Having become an avowed spiritualist the hero of our account "discussed spiritualism at home and elsewhere whenever he found any one who would talk on either side of the question." Nevertheless on reading the reports of exposures in the newspapers, doubts arose in him which, however, he might have overcome; but most jarring on his budding faith were the seances given by amateurs and parlor mediums. The circles of these dilettante performances disgusted him and he describes the occurrences, which he witnessed there, with much sarcasm.

He might still have given up his quest for the mysterious if he had not met with a representative of the profession of such a remarkable personality and polished manners that he was again attracted to mediumship. He became so passionately interested in the mysteries of these spiritual powers that he finally made up his mind to venture into experimenting with them himself even if it were merely for the purpose of getting at the truth of the matter.

We will let the ex-medium describe in his own words the seance which impressed him so deeply.

THE SEANCE WHICH MADE ME A MEDIUM.

There came to the writer's city, during the year of '71, and after the time of visiting the circle just described a professional, traveling "test medium." In this instance I will give the name, for there is nothing to be said concerning him as a reason I should not. His name was Frank T. Ripley. A glance at the "Movements of Lecturers and Mediums," in the pages of the Banner of Light, to-day, will disclose his name. He is still doing business in the old line. He was to occupy the rostrum at the Spiritualist's hall four Sundays, afternoon and evening: A lecture at 2:30 p. m. and "tests" beginning at 8 p. m. The writer visited each lecture and test tournament. Mr. Ripley's professional work did much to strengthen his weakening faith.

The particular meeting that made a medium of him was on
Mr. R's third Sunday evening. A description of the proceedings on this evening will suffice for all, as they were all very similar. The festivities would open with singing by a choir, then Mr. R. would offer an invocation; then more singing. During the singing of the second song Mr. R. would make passes before his face and eyes with his hands, and his hands, limbs and body would twitch and jerk convulsively.

As soon as the singing ceased, he rose from his chair and came hesitatingly forward to the front of the rostrum with one hand spread open across his forehead and the other raised aloft and seemingly feeling for some object. Arriving at the front of the platform he stood some seconds in silence and then with a start his hands dropped to his sides and he began to speak, saying:

"I feel an influence, as though I were sinking in salt water. I am drowning. I have fallen from the yard of a vessel that is moving before the wind in mid-ocean. I had been sent aloft to make fast a brace that was playing through its thimble, lost my footing and fell. I have a brother in the audience. My name is ——, Does my brother recognize me?"

"He does, beyond any doubt," answered a gentleman in the audience, having the appearance of a working man. "If you are not my brother, you are some one who knows me and all the circumstances of my brother's death."

"Now," said Mr. R., "I see standing in the aisle beside you, sir," addressing a gentleman, "an old gentleman, with gray hair, gray eyes, one eye being sightless; he is bowed with age and has a cane on which is inscribed 'From —— to ——, his father, on his sixty-fifth birthday.' He says you are his son and the donor of the cane. He passed away about three years ago, of paralysis: Is what I have said correct, sir?"

"It is, sir, in every particular," declared the gentleman.

"Now," continued the medium, "there stands by you sir," addressing the writer, "a gentleman of apparently thirty years of age, tall, slender and lithe of form, with light hair, blue eyes, fine features and even, white teeth. He served a few months in the army and came home sick. He did not pass over through the sickness but was accidentally shot. He says his name is L—— A——, and that he is your uncle. That you mistook another spirit for him at a seance not long ago. He says to tell you that if you will sit for development in the cabinet you will get manifestations as wonderful as any you have witnessed. Do you recognize the person as the one he claims to be?"
The author could not have told the story better himself, and as everything he had said concerning him was correct, there was nothing to do but admit it as a fact.

After from ten to twenty of such tests the meeting would close. What would you think, reader, to sit in a public audience and have a man single you out and tell you all about some loved spirit relative, when it appeared impossible that he should know even yourself and much less your spirit friends.

The writer had been careful to take a seat in some remote part of the room and never enter or leave in company with his sister. He avoided an introduction to him and had never exchanged a word with him, arriving at his meetings at the last moment and taking his departure during the singing of the closing hymn. It was very satisfactory to him; but the memory of those private circles would present itself and he was in a quandary. One hour he would feel that there was a truth in it and the next he would declare to himself that it was all "bosh." Had the writer never come in contact with other than finished, professional mediums the chances are excellent that he would not have become an adventurer. It finally struck him that, in order to make certain of the truth of the matter, it would be the proper thing to sit for the development of a "mediumship" of his own. He would use every endeavor to obtain some "mediumistic" gift, and if he succeeded, that would finally and indisputably settle the matter. If he did not succeed he would, of course, have the same uncertainty about it as before he attempted his development. It would cost nothing but a small portion of his time, and even if it was a failure there would be no loss.

Having made up his mind to become a medium our author procured a cabinet and began seances for which his spiritualistic friends and supporters constituted the audience, but having gone into the business with honest intentions, the first seances were absolute failures, until he grew tired, and once having fallen asleep, his audience thought he had been in a trance. They expected great things, and he was anxious not to disappoint them. So he, at first perhaps without any deliberate intention of helping the spirits, caused some raps to appear. Says the writer:

"Nothing but raps occurred at this sitting and the sitters were much pleased that the raps had been made to answer their questions. This was looked upon as a decided improvement over the preceding sittings."

