greet the ring of true gold.

The "support" was very poor, as is generally the case over here. It was a matter of constant surprise to me at Boston that Booth could bring himself to play with such mediocre support. I suppose it is a remnant of the old "starring" policy, which Henry Irving has done so much to uproot.

Booth seems to consider a dark background an absolute necessity, whereas Irving appreciates the great truth that *harmony*, not *violent contrast*, is the first canon of art, and therein proves himself surely the greater artist of the two.

A delightful American woman whom I met at Washington told me much of the old days of Washington society, when Dolly Maddison (wife of a president) reigned supreme, and when "receptions" were more solemn affairs and less frequent than they are nowadays.

On one of these occasions "Dolly" wrote to an aunt of hers (a connection of my friend):

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“Dear Fanny,—Mr. So-and-So is coming to dine here, and we receive afterwards. Please lend me your curls and your Turkey fan.”

It seems that in those days two or three sets of artificial curls went the round of “society ladies,” and were put on entirely regardless of the shade of hair they were supposed to match.

Mr. Blaine has a gorgeous house in Washington, full of costly works of art, beautiful draperies, and valuable pictures by foreign artists.

Going there to call upon a friend gave me a pleasant opportunity of inspecting all these, but the master of the house himself was absent from Washington at the time.

It is unnecessary to describe the Smithsonian Institution, with its valuable collection of flint, bronze and copper implements, or the National Museum, which reminded me inside of a baby “Healtheries.” Are not all museums more or less alike? And can any one hold a candle to our own grand but shamefully neglected British Museum?

So I pass on to our reception at the White House, where we went, as in duty bound, to shake hands with the President (Cleveland). I have already said that I 267 was surprised and rather disappointed by the appearance of the White House.

When first occupied some eighty years ago I have no doubt it was considered a most imposing structure. To-day, surrounded by other buildings so much larger and more magnificent, the White House appears a nice quiet country house of two stories, a portico on the main entrance, supported by eight Ionic columns, and an unpretending wing on either side.

We were ushered with some two or three hundred others into a handsome reception-room of white and gold, and kept waiting there about half-an-hour. Then a door at the side of the

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room opened and Cleveland appeared. As he came in we gathered up towards him, and one by one shook hands and passed out, much to his relief, no doubt.

He has a kindly, honest face, is short, rather stout, but with a certain dignity of his own, and a very charming and courteous manner.

A second experience of the White House, when we went to Miss Cleveland's reception there (this was just before the president's marriage), has left a far more painful impression on my mind, as it did at the time upon my body.

Never was anything so badly arranged. I trust that 268 the present Mrs. Cleveland has a little respect for the comfort of those who come to see her. The crush and crowd on the steps of the White House were inconceivable. Hundreds were thronging to the doors half an hour before they were even opened. When they were at last opened, only some twenty could be admitted at once, and the surging backward motion of those shut out nearly annihilated the poor sufferers at the back.

My own bitter experience lay between a very fat old gentleman behind me and a very restless lady in front; and existence under these conditions seemed for some thirty minutes like a hideous dream.

At length our turn came, and we were pitched headlong into the safe harbour of the vestibule, crushed, tossed and heated with the fray, and feeling as if we "had been through the Thirty Years' War," as poor Jane Welsh Carlyle used to say.

Two by two we went through the ante-rooms, and then in single file into the reception-room.

The hangings of light green are not of a happy shade, but the lovely flowers and lights and bright music seemed a very fairyland after our terrible experience outside.

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I do not remember what music the band was discoursing 269 coursing as we entered, but I know that it struck me that “See the conquering *Heroine* comes” would have been the most appropriate tune under the circumstances.

Several ladies (amongst them pretty little Miss Endicott) in full dress, and with most lovely bouquets, were helping Miss Cleveland to receive.

The latter is a plain, pleasant, fair woman of some forty-five years of age. She shook my hands very warmly on finding that I was English. We bowed to the other ladies and walked on through another door to make room for fresh arrivals.

The White House conservatories are extremely pretty and well worth a visit. No wonder they supplied such constant relays of flowers to the president's *fiancée* during her stay on the Riviera last winter. Nevertheless, except for the sentiment, it must have seemed like sending coals to Newcastle.

There is a “good deal of weather” about Washington at this time of year. After some spring-like days we have had a bout of searching east wind, more terrible than anything ever experienced by us in England. After this comes deep snow lying thick on the ground, to be succeeded by a warm relaxing atmosphere next day.

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I pass over any account of the Capitol itself, since this can be found in all guide-books. I spent a couple of mornings prowling about there, stepping alternately into the House of Representatives and the Senate Chamber, but no discussions of any general interest were going on.

