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The Colporteur.

Mother, I've read in legends old,
Of minstrel travelling wood and wold,
And yet with bow so weak and wan,
I cannot see a lingering trace
Of disappointment on his face.
For "BRACK" seems written there.

Mother, I've read in legends old,
Of minstrel travelling wood and wold,
While high and haught their numbers swell'd,
Is not you man with books outspread
Like those old bards of whom I've read
In chronicles of Eld?

No minstrel of the olden time,
Made framer of the Runic rhyme,
A loiterer you to him give name—
For his bright book contains the strain
Of one who sang of olden days,
By minstrel born in heaven.

"Say, Pilgrim, weary with thy load,
While hasting still upon the road,
What was the burden of the hymn,
One whom thy God's bright angel train,
By night on old Judea's plain,
When stars were burning dim?"

"Oh! that the glorious music run—
"Glorious to God, the Highest One,
And everlasting peace to men—
"For CHRIST, the LORD, is born to-day,
Revealed to take the 'course' away—
"And Eden give again."

"And was God once a child like me?"
"He was a little child like thee—
"And died to abolish sin and death—
"The blessed tidings having heard—
"Rejoice in sin—believe His Word—
"The child of Nazareth."

"Say, pilgrim, with thy burden weary,
While night is closing dark and dreary—
"How far off lies thy peaceful home?"
"In where streams are flowing free,
"And lowly ones now are calling thee—
"When will thou cease to roam?"

"Is it those starry worlds are springing,
"And bright winds' birds and bees are singing—
"Where summer breezes fill the air—
"Where every breeze that murmurs free
"Is fragrant with the orange tree—
"Say, if thy home is there?"

"No—dearest child—beneath the sky,
"No home—no place of rest have I—
"I read the path my Master trod,
"Who had no where to lay His head—
"And still I ask a softer bed—
"Than His—the Eternal God."

"I seek a rest where light and love
"O'ershine the faded stars above—
"Meanwhile contented here I roam—
"Invaluable to me is the name
"Of whose Saviour leads I go—
"And where He is, is HOME."
December, 1853. W. MCK.

Spirit Rappings.

In a former paper, I gave an abstract of the history of "Rapping"; and the object of this article is to give instances of investigation for the discovery of the cheat.

Table Moving seems first to have attracted attention in these Prov. States. That some persons could move some tables, without muscular strength and by slightly touching them, was an undoubted fact; and was often done by individuals who had no intention to deceive, and who were usually unconscious of the power by which the motion was effected.

After all the wonderful tales told about "table moving," it seems resolvable by electricity.

It is known to philosophers that "dry rods" is an electric, or non-conductor; but the fluids of the animal body are conductors. When several hands, (previously warned) are laid upon the table, an accumulation of electricity is produced; and the effect is electrical attraction, which is the motive power. There certainly can be no moral action in simply moving a table in this way; but the evil consists in asserting that it is moved by invisible spirits, who, by this motion, possess a power and a willingness to give mortals information respecting secret and future things, known only to the Great Supreme.

Table turning is by some explained thus:—Whenever a solid is pressed, there is an upward motion of the parts thereof, tending to deliver themselves from the compression; and this is the cause of all violent motion. It is very strange that this notion has never been observed and inquired into; as being the most common and chief origin of all mechanical operations.

This motion operates first in a round, by way of proof and trial, which way to deliver itself, and then in progression, where it finds resistance the easiest.

This is in accordance with the exposition given by Prof. Faraday.

If a small piece of dry board be placed on the end of a common cotton reel; and two or three of the fingers *when warm*, be gently placed upon the board, it, in a short time, will be seen to move. This motion is produced either by the electricity from the body of the person, or from the very slight pressure upon the board; either way the phenomenon is natural, and not produced by spiritual agency.

The "Rapping" may not be explained quite so clearly, as there seems different modes of producing these sounds.

In the *National Magazine* for October last, page 301, are found the following sensible remarks, which may throw some light upon this subject.

"It is now pretty well ascertained that the human system, in certain conditions of nervous excitement, is capable of producing, by spasmodic movement of the muscles and joints, noises similar to a dull heavy rapping. It is further worthy of notice, that all well attested cases of the kind having originated with persons of a class of persons especially liable to such nervous derangements—these phenomena have hitherto received but little attention from persons capable of investigating them in a satisfactory manner; while the subtlety

of the agent, and the prevailing delusion as to displaying any abnormal condition in one's own physical system, have rendered such investigation peculiarly difficult. With the ignorant and superstitious the marvellous is at once accounted supernatural, while the designing often pervert to their own reprehensible purposes."