The incipient medium felt some pangs of conscience, but his pride and vanity prevented him from confessing that he had produced the raps and so he continued with his experiments. His friends took pride in the hope that a genuine medium, in whom there was no fraud, was developing under their very eyes, and they were confident at each little progress he made that they thereby gained unequivocal evidences of the truths of spiritualism.
We now let our ex-medium explain how it came to pass that he entered upon a professional career.

**MY FIRST PUBLIC SEANCE.**

At the next meeting of the "developing circle" each one was in a state of pleased expectancy, and some very intemperate predictions made as to the wonderful nature and vast amount of phenomena that would be presented. From the expressions of what was expected to occur, the medium was positive that there would be some disappointed sitters present after the seance. By no possible means could he fill the bill they had prepared in their minds and were so confident would be produced at this sitting. They appeared more anxious than the medium had ever been, even in his most impatient moments. However, after being bound, and this time in a manner different to the previous occasion, and in a way that created a healthy doubt in the medium's mind as to whether or not he would be able to free himself, the singing was begun. This time his hands had been tied to the front legs of the chair, at his sides, and there was no possible way to get them together. However, after a dint of hard work and much experimenting, he found his right hand free, and that the tactics employed on the previous occasion would restore the ropes to their original condition. He had been careful to place in the cabinet a chair that was sound in all its parts and would not creak with every movement, and he was enabled to work when the sitters were not singing. At this sitting raps were produced, the guitar twanged, louder than before, the tea-bell was heard to skip across the floor of the cabinet with considerable force, lights appeared at the opening in the cabinet, three or four at a time, and a message written, declaring that the development was progressing favorably, and signed Jno. King, control. At the seance previously witnessed by the medium, Jno. King was the control and seemed to be quite well appreciated by the Spiritualists present, therefore the medium, in this case, concluded he might as well have a control of favorable mention as not, as all that was necessary to procure him was to subscribe his name to the communications written. This he did and great was the pleasure expressed by the sitters, all of whom had attended the seances of the aforementioned physical medium. They were now positive that full-form materialization would be the ultimate outcome of the sittings, as Mr. King was identified with nearly every medium getting that phase of physical phenomena. On the gentleman entering the cabinet to inspect the ropes, he declared he smelled phosphorus, brimstone, or matches. The medium's heart
jumped, and he was sure that his manner of making lights was about to be exposed. However, it was passed by as probably being an odor induced through some chemical proceedings on the part of the spirits in producing the manifestations. That theory was accepted and restored the medium's peace of mind, but he swore to never make any further use of matches in producing spirit lights, but would find some safer way or dispense with them entirely. After a few more sittings of substantially the same manifestations, except the lights, and being secured with the ropes in a different manner each time, the lights were missed by the sitters and their absence remarked. The medium saw that he must either furnish lights in some way, or lay the previous ones open to suspicion. An idea struck him. He procured a flat, two-ounce druggists' bottle, and filling it about one-fourth full of water, cut the heads off about one hundred parlor matches and dropped them in. When the composition was dissolved he poured off the water, saving it, and threw away the bits of pine left in the bottle. He now returned the brown fluid to the bottle and corked it. After labelling the bottle "Cough Medicine," he put it in his pocket and sought a dark closet to see how his "cough medicine" would work. Getting into a dark place he took the bottle from his pocket and was not disappointed to find that it was not at all luminous, and of course a failure. However, he thought he would smell of it and see if it would have passed for a cough mixture in odor as well as appearance. What was his surprise, on admitting a little air, in the effort to extract the cork, to have the bottle become a beautiful yellowish luminous shape. Ha! now he could furnish all the lights they wanted without any betraying odor being able to fill the cabinet or escape into the room. He actually exulted over the success of his experiment and was as pleased as though it was an invention for some useful purpose and would win for him fame and fortune. Really, it has won fame of a certain kind, and money enough to travel and live comfortably upon. But he did not yet know of the possibilities of his "cough medicine," and in the course of a few months had discovered a way in which to produce a great deal of interesting phenomena with its aid that was new to most Spiritualists. Try it, reader—you will be astonished at the results you can obtain from a bottle of this "cough mixture," a white handkerchief and a dark room. More concerning it presently. After having been tied in several different ways and easily freeing his right hand and replacing it so as to present the appearance of not having been removed or tampered with, the medium began to have a pretty good opinion of his abilities to
deceive, and a feeling of pride in his deceitful work took possession of him. By this time it had become noised about the city that some wonderful manifestations were occurring through him under test conditions, and many persons were clamoring for admission to the circles. It was denied them on the ground that to admit strange "magnetisms" at this juncture would have a tendency to retard the progress in development. So many of them importuned so lustily and incessantly that it was finally agreed that the sitters would ask Mr. King, the control, and be guided by what he said. Accordingly, at the next sitting Mr. King was approached on the subject with the following question:

"Mr. King, do you favor the admittance to our circle of persons other than the regular members thereof?"