The “representatives” (who represent the people) are appointed according to the numbers of the population—so many members to so many thousands. The Senate is appointed

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by legislation, each state (no matter what its size) having the privilege of sending two members.

Next I find an account of a pleasant evening spent at the house of the United States minister to the Sandwich Islands. We were asked to meet the novelist, W. D. Howells, and his wife, who had not been in Boston during our stay there.

Mr. Howells is a short, rather solid, good-tempered looking man with a straight fringe of hair over his forehead, who gives you the idea that he could ride "pretty straight" across country had he chanced to have been brought up in the traditions of "the field" instead of "the pen."

Mrs. Howells is a ladylike, fair, pleasant woman, 271 and, like her husband, somewhat on the wrong side of forty I should imagine.

Lieutenant Greely and his wife were also there, the latter a magnificently tall and exquisitely dressed woman, but the Howells were the lions of the evening on this occasion, and they roared very nicely.

As must always be the case on similar occasions the lion was no sooner brought up to you and just beginning to wag his tail in an affable way, when some other prey was found for him by the lady of the house, and he was whisked ruthlessly away to do a little friendly growling elsewhere.

Dr. Burnett, a clever Washington oculist, and husband to Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, was also present, and we had some talk on the subject of "mind cure," in reference to his wife's trial of it, to which I have referred earlier.

He thinks the time is coming when the body will be to a much greater extent than at present subordinated to mind; but that this time has not yet arrived, and that in any case the impulse must come from *within*, not from *without*.

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A morning spent at the Washington Treasury interested me very much, especially the secret service department. Here are kept all the forged notes from 272 five up to 1,000 dollars, also the casts and tools taken from the forgers at the time of their capture, and photographs of the principal criminals in this line.

A "raised bill" in technical language is a bill raised in value, from two to twenty dollars, for example, or a ten-dollar bill raised to one hundred dollars.

This requires very neat work, and only first-class engravers can do it and make the false plates necessary for other frauds.

One man (still undetected) forges notes which are entirely worked and etched by hand, involving such an amount and so high a standard of artistic work that one wonders it *can* be worth his while to do it, as he does, for twenty-dollar bills.

They cannot over here give more than fifteen years' imprisonment on any one count, but every fresh bank upon which the forgery is made is ground for a fresh indictment.

For example, if a man is found with twenty thousand dollars in notes forged on *one* bank, he cannot get more than fifteen years in all; but if found with a smaller amount drawn on two banks he may get twelve or fifteen years on either count.

I went down also into the silver vaults, below the ground floor. These are guarded by two enormously strong doors, opened by secret locks, for which no one man can produce the necessary combination; thus insuring that two must always enter them together.

They keep twenty millions of dollars in gold always in reserve, and many more of silver, which latter are done up in canvas bags containing twenty thousand dollars each, and which bulged out against the iron trellis work in a most inviting manner.

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A visit the same afternoon to one of my kind hostesses in Washington led to an interesting talk about the city in old days. This lady, who is a Scotch woman by birth, had left a comfortable home there many years ago to follow the fortunes of her husband, a fellow-countryman, in the new world.

In those early days life over here must have been rough work indeed. This delicately-nurtured woman soon found that it was absolutely necessary to do everything for herself, from laying the fire, cooking the food and making the beds.

Domestic service does not seem to have improved much even nowadays. Servants at any rate are most exacting in their demands, expecting to be allowed to go out and sleep out twice a week, not returning until seven or eight o'clock next morning. VOL. I. 18

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One of the prettiest drives within easy reach of Washington is to the Arlington Cemetery, situated on the Virginian side of the Potomac River, and close to the property of that name which was once the residence of George Washington Parke Custis (almost the last survivor of the Washington family) and later of the famous Southern general, Robert E. Lee.

The house itself is built quite on the heights, and commands a glorious view over the river and city of Washington. The grounds are beautifully undulating, just sufficiently cultivated not to "run wild," but otherwise nature is allowed most wide and picturesque liberty.

The house contains nothing of interest, only a few empty rooms, hung with maps, charts, and a dilapidated "knee-hole" writing-table, which belonged doubtless, to the great "rebel" general.

My friend and her maid having both succumbed to Washington east winds and being in bed with influenza, a long-planned expedition to Mount Vernon to see George

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Washington's home seemed likely to be abandoned, for our last days in the political capital were fast approaching.

It seemed dreary work to go alone, even though my invalids were by this time capable of looking after each other. Moreover, the only possible day for the expedition proved hopelessly stormy and rainy.

However, I screwed my courage to the sticking point, and, armed with a small packet of sandwiches, plenty of wraps, and an introduction to the captain of the steamer, drove down to the landing stage in the empty hotel omnibus at nine o'clock in the morning.