The girl Parsons appears to have produced "rapping" by something like "spasmodic movement," as she seemed, at first, unconscious of the power by which she was acting; but there was evidently duplicity afterwards;—and when confined in a hammock she was unable to produce the same knocks even with the assistance of a board.

The knocking by the Fox girls, was said by an accomplice to have been done by their toes. Mrs. Norman Culver, a relation of the Fox family, made a formal deposition, certified by two respectable witnesses, at the town Acadia, in New York. Her statement was as follows:—

"I am by marriage a relation of the Fox girls; their brother married my husband's sister. The girls have been a great deal at my house, and for about two years I was a sincere believer in the rappings; but some things which I saw when I was visiting the girls at Rochester, made me suspect that they were deceiving. I resolved to satisfy myself in some way; and sometime afterwards I made a proposition to Catherine to assist her in producing the manifestations. I had a cousin visiting me from Michigan who was going to consult the spirits, and I told Catherine that if he intended to go to Detroit, it would be a good thing for them to convince him. I also told her, that if I could do anything to help her, I would do it cheerfully. That I probably should be able to answer all the questions he would ask, and I would do so if she would show me how to make the things. She said as Margaretta was absent, she wanted somebody to help her, and that if I would become a medium, she would explain all to me. The raps were made with the toes. All the toes were used. After nearly a week's practice, with Catherine showing me how, I could produce them perfectly myself. At first it was very hard work to do it. Catherine told me to warm my feet, or put them in warm water, and it would then be easier work to rap. She said that she had sometimes to warm her feet three or four times in the course of an evening. I found that heating my feet did enable me to rap a great deal easier. I have sometimes produced an hundred and fifty raps in succession. I can rap with all the toes on both feet; it is most difficult to rap with the great toe. Catherine told me how to manage to answer the questions. She said it was generally easy enough to answer right, if the one who asked the questions called the Alphabet.

Whatever may be thought of the above statement, it would seem that other mediums besides Mrs. Culver, and the Fox girls have effected heat to effect the "rappings."

"Dickens in his 'Household Words' for Nov. 20, 1852, describes a visit of two gentlemen to Mrs. Hayden, a 'medium' in London from the United States. He says:—'The medium sat not only opposite to us, but opposite to the fire. It had occurred to us when we went into the back drawing-room, that the kitchen had come up stairs; there was such an enormous fire in the grate.'

And a person who witnessed the feats of the woman Johnson who recently visited this place, told the writer of this article, that the loudest raps were heard while she was wearing her feet.

It must be admitted that science has not yet fully demonstrated the cause of rapping. Professor Faraday has attributed it to "Diamagnetism"; some persons to Electro-Biology; and others to what is called the "Ole force."

If the latter be the solution, it is no wonder that it has not yet been explained, because "Ole" has just been discovered. Ole is a name given to a certain substance or property, which acts very singularly upon particular persons. It is said to be produced by the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, by the decompositions of salts; and of the animal bodies. By Ole certain vapours are said to arise over the graves of the dead, which are sometimes visible; and which possibly has given rise to the stories of church yards being haunted. Lunacy is also attributed to "Ole." The discoverer was the Baron Von Reichenbach an Austrian nobleman.

In whatever manner "spirit rappings" are produced, they certainly can lay no legitimate claim to supernatural agency. Science is now engaged in the matter, and will not long be in the dark as to the cause, and the public mind dispersed in reference to this mysterious and wide spread imposture.

It is not surprising that the whole has not been made known, for as but few understand Jugglery except jugglers; so but few understand the "Rapping"; but those who are interested in keeping the secret.

The system has progressed astonishingly in the United States it is said, there are one thousand persons travelling and lecturing on Rapping, and at least thirty Mediums.

In England also it is spreading; houses of distinction are said to be receiving the Circles, and multitudes are being deceived thereby.

These travelling "Mediums," move tables, produce raps, call Spirits from the other world, tell fortunes, reveal secrets, cure diseases, and perform feats that often astonish the beholders; and all this is professed to be done by a supernatural agency, or by human Spirits who have been called from the body into the immediate presence of their Judge.

The lying character of their Oracles has often been demonstrated, but with little effect; for notwithstanding such detection the rapping has continued to progress.

A travelling "Writing Medium," who recently visited this Town, was in the *York Herald*, of December 22nd, 1853, given the following absurd and anti-scriptural reason for the mistakes, or lies, so often made, or told by the Mediums, in their answers.