The medium being anxious to see what would be said of the manifestations by others than his developing sitters, caused Mr. King to reply that they could admit four at the next sitting, two ladies and two gentlemen. They were to sit by themselves, in a row back of the regular sitters. One of the strangers would be permitted to do the tying. One of the ladies then asked Mr. King if he did not think it would be the fair thing to charge them an admittance of twenty-five cents for wear and tear on the carpets. Mr. King, after thinking a few moments, said he thought that would be about right. The medium knew his manifestations did not compare at all with those he had witnessed, but that they were worth one-eighth what was asked for the better ones, besides, since burying his conscience he was of the opinion some one, other than himself, should pay the funeral expenses.

The night arrived and with it the four persons privileged to attend. They were Spiritualists, all of them, but exercised the privilege granted of making an examination of the cabinet.

As the medium did not invite an investigation of his pockets, none was made. A twenty-five cent medium could not be expected to submit to such indignities and reflections on his uprightness. The hour for the seance to open arrived and the medium seated himself with the ropes in his lap in front of the curtains. One of the regular sitters assumed the management of the seance and announced that either of the gentlemen strangers would be permitted to bind the medium in any manner he chose. After some hesitancy and protestations that neither of them cared whether the medium was tied or not, one of them came forward and undertook to make him fast.

The medium had learned a thing or two about this time about stealing some of the slack of the rope for future use, while being
tied. By sitting well forward on his chair when the ends of the rope were made fast to the back rung, he could, by sliding back in his seat afterward have the use of as much slack rope as any ordinary unselfish medium could wish. The coat falls close up to the back of the chair, thus hiding a move of that kind.

When the wrists have been tied and are being drawn down to the knees, to the chair-legs or together at the back, one twist of the hand, and, consequently the two ends of the rope, and by a reverse twist, when the time arrives, you have all the slack you need, or you should go out of the business.

There is never any occasion to free but one hand. It will astonish you to know what a number of things you can accomplish with one hand, your mouth and elbow. If you fail to get in the twist do not allow it to disconcert you, and result in your being helplessly tied. But, if they proceed to tie your hands to your knees, sit up straight, thus compelling them to tie around the fleshy part of the leg. All you have to do to obtain the coveted slack is to lean forward and force your hands toward your knees where the leg is much smaller and the slack is yours to command.

If they proceed to tie your hands to either the front or back legs of the chair and you do not have an opportunity to twist on them, without their observing, which sometimes happens, sit very erect and shorten your arms by not allowing them entirely to straighten and by elevating your shoulders as in shrugging, thus making the distance from the point on your wrist where the rope is tied to the top-most rung about four inches. It will always be their endeavor to tie below the top rung around the leg. By slipping down in your seat you ought to have all the slack you could possibly make use of. If they are tying behind you, turn the inside edges of your hands together, and when they make the ends fast to the bottom rung, or any point below the hands, sit up straight, drawing the hands up just far enough to avoid it being observed, and there will be plenty of slack. You can, by reversing the tactics used to free yourself, get back and leave every rope taut and drawing by giving an extra twist to the ropes where they pass around the wrists. Never furnish a soft, cotton rope or you are a "goner" except your hands will permit of your drawing them out of any loop as large as your wrist. Even if you succeed in doing that you cannot possibly get back again. The fact of the matter is, if you practice a few weeks, it will be an exceedingly difficult matter to tie you so that you cannot readily get out. More on this subject later on. As a matter of course, there are very few experts at tying and the gentle-
man who tied the medium on this particular occasion was no exception to the rule, and before he had finished his undertaking to his satisfaction, the medium was as good as free. Before he reached his seat the tea-bell was violently ringing and the guitar sounding. Now a hand was thrust out at the opening and the fingers snapped. The trumpet was thrust out and an unintelligible sound made through it. One of the gentlemen strangers mistook the sound to be the word William and exclaimed: "William, is that really you come to see your old father?"

"Yes," replied the horn, and the old gentleman stated it was the first time he had been able to get his son's name through a medium.

Once more the medium made a noise through the horn that could be mistaken for Charles or Clarence or almost any name beginning with C, and again was it recognized as a son, this time of one of the lady strangers. She mistook the sound to be Clarence. The horn was dropped, and a communication written from Clarence to his mother. It proved satisfactory, and the medium concluded that was tests enough for the initial seance. An examination was now made of the condition of things in the cabinet, and the gentleman who did the tying stated that he was positive the ropes were in precisely the shape he had left them. Mr. King now requested that the room be made dark, as they desired to illuminate their hands. The lights were turned down and a screen put between them and the cabinet. The medium brought forth his "cough medicine," and after wrapping his handkerchief about it to conceal the shape of the bottle, gave it a dash up and down the front of the cabinet. This light was different from the former ones, being the size of a man's fist, while the first ones had been only small specks. The lights were the hit of the seance, and drew forth many expressions of wonder and delight. Especially were the regular sitters delighted. After showing the light three or four times, always in motion, he loosened up the handkerchief, making it stand away from the bottle on all sides, thus producing a light about the size of a human head. This he slowly pushed through the opening in the cabinet and allowed it to stop a few seconds and then he drew it back and put it away. The sitters now claimed that the last light was a human head and face, the features being distinguishable. It was set down as a case of etherialization, as they declared they could look right through it, and see the curtains behind it. One gentleman, a doctor, declared he could see the whole convolutions of the brain. Thus they helped out the show with their imaginations and made a reputation for the medium.
Another examination was made of the ropes and all pronounced satisfactory, another song, the medium is untied and the seance is at an end. Many were the congratulations received by the medium over the progress made and the wonderful manifestations just received. The strangers paid their admission fee and expressed themselves as well pleased that so wonderful a medium was being developed right there in the city, and they should not have to depend upon traveling mediums when they wanted communication with their friends.