The sun obstinately refused to come out until long after our arrival, but the captain turned out to be a pleasant, genial sort of man, full of stories of his Californian experiences when he went out there at the time of the 1847 gold fever.

A young naval officer, taking his wife and two other ladies for the expedition, also proved friendly. It was the case of a "last possible day" with them too, for the lady visitors were returning to Richmond next day, so a fellow feeling in misfortune produced as usual a strong bond between us.

Mount Vernon lies some fifteen miles below Washington on the Virginian side of the river. In summer the sail must be delightful, but under waterproofs and umbrellas the views were scarcely seen to advantage.

When we landed at last, damp and dripping, a covered car was fortunately waiting, and took the whole somewhat depressed party half a mile up the hill towards the house itself.

On the way we got out to see the two tombs, where George Washington and his wife lie side by side. They are above ground, in an ugly red-brick mausoleum. The devoted wife died within two years of her husband.

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The house stands high up on the hill, and is a pretty, low, white, old-fashioned looking place with verandah in front and white pillars to support it. The views from it on a fine day must be exquisitely beautiful, as it commands the whole range of the river. There are many rooms, but all are small and low and of the "rabbit warren" style of architecture.

Unfortunately, people have behaved so badly in carrying off relics that, although the rooms below are all open, wooden bars have been placed in front of each by order of a preventive committee, and so the innocent suffer for the sins of the guilty.

There is a beautifully carved marble mantelpiece in one of the lower rooms. A lady chipped off the head of a small dog in relief, kept it for two or three years and then returned it, owing, I suppose, to an uneasy conscience. It has been so neatly replaced that no one would notice the theft without having heard the story.

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The room where Washington died, with two small dressing-rooms opening out of it on either side, is kept intact. The furniture is just as he left it: the quaint old bureau with brass handles, the spindle-legged table, the old-fashioned bed, even down to some enormous glass bottles in a chest in the dressing-room, which went with him on all his campaigns.

The room where General Lafayette slept whenever he stayed at Mount Vernon is specially pointed out, but is in no way remarkable, except for inconvenience in size.

After Washington's death poor "Martha" went upstairs to sleep in an attic room, very small and stuffy, so that she might see his tomb from her window.

Mount Vernon must have been quite a little colony in those days of slavery.

The "slave quarters" in the back garden are still pointed out to the visitor.

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George Washington also imported tailors and shoemakers over here from England to teach their trades to his retainers.

There is a quaint little arbour in the garden, and in a plan of the place, made by Washington and still in the possession of a Mrs. Cannon (a relation 278 of Martha Washington), this figures as the “school-room.”

The devoted Martha was a widow when Washington married her, and had two children, a boy and a girl, Custis by name, and doubtless the grass had been watered by *their* tears, poor little souls, in those faraway “school-room days.”

My naval friends were fortunately acquainted with Mr. Dodge, the superintendent of the place, so we were allowed to eat our sandwiches in his official room. Otherwise they must have returned to the boat intact, as was the case with the provisions taken by the other visitors, for nothing may be eaten in the house, and it was too wet for an *al fresco* meal.

Mount Vernon was purchased by the father of George Washington, but the latter never lived there until he was twenty years old. His elder half brother, Lawrence, inherited it and left it to George in the event of his own daughter dying before she was twenty-one, which proved to be the case.

Baltimore, just a pleasant, pretty hour's journey by railway cars from Washington, remains in my memory as one of the brightest and freshest little vignettes in the American sketch book.

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It is very hilly, very clean, quite provincial, but very pretty.

The little Mount Vernon Square, at the top of the town, has a fine round tower monument to Washington, some good church buildings, some handsome stone houses, and last, but not least, the excellent Mount Vernon Hotel, which is small and quiet, but more homelike

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than any we have yet met, whilst the food is really excellent and almost worthy of the exaggerated praise bestowed by "Willard" upon his badly-cooked viands.

Some two miles from the town is Druid's Hill Park, a fine piece of water, well-wooded park and beautiful views, which looked all the better for the brilliant spring days that marked our short stay in this bright little town.

An American friend here explained to me that the diamonds I had seen so profusely worn by Washington ladies on every possible occasion were real and not paste, as I had imagined.

Seeing nearly every woman in the hotel adorned, even in the morning, with costly diamond earrings, brooches and finger rings, I took it for granted that some enterprising "Faulkner" must have set up his trade here, as with us. It seemed unlikely that 280 women should risk wearing and losing stones of such value. But so it is.

My Baltimore friend says that the first thing an American woman thinks of when her husband "strikes ile" is to buy diamonds.

A lady friend of hers invested £4,000 sterling on diamonds, although the whole family income only amounted to what would be—800 a year with us.