Speaking of objections that were made to "Spirit manifestations" the writer says:—'The gist of the whole appears to be that false communications are received from a class of persons especially liable to such nervous derangements—these phenomena have hitherto received but little attention from persons capable of investigating them in a satisfactory manner; while the subtlety

drawn to them in the form, or natural body, by the laws of affinity; consequently when the thousands who were following the leaded idols of the world, there were yet some who worshipped the living and the true.

Hallowed memories of the past came back to her; memories of a time, when, almost stifled over a closing grave, a kind voice had assured her of One who would be a Father to the fatherless; memories of distant friends—friends of Jesus who had led her when a child to the fold, and taught her to sing of heaven and learn the way. And then came visions of an hour, when watchers stood over her with anxious fears; when, in the silent night of the grave, blessed views were revealed to her of the better land, so bright and glorious that she longed to depart. And as returning health that she was still to be a sojourner here, she had promised to ever live as seeing that inheritance beyond—deeds, enduring.

She stood then listening and musing but a brief space; yet doubts of long-vaunted precepts were all dispersed, and heavenly influences were restored to her. The vows which, in the exciting changes of many months past, had been well nigh forgotten, were renewed, and she felt as if she could have knelt down on that stone pavement, and promise again to be more watchful, more steadfast, more persevering as a follower of the Saviour. And she went on her way with joyful steps. Had an angel from heaven strengthened her? That night she slept sweetly, and her dreams were of hands clasped in prayer, of lips that had said, "Be thou faithful unto death."

The next Sabbath found the young stranger at the door of that old church; no one welcomed her—being not a free citizen she had never seen before, but when the waiting assembly united in one chorus of grateful adoration, she felt happy, for she felt safe. She was among those whose faith could realize the presence of the Invisible; their joys were her joys, and God they had stepped was her God. She was not alone.

Years have gone by, and that still living discipline has often been heard to exclaim, "O how I love the sweet songs of Zion; they have kept me from the path of the destroyer."

These memories of the past, these incidents of other days, were recalled while looking over the pages of a work lately issued from the press, named "Family and Social Melodies," by the Rev. W. C. Hoyt, a bold and brave man, and one who loved the songs of praise to our family devotions. No better way, perhaps, to imprint the truths of our holy religion upon youthful and inquiring minds, no better way than to bid them study the spiritual lines of the Bible, and then they will be able to tune a lyre well-fitting to warble forth the saving themes of the word of life. And if we would win the attention of infant prattlers, playful and wayward as they are, we should sing to them the words of love. Sing with them daily, and the feelings thus awakened will be far more precious than any other we might give them. Make our beautiful hymns "household words,"—chant them around the family altars; they will be the words of the spirit of the worshipper never to be effaced.

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She stood then listening and musing but a brief space; yet doubts of long-vaunted precepts were all dispersed, and heavenly influences were restored to her. The vows which, in the exciting changes of many months past, had been well nigh forgotten, were renewed, and she felt as if she could have knelt down on that stone pavement, and promise again to be more watchful, more steadfast, more persevering as a follower of the Saviour. And she went on her way with joyful steps. Had an angel from heaven strengthened her? That night she slept sweetly, and her dreams were of hands clasped in prayer, of lips that had said, "Be thou faithful unto death."

The next Sabbath found the young stranger at the door of that old church; no one welcomed her—being not a free citizen she had never seen before, but when the waiting assembly united in one chorus of grateful adoration, she felt happy, for she felt safe. She was among those whose faith could realize the presence of the Invisible; their joys were her joys, and God they had stepped was her God. She was not alone.

Years have gone by, and that still living discipline has often been heard to exclaim, "O how I love the sweet songs of Zion; they have kept me from the path of the destroyer."

These memories of the past, these incidents of other days, were recalled while looking over the pages of a work lately issued from the press, named "Family and Social Melodies," by the Rev. W. C. Hoyt, a bold and brave man, and one who loved the songs of praise to our family devotions. No better way, perhaps, to imprint the truths of our holy religion upon youthful and inquiring minds, no better way than to bid them study the spiritual lines of the Bible, and then they will be able to tune a lyre well-fitting to warble forth the saving themes of the word of life. And if we would win the attention of infant prattlers, playful and wayward as they are, we should sing to them the words of love. Sing with them daily, and the feelings thus awakened will be far more precious than any other we might give them. Make our beautiful hymns "household words,"—chant them around the family altars; they will be the words of the spirit of the worshipper never to be effaced.

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