After his visitors had departed, the medium took the dollar from his pocket and wondered what he should do with it. He had made up his mind, now, to become a professional medium, and concluded he would keep it for the purchase of articles he would require in his business. Since his sitters had mistaken his handkerchief for a human face, he had an idea that he could provide something that would not require so much of the imagination to make it appear a face, and to that use was put the dollar received at his first public seance.

Repairing to a toy and novelty house he purchased one of those wire gauze masks, which would permit a light to shine through it. This he trimmed down until it could be put into the breast pocket, and yet enough remained to make quite a good spirit face. By putting this mask in front of the luminous handkerchief a luminous face and head was presented. It was bald of course, until he discovered that with a small piece of black cloth he could put hair on the gentleman. The wire mask has been recognized by dozens of persons as fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, cousins, sweethearts, wives, husbands and various other relatives and friends. None but the medium knew that it was only a fifty-cent wire mask, hence none but the medium could enjoy the humor of the occasion.

His fame rapidly spread now, and the people became even more clamorous than before to get in. His first sitters had gone away and told wonderful stories of the strange phenomena they had witnessed at the seance, and it went from one to another until it appeared the whole city knew of it and wanted to witness it for themselves. The medium concluded that now was the time to make it pay in that particular city if he ever intended to attempt it. Accordingly Mr. King was made to say that he would admit eight persons in future, and that the fee for admission should be fifty cents. He would also advise holding an additional seance on Thursday evening, each week. He also selected one of the regular sitters as master of ceremonies, who was to have charge of the
seances, without other recompense than the glory he could get out of the position. He was much pleased at the confidence manifested in his ability, and all that kind of thing, and accepted the position.

Our medium was now in the business for what there was in it, in a financial way, and for several months he had all he could do. By that time, not having been detected at his tricks, he was fully persuaded to undertake his mediumship as his profession and make his living with it. Articles had appeared at different times in the various Spiritualistic journals from the pens of those who had attended his seances, descriptive of what occurred and the conditions under which the seances were held, and the medium was in receipt of a number of letters, the writers of which were desirous of engaging his services as a medium in their respective towns. He gave up his position, had some cards printed and set out on his career of travel and adventure. He has been continuously on the road ever since that day, stopping nowhere more than a few days at a time, and having never as yet figured in an expose. To be sure his seances are very different from what they were when he started out, they improved each time he sat. He met many mediums the first year and from each gained the admission that they were frauds. They would also tell him who to look out for in the towns from which they had just come. His manifestations were pronounced "out of sight" by every medium who ever witnessed them, and many were the entreaties to tell them how it was done. He would not reveal the simplicity of his operations, however, as he did not want any opposition in his particular line, and having the reputation, now, of being one of the finest physical mediums in the country, did not care to have to share it with any one. He made it a point to learn all possible from the mediums which he met, but to give up nothing himself but what they already knew. By following up this plan of taking all the information possible and at the same time keeping a still tongue, he came to know the methods pursued by a great many mediums, which was of much use to him in his own work. He will say, just here, that of all the mediums he has met, in eighteen years, and that means a great many, in all phases, he has never met one that was not sailing the very same description of craft as himself. Every one; no exception.

Converts to a belief in the extraordinary power of mediums are made not so much through their feats in the cabinet and in seances as through the many mysterious communications of a personal nature which are the more wonderful as they are most striking when the medium is a perfect stranger whom they had never met before.
Our readers will remember that the subject of this sketch was most deeply impressed at the beginning of his career with the inexplicable tests that were given him at several seances. The acquisition of this power is related by him in the following chapter.

THE ORGANIZATION OF MEDIUMS.

The one thing that puzzled him most was the source of the information he had regarding persons who were absolute strangers to him. How came he to know that Mr. and Mrs. E—— had a son Willie E——, and that he had owned a pony that the parents still kept and that the pony was called "Midget?" Whence came the faces that were recognized in every feature and spoke so certainly on subjects the medium could not possibly know anything about? How came he to know the names of my spirit friends and the names of members of my family not present? Even if he did know them, how came he to know that I was their relative? I had not had an introduction previous to the seance. When he would think of these things he would be fearful, for a time, that he was perpetrating these deceptions on his friends, and under the eye of his sorrowing spirit relatives, and was inviting all kinds of catastrophes to blight and ruin his prospects and life. Again he would explain the whole proceeding to his satisfaction as the result of mind-reading, and determined, within himself, to acquire that power if it were a possibility.

It was during the third year of the writer's travels that he became a member of an organization of mediums that discovered to him the manner in which the first medium visited by him came by the information he possessed regarding the writer and the writer's family. It was made clear to him, how, without any mind-reading powers, he could probably have given a test to every spiritualist or investigator in the city who had ever received a test prior to his visit to the city.

The writer was asked how he was fixed for tests, and had to admit he had none that he had kept track of. Well, the organization was for the purpose of keeping each other posted on tests in the territory in which we traveled.