Perhaps they have the same respect as the immortal Mr. Wemmick for "*portable property*."

My one unpleasant association with Baltimore lies in the fact that here we met with our only experience of any want of courtesy in the whole of America.

One of the finest private collections of curios is to be found here, and is the property of a rich, but I believe eccentric man owning a handsome house on Mount Vernon Square.

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This collection is supposed to be open to the public on Wednesdays; but as it was impossible to include this day in our visit, a gentleman living in Baltimore advised me to write and ask for special permission to see it, on the plea of being a foreigner and unable to make any longer stay.

Now Mr. Walters was of course entirely within his right to refuse such a request, but we thought the 281 answer to a lady's letter might have been more courteously given than by a curt message, through a black man-servant, delivered at the door of the house. That the incident should have made any mark, however, speaks well, I think, for the general high standard of American courtesy towards women.

Philadelphia has made little impression upon me, partly, no doubt, owing to the damp, muggy, rainy fortnight which we spent there, chiefly in preparations for our trip to the West.

An introduction kindly given me by Dr. Hedge, of Cambridge, to Mrs. Wistar, of Philadelphia, a well-known literary star there, who has made some of the most successful German translations yet achieved, led to little social intercourse.

We were both most fully occupied, she with a house-moving after thirty years of residence, and we with a general tidying up and re-arrangement of wardrobes, separating what *had* been so useful, but was now useless, from the positive necessities of travel, packing off the maid to visit a Canadian brother, and finally packing our own trunks as closely as might be, for "extra baggage" becomes an expensive item as one travels farther west.

Of course we drove in Philadelphia to Fairmount 282 Park, where the great Centennial Exhibition of 1876 was held. It is very extensive, but to my mind too near the black dirty city to compare for beauty with the smaller Druid's Hill Park at Baltimore.

Some fine glass-houses remain, as the only relic of the exhibition, and are filled with a splendid collection of tropical palms and plants.

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Philadelphia has some very excellent “dry-goods stores,” notably “Wannamaker's,” a sort of glorified Whiteley, where every conceivable article can be obtained at a fairly reasonable cost.

We haunted the place by day, and dreamed of it doubtless by night. There were so many absolutely necessary last thoughts: some sort of shady hat, some attempt at spring clothing, some ante-mosquito mixture, quinine, eau de cologne, and sal volatile; the hundred and one things which are so indispensable to comfort, but such a nuisance to pack. Worst of all came the culminating agony of weeks of discussion over the great ticket question.

Just at this time the “cut rates” as they are called (tickets issued at an almost nominal price) were constantly tantalizing us by their absurdly low advertisements, \$50 and even \$30 from Philadelphia to San Francisco, the ordinary rate being \$125!

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Every one kept on saying, “Well you are lucky to be going now! Of course you will take the cheap tickets,” and it almost seemed our own bad management that prevented us from being able to profit by them.

As a rule, they would only on investigation carry you over the most direct and often the most uninteresting route, and they were invariably limited more or less strictly as to time.

These very cheap rates were only quoted when some six to ten days formed the limit of time for completing the journey. This would answer very well for business men or even tourists who wished to make straight for California; but we clung to a cherished idea that there must be something worth seeing on the way.

In any case I am sure the continuous travelling would have been very monotonous and wearisome; not to mention the fact that we should always have considered that we had missed a great deal and should have felt ourselves completely at the mercy of any

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wretched American or Englishman who chose to bore us to death about the “Kentucky Caves” or marvel at our stupidity in crossing the Atlantic without going to see them.

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So we hardened our hearts, kept to the original programme, paid almost the full ordinary fare and procured unlimited tickets for San Francisco, arranged according to the route we had already planned out many weeks before, but which was constantly under-going modifications as fresh light came to us.

One of the greatest difficulties in an extensive country like America is to get any reliable advice as to such a tour as we were contemplating. We could not see everything. Naturally we wished to see what was most characteristic. But each one's opinion varies on this point according to his own tastes or accidental experiences.

Moreover, when distances are calculated not by hundreds but by thousands of miles, it was difficult to find people who had even been over much of the ground we thought of taking.

Many of those who had done so had travelled some years ago, when the conditions were perhaps quite unlike those of to-day, and in all good faith would warn us against hardship and discomfort in the least disagreeable part of our wanderings, or try to insist upon our including something in the programme which turned out to be utterly uninteresting to us.

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On the whole, I think we did very fairly well; seeing a great deal and doing what we did very thoroughly.

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I am bound to say, however, that we received no sort of help from the counsel of friends or acquaintances, and that by far the most interesting and beautiful places we visited were visited in direct opposition to their advice.

And so after six months of Eastern civilization, we packed our trunks and made ready for the grand start for Westward Ho!

END OF VOL. I.

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