

AUTOMATIC OR SPIRIT WRITING

By B. F. Underwood, in the "Arena."

Before commenting on what is called by some "automatic" and by others "spirit" writing, I will give several samples of such writing, selected from a large mass of manuscript "communications," written by Mrs. Underwood's hand, without conscious effort on her part in originating the thought, mentally selecting the words, or in the mechanical construction of the letters into words and the words into sentences. Mrs. Underwood, who is well acquainted with the facts and theories in regard to double consciousness, dual and multiple personality, is confident that this writing is not the product of her own thought or will, and that the explanation of it must be sought in some intelligence or intelligences foreign to her mind, as that mind is understood by herself and those who know her mental characteristics.

One evening was written the name of a person recently deceased. In reply to a question whether he could communicate this was given: "Sensory duets are born with mortals which are here useless, and at rebirth these must be eliminated. Changes must occur while the soul is unconscious, to make possible the realities of the new phase of being, and—left earth's sphere in so chaotic a state of intelligence that it may belong ere his friends can get connected messages from him."

From the notes of one evening the following is taken:

Ques.—"Can you tell us in what consisted Christ's power?"

Ans.—"Sympathy with humanity."

Ques.—"Wherein lay Buddha's?"

Ans.—"The self-same spirit."

Ques.—"And Mohammed's?"

Ans.—"By reason of his desire to elevate his race."

Ques.—"And Confucius'?"

Ans.—"Sympathetic common sense and philanthropic anxiety."

Ques.—"And Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader?"

Ans.—"Physical sensibility, mixed with intense idealism of a sensuous character."

At another sitting this was received: "Yonder comes a man who will do you honor by his desire to speak with you."

Ques.—"Will he give his name?"

Ans.—"Charles Darwin."

Ques.—"Well, if this is Mr. Darwin, we would be very glad to have him say a word as to his opinion of his new state of being. Did he expect anything of this sort before his change?"

Ans.—"When on earth I worked conscientiously in certain grooves. I was often puzzled, but, being of a logical turn of mind, was obliged to accept such conclusions as my experiments led to. I did not then understand the limitation of sense perceptions, and sometimes I was

gravely mistaken. I was not then aware of the reasonableness of another stage of being. I have, since changing my form, recognized my one-sidedness, but now perceive that in my then conditional state I was not to blame for the false conclusions I made from mortal premises. We here feel rejoiced that we can return through congenial mediumship.

"CHARLES DARWIN"

Once noting a vase of flowers on the table, I asked, because at the moment I had nothing else in my mind, "Why is Sara so exceedingly fond of flowers?" The answer was: "Flowers are the essence of sensuous spiritualism; and she and all who, like her, are in sympathy with the beautiful models given as symbols to human souls, are forced to recognize the divine atoms of being in whatever form manifested."

Ques.—"What do you mean by atoms of being?"

Ans.—"By this term we desire to state as clearly as possible in your circumscribed voicing the relation your ephemeral state holds to the All of Being. Flowers are atoms of Being, sharing with all other atoms persistence toward the source whence they emanate."

One time, when I was a little belligerent in my attitude toward the "spirit," was written, "When Mars declares war all martial souls put on armor."

One evening the name "Caroline" was written. Several persons named Caroline were mentioned, after which the name of one not thought of was written; viz, Caroline Fox. Mrs. U. recalled having read her "Memoirs," and so remarked.

Questions and answers were as follows:—
Ans.—"Doubtless she (Mrs. U.) will be glad to meet a friend who is in sympathy with her friendships."

Ques.—"Will Caroline Fox say a word in regard to her friend and my hero, John Stuart Mill?"

Ans.—"John Stuart Mill sought to advance the social state of women because he was 'un chevalier sans peur et sans reproche'."

Ques.—"Do you meet the Carlyles on your present plane?"

Ans.—"Sometimes; but their sphere seems not exactly what I expected it to be."

Ques.—"Are you as happy in your present state as you were on your plane?"

Ans.—"Told as a wonderful dream of poet or seer, I should have thought this phase of existence a phantasm too beautiful for realization; but living this new sweet, helpful life, I am constantly wondering whether I am a real part of this sphere."

Ques.—"What can you tell us as to the locality of your sphere?"

Ans.—"There are no words in your language which we can make useful. Verbal modes of expression are inadequate to ex-

press that of which there is no equivalent, on your plane."

Ques.—"What constitutes your highest pleasure there?"

Ans.—"The society of loving and freed spirits."

Ques.—"You formed many beautiful friendships here—do you find new friends there?"

Ans.—"Doubtless my friends on earth were sources of much real pleasure and helpfulness, but the friends on this plane are fountains of everlasting joy."

Ques.—"In what way do you make the acquaintance of these new friends?"

Ans.—"Sara, all who are in sympathy here come to know one another as members of the same spiritual clan."

Here I asked, "What should you, who knew J. S. Mill so well, particularize as the weakest point in his strong intellect?"

Ans.—"The apparent weak point in that most lovely character was his lack of human sympathy with the individual. The race he could partly understand, but the individual was to him a mystery."

(To be Concluded in our next.)



PERSONAL.

Mr. Wentworth J. Buchanan and Mrs. Buchanan have returned from a visit to New York.

Miss R. Scott, Redpath street, has returned from a visit to Ottawa, where she was the guest of Mrs. Charles Elliott nee Hamilton, of Montreal.

Sir Donald Smith has almost entirely recovered from his recent attack of illness and is now able to go to his office daily. Lady Smith, who has been confined to the house by a severe cold, is also convalescent.

Dr. Harry Yates, who has recently taken his degree at McGill, has left for Bermuda to join his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Yates, of Branford, Ont., who have been spending the winter in the West Indies.

Mr. Duncan McIntyre and Mr. Chas. Cassils arrived in New York, Thursday, by the "Teutonic." Neither were in the best of health.

According to present arrangements, Sir Donald and Lady Smith will leave for their usual summer visit to England early in June.

THE LOGIC OF IT.

The cautious bachelor—"How charming you are, fair fraulein! May I take a kiss?"

The pretty waitress—"No, indeed; he who asks for such a thing, doesn't deserve it."—Fliegende Blaetter.