The writer was not long in discovering that it was an excellent organization to belong to. He was supplied with all the tests known by from one to twenty mediums who had done the territory he intended covering, and was expected to make notes of any new tests he should discover.

You can see, reader, what an impression a medium so prepared could make in Cincinnati. He would have, say five hundred tests
for Spiritualists and frequenters of seances in a city of that size, and could give three or four to a dozen wonderfully accurate tests each night so long as he remained. Here is what a page of those note books looks like:

FOR CINCINNATI, OHIO.

G. A. Wilson, (Merchant).

Spt. Dau. Elsie—Died '76, age 14 mos. diphtheria, blonde, blue eyes.


Spt. Friend. Andy Nugent, schoolmates at Oberlin, O.

S. O. Wilbur, Shoe Dealer.

Spt. Son. Albert E., '74, lung fever, 19 years, blonde, only child. His parents keep his books and clothing. He is always described as a student, with book in hand. Good mark for private sittings.

R. B. Young, rich.

Spt. Dau. Alice E., aged 19, pneumonia, '79, upper front teeth gold filled. Extraordinarily long hair. Quite an artist, and one of her landscapes hangs in parlor in gilt and plush frame. Spirit painting of her in the sitting-room, that is kept curtained. She is an artist in spirit world. Supposed to have a son in spirit that had no earth life named Egbert O.

Spt. Son. Egbert O. never had earth existence, an inventor in spirit life and supposed to work through Thos. Edison. Is especially interested in electrical work.


Spt. Moth. Sarah—died when he was a child.


Remarks—A good marks for private seances at his home, and will pay well. Dead gone on physical manifestations and materialization. Will get up lots of seances. Agree with everything he says and you are all right.

A. T. Younger.


Spt. Fath. A. O. Younger, died '84 railroad accident in Illinois. Is looking for private papers supposed to have been left by him. Sends love to his wife Kate in Covington.

There, reader, is one page out of sixty-three similar ones all relating to Cincinnati Spiritualists and investigators.

Could you not go to Mr. Young, having arrived direct from Denver or the Pacific coast, and never having previously visited Cincinnati, and astonish the gentleman as to your knowledge of his family and affairs? Would it not be possible to give him a number of absolute, pointed tests?

Suppose you were giving a seance, and should put out a face. Nobody recognizes it. Mr. Young is in the audience. All that is
necessary to have a grand test out of the unrecognized face is to cause it to announce in a loud, labored whisper the name "Egbert O. Young. My father, R. B. Young is present."

If, as is sometimes the case, Mr. Young desires to make a still stronger test, he is likely to ask:

"How old were you when you passed over?"

The spirit now replies, "I had no existence on the earth plane."

"What are you engaged in on your side," continues Mr. Young.

"I am still working on electrical problems through Mr. Edison."

The spirit might now clinch the proof of its identity by saying:

"Grandfather Robert B. Young, and great aunt Lucy Wilkinson are with me to-night. Uncle James Young has something of importance to say to you at first opportunity."

It may be that Mr. Young has heard nothing of the spirit Egbert for a year or a greater length of time, and on your causing him to manifest his presence, it being the first time you have met Mr. Young, and your first visit to his city, it is likely to place you high in the esteem of that gentleman.

As he is rich and in the habit of having private seances at his home and paying well for them, as you will learn by referring to the Y's in your note book, it is quite desirable that you make an admirer and champion of him. Many will be the twenty dollar seances given at his home by yourself, and frequently will you be called upon for slate-writing, if you are doing that phase at two dollars per writing.

If you are a close observer you will manage to pick up many new tests.

Where one is not a member of the mediums' brotherhood and finds it necessary to rustle for tests, there are many ways open for obtaining them. You know the names of a large number of the Spiritualists of the city in which you are stopping and by a dint of careful questioning, can learn the names of a great many persons who are regular attendants at the seances held by the traveling mediums.

Armed with a list of such names, make it your business to visit the cemeteries, and it is more than likely you will be able to pick up considerable information that will be useful to you before you leave the city.

It is always a fruitful piece of work to buy the back numbers of the newspapers of the city and carefully read all the funeral notices. The State Library will usually furnish you with much information regarding the old settlers and their history. Besides this you can usually pump tests from one Spiritualist or another by a
little fine work on your part. We will say you are in search of information regarding the friends in spirit life of Mr. Brown. You meet Mr. Smith, who is an intimate friend of Brown's, and after a little general conversation, say to him:

"The gentleman who was in company with you at the social last Tuesday evening, would make a fine 'medium.' I saw a great number of bright spirits about him. He must have a large number of friends or relatives in the spirit land. I think his father and mother were both with him the evening of the social. Have they ever told him he would make a physical medium, do you know?"

"I believe the mediums do tell him occasionally that he could develop a fine phase of mediumship. I do not know what particular spirit furnishes the information, although it is probably his father, who was quite a strong Spiritualist for many years previous to his death, and was the cause of many persons investigating it in his town in Ohio," replies Mr. Smith.

"Why, you don't mean to say Brown is a native of the Buckeye state?" exclaims the medium.

"Yes born and raised in Dayton, where his father died and his mother still lives with his sister," replies Mr. Smith, who is pumping wonderfully easy.

"I think I have heard of him or read articles from his pen in the Spiritual papers. His name was Ebenezer Brown, was it not?" queries the pumper.

"No, his name was Elijah," corrects Mr. Smith.

"Oh, yes; now I remember! Ebenezer Brown was from Pennsylvania," says the medium, "but Mr. Brown certainly has a host of friends on the other side, and death must have many times bereaved him."

"Yes; he has many relatives over there. He has four sisters and two brothers that I know of, and a great many uncles and aunts," states Mr. Smith.

"That is quite a number from his immediate family," remarks the medium; "there must have been some hereditary disease running in the family."

"I believe they all went with lung trouble," assents Mr. Smith, and the medium has learned enough regarding Mr. Brown to make it interesting for him when he visits his seance room or calls on him for slate-writing. He can now pump Mr. Brown regarding his friend Smith, with possibly just as fruitful results.

The medium's ear is always open for tests, and not one escapes him. Family Bibles and albums are very interesting books to him,
and if there are any children in the family he is visiting, he will await an opportunity and learn all the child knows regarding the portraits in the album.

A good way to keep posted as to tests on the Spiritualists is to subscribe for the Spiritual Journals and keep an alphabetically arranged scrap-book for the clippings you cut from them.

**A MASTER AMONG THE MEDIUMS.**

Having acquired the necessary skill to produce physical phenomena and having at the same time procured the connections by which he could give tests our ex-medium became a past-master in the art of spiritual powers. Here follows the description of his activity:

The writer was now "in it" all over. His seances were equally as wonderful as the one he had first witnessed. He could now have the instruments floating about in space over the top of the cabinet without visible support. He had also a guitar that would play on itself and was a wonderful instrument in more ways than one. It had, also, the small hole bored in the neck, for the music-holder. It would contain a music-holder, but was also useful for other purposes.

He could, without any danger of detection, permit a thorough search of his clothing and person for apparatus that might be accessory to his manifestations. He could produce full-forms with faces that could be recognized beyond doubt by various visitors to his seances. He could clothe his spooks with robes that appeared to have a great number of yards of material used in them, and still no piece of white larger than his handkerchief could be found about him. It had been long since his last lingering doubt, but what there might be something in it, had disappeared.

His guitar was an innocent appearing but wonderful affair. It was decorated by dividing the sides into small panels by gluing strips of ornamental moulding from top to bottom. The panels thus formed were further decorated by inlaid designs in pearls. One of the panels on the large end of the instrument could be displaced leaving an aperture sufficiently large to comfortably insert the hand and fore-arm. Inside it was arranged for holding various articles, in such a way as to be impossible of discovery except through the defective panel.

Besides this the machinery from a small one-tune spring music box had been affixed to the wood forming the top, just under the strings. Wind this up, set it in motion, take your reaching rod and insert it in the hole in the neck of the instrument, raise it into view, slowly turning it round and round and waving it back and forth,
and you present the strange phenomenon of a guitar floating in the
air and performing a tune upon itself. It does not sound exactly as
though the music was produced on the strings; but near enough so
that the true explanation, or any explanation other than the one
the medium is supposed to offer, has never been advanced for it.

In this guitar were kept the flowing robes with which the spooks
were clothed. The robes were of white netting so very fine that
enough of it could be compressed into a space no larger than an
ordinary tin blacking-box to furnish a full evening suit for the
largest spirit. Enough more can be carried in a hollow boot-heel
to dress up a couple more with an abundance of clothing. In the
other boot-heel can be carried an assortment of netting-masks with
which to transform your own face a half-a-dozen times.

In the envelopes supposed to contain letters you have the water-
color faces for completing the forms, when their relatives are in
attendance.

If the reader is a Spiritualist, who has attended full-form
materialization seances in New York, Brooklyn, Cincinnati, Chi-
ago, Denver, San Francisco, Los Angeles or New Orleans, he or
she will say:

"Oh, pshaw! that don't explain it at all. I have never seen
any materialization in which the explanation given would answer,
in any way. In all the full-form materialization I have seen, the
forms have come out from the cabinet, walked and talked with the
sitters, and the medium could be seen sitting in his chair. I have
seen as many as ten spirit forms out at one time and of different
sexes and sizes. They were not all dressed alike by any means.
You cannot stuff that down me as an explanation."

It may be possible that you have not visited the writer's seances
in years past, but he gave scores of them just as have been described
and he is personally aware of several others who gave the same
manifestations, making use of the same apparatus and methods.
However, he will come, in due time, to the class of seance, you have
seen. He has participated in many a one. Mission Street in San
Francisco, at one time harbored some very fine mediums, for full
materialization. It is possible you have shaken the writer's hand
at some of the full-form seances you have visited, and called him
husband, father, brother, and, possibly sister. Many rich stories
could be told by various mediums, did they dare open their mouths.

The apparatus just described is quite costly for the reason that
you must go to the manufacturer to have your guitar made. It
would be a very simple matter to remove a piece of the guitar so
that it can be replaced, but it is entirely another matter to so accomplish it that the instrument will not be ruined as to its musical qualities, and in such a manner as to avoid detection of the defect.

It must be so arranged that the apparatus concealed inside will be immovable and will not rattle, in handling the instrument, thus disclosing the fact that it is loaded. Seventy-five dollars will pay for an instrument that will be perfection in its way and defy detection under a most critical examination.

The shoemaker, for twenty dollars, will make you a pair of congress gaiters with hollow steel heels veneered with leather, by raising the insole of which discloses quite a roomy "cellar." Of course these shoes are to be worn only while at work.

The writer has also carried effective apparatus in his elegant gold watch. The watch was without a movement, and a watch only in appearance.

At one time in his career the writer ran afoul of one of nature's sharp newspaper men, in a southern city who proposed to stop all the horn manifestations given during one of his seances. He did not succeed in it, but tried to the best of his ability.

In order to stop the voice through the horn, he brought a horn of his own, and after the medium was tied, he produced a flask of wine and had the medium fill his mouth. After the manifestations on the horn, if any occurred, he was to spit out the wine, thus showing conclusively that the medium's voice was not the one heard.

Here is the means by which the medium beat the reporter's game. Freeing his hand, he obtained possession of the tea-bell. Turning it upside down, he emptied the wine into it and held it between his knees. It is needless to say that the horn put in its "best licks," and in addition a quick tune was performed on a mouth-organ. The wine was again taken into the mouth and spit out in the presence of the sitters including the reporter.

His conditions would not hold, and he went away wondering what did do the talking through the trumpet, anyway.

You must keep both eyes wide open if you would avoid all the impositions practiced by the slate-writing mediums.

Many persons will tell you that they have obtained slate-writing from the medium and besides furnishing the slates, which were screwed together, they were not out of their own hands a moment from the time they entered the medium's room until they reached home. They will also tell you that a list of questions secured between the slates were answered. Your informant will believe that every word he is telling you is the truth, for he has himself been
deceived. Don't laugh at his seeming gullibility, for were you to have the same experience he has passed through, it is more than likely you would be telling the same story. There are many men and women in the Spiritualistic fold who are just as intelligent as you may imagine yourself to be. It is only the fool who will deny the truth of any proposition when he is utterly ignorant on the subject.

It is very pleasant to believe that you do not stop in the grave, if you can; but a large majority of the people do not want to believe it any longer—they want to know it.

The writer has furnished positive proof of life everlasting to scores of skeptical minds that the church did not reach. It was very satisfactory proof to them but the writer knew just how much it was worth, and for his own satisfaction it did not fill the bill.

Our ex-medium never claimed supernatural powers. He left it to the audience to explain his mediumistic feats as they saw fit, and with this attitude he freely submitted himself to investigation by learned committees. But he exhibits a certain contempt for the intellectual abilities of these men who invented far-fetched explanations such as mind-reading and telepathy. His own statements are as follows:

A TYPICAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE.

Ordinarily, the physical medium is an artist in his line. He must be, else his calling is soon gone, and he must earn his bread in other and perhaps better occupations. If a man become at all clever in giving physical manifestations, he is assured of plenty of remunerative business, and can travel 'round the world and have his entertainment at the hands of Spiritualists, no matter in what country he may tarry. And just here it may be said that his entertainers would by no means be the people of the lower classes.

Those whose business it is to attempt an exposé of Spiritualism in order to please and gratify the desires of their congregations, or to create a little cheap notoriety for themselves make many gross misstatements regarding the believers and adherents of that religion. They are invariably depicted as a mob of "free-loving, licentious and bestial lunatics and criminals," and it is claimed that "the insane asylums and penitentiaries are overflowing with them." They are said to be "lean, lank and lantern-jawed, with clammy hands and long or short hair," as best suits the fancy of the speaker.....

As to the morality of the Spiritualists, as a class, outside of the fraternity of mediums, it would prove a difficult task to establish their rating one jot below that of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic or any other denomination of Christians.....
Denunciation of the Spiritualists, as a class, will not answer for arguments against their philosophy, nor disprove one of the miraculous manifestations they will tell you they are receiving daily....

The writer, it will be seen, is especially disgusted with the rattletrap explanations offered by the learned gentlemen occupying pulpits in the churches of various denominations.....

The writer during his mediumistic career was never heard to claim that his phenomena were the work of spirits, always dodging the question. However, he never objected to persons other than himself, calling it whatever they chose. His little speech before taking his seat in the cabinet being in these words:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: You are here to-night, and pay your money to witness and pass judgment on the phenomena presented in my presence—phenomena that have been occurring through me since I was eighteen years of age. I am not here to proselyte any one to Spiritualism, simply to present to your notice the phenomena that are described as wonderful by all who have witnessed them. I make no claims, and you are welcome to explain them in any way you choose after witnessing them. I will say that they are not the work of the Devil."

A sample verdict of a learned and scientific committee will be of interest here, as illustrating the far-fetched and absolutely ridiculous solutions of the physical phenomena, concocted and offered the hungry skeptic and churchman, by those who, through their intellectual capabilities and scientific attainments are supposed to be eminently fitted for the task they assume.

The writer had been giving seances in a Western city, for a number of weeks, in 1887. The phenomena produced at these seances had created considerable discussion and newspaper comment, besides converting quite a number of well-known, and a portion of them prominent citizens of the town. In a near-by city there lived and transacted business a preacher, of the Presbyterian persuasion, and a physician of great prominence and supposed learning in the sciences and wiles by which the ancient Prince of Black Magic, Cagliostro, produced the results that puzzled the wiseacres of his day and generation. These gentlemen concluded to form an "investigating committee" of a dozen persons, from among their large number of friends, choosing none but those gifted beyond the ordinary in intellectual attainments, or versed in some of the sciences that it was supposed would materially aid in disentangling the web of mystery surrounding this young man and his strange phenomena.
Accordingly, there finally was associated together the minister, who was noted for his scholarly sermons, disclosing a deep knowledge of many of Nature's laws and the isms and ologies that perplex so many of lesser learning and researches; the physician, who also bore a reputation for a profundity of information on subjects other than physics; a very popular lecturer on occultism, hypnotism and kindred subjects; two wholesale merchants of the city, who were blessed with extraordinary large bumps of self-esteem, with the perceptive faculties largely developed; and a state legislator, who had the points down fine, but withal a well informed individual. Each gentleman was accompanied by his wife, each of whom was accredited with a large share of brilliancy in an intellectual way. This composed the circle or committee of twelve, sharp and keen, who were to wrest from the blonde, hatchet-faced, gentle-eyed medium all his secrets, whether he would or no. One of the merchants was deputized to visit the medium and bargain with him for his services one evening, to be designated by himself. The visit was duly made, arrangements satisfactorily concluded and the medium was in for it. A few evenings after the merchant's visit found the medium in one of the drawing-rooms of the minister's residence, in the presence of the aforementioned dozen of investigators. The time set for the seance to open was eight o'clock. At half past seven the ladies withdrew to another apartment, and the preliminaries began by the minister saying:

"Mr. Smith," I call the medium Smith for convenience, "It is my duty to inform you that you were engaged for this evening for the purpose of more fully and carefully testing your claims than possibly has ever yet been undertaken. Will you submit to the means proposed to be used by us, in our work?"

"I will submit to everything reasonable, and do all in my power to aid your experiments," replied Mr. Smith, "but as to my claims, I will say that I make none whatever."

"We have understood that you are a Spiritualistic medium, for materialization and physical phenomena," pursued the minister.

"I believe myself to be equal to the best of them, and yet do not make any claims for the phenomena produced in my presence. I leave all conclusions and deductions to the investigators, and am satisfied to have them name it what they choose. What I do claim is that the phenomena are very wonderful and given under test conditions that make my participation in their occurrence, apparently one of the impossibilities. It is your business to discover whether I do have a hand in it or not," replied Mr. Smith.
They now searched his clothing thoroughly, and even took the precaution to explore his mouth and ears. After satisfying themselves that he carried nothing contraband, he resumed his clothing, the ladies re-entered the room, and he proceeded to arrange them in a semicircle, male and female alternating, in front of the cabinet, which was constructed by hanging a pair of heavy curtains across a corner of the room and making a cover to it with a pair of blankets.

The seance now began, it will be minutely described later on, and continued about one hour and a half, to a successful termination. Everything, including the medium, was examined every few minutes, by the learned gentlemen, who felt the pulse, took the temperature, and affixed some kind of apparatus on his limb for recording the muscular activity or contractions, pried into his eyes and mouth and conducted themselves very much as learned men are supposed to do in their experiments in quest of more light.

At the conclusion of the seance the ladies were a unit in declaring it as wonderful as the printed stories of the wonders worked by the fakirs of the Indies. The gentlemen held a conference of their own in one corner of the spacious apartment, in low tones, while the medium made mysterious passes about his own anatomy, presumably to aid in recovering the exhausted vital forces, expended during the seance.

After some thirty minutes had passed, the gentlemen, after making a last examination of the medium's condition, confided to him that they were positive that "the manifestations were not caused by the spirit-world at all." They also stated to him, in reply to an interrogation, that they did not think, in fact were positive, that he did not cause the manifestations knowingly, but innocently made the entire entertainment.

On being asked for an explanation, the lecturer on hypnotism unburdened himself in the following fashion:

"Our solution to the matter, and I, for one, would stake my professional reputation upon its correctness, is that you throw yourself into a self-induced, cataleptic trance, and, while in that condition, your soul-principle leaves the body and causes all the manifestations, causing the pictures hung on the walls twenty feet from the cabinet to rattle, and the piano to sound, besides the dozens of other manifestations occurring in and about the cabinet. Your soul principle can read our minds as easily as we could read a printed book, and that is the source from whence came the names given, of our spirit friends."

They expressed themselves as immeasurably pleased and satis-
fied with the seance and its results. There, reader, is an explana-
of some really very simple operations, that are, in reality, more
wonderful than the performance itself, even though it was produced
through the agency popularly supposed to cause it. There is an
explanation calculated to cause the medium to smile right out loud,
every time he thinks of it.

Think of the aggregate of intellect there on that evening, using
their every faculty to discover the true source of the manifestations,
bringing in such a verdict.

It is the opinion of the medium of the occasion, that, in reality,
they were convinced it was the work of disembodied spirits, but it
would never do to admit it; hence the ridiculous explanation as the
only respectable way out of it. It is only the medium who can enjoy
these displays of brilliant ideas and profundity of the supposed pro-
found men and women who undertake to unearth the true inward-
ness of our puzzling isms, for only the medium is absolutely certain
they are wrong, and he alone could tell just how simple were the
operations that befuddled the brainy man of science.

[to be concluded.]