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LINCOLN CENTENARY EDITION.

LINCOLN THE MYSTIC

Vision of Calhoun.

ELSEWHERE in this edition of THE TRIBUNE are stories of the many premonitions and misgivings which came to Lincoln personally and to his friends and relatives. Herewith follows a story which gained much currency during the early part of the civil war and which reflects the extent to which even the most well tempered men and women of the times were moved by phenomena which otherwise probably would have made no impression upon them. Doubtless Lincoln knew of this story, and there are many testimonials to the effect that dozens of similar stories were conveyed to him throughout the war.

"The other morning, at the breakfast table, when I, an unobserved spectator, happened to be present, Calhoun was observed to gaze frequent at his right hand and brush it with his left in a nervous and hurried manner. He did this so often that it excited attention. At length one of the persons comprising the breakfast party—his name, I think, is Toombs, and he is a member of congress from Georgia—took upon himself to ask the occasion of Mr. Calhoun's disquietude. 'Does your hand pain you?' he asked of Mr. Calhoun. To this Mr. Calhoun replied, in a rather hurried manner: 'Pshaw! It is nothing but a dream I had last night and which makes me see perpetually a large black spot, like an ink blotch upon the back of my right hand; an optical illusion I suppose.' Of course, these words excited the curiosity of the company, but no one ventured to beg the details of this singular dream until Toombs asked quietly: 'What was your dream like? I am not superstitious about dreams, but sometimes they have a great deal of truth in them.' 'But this was such a peculiarly absurd dream,' said Mr. Calhoun, again brushing the back of his right hand. 'However, if it does not intrude too much on the time of our friends I will relate it to you.'

"Of course, the company were profuse in their expressions of anxiety to know all about the dream, and Mr. Calhoun related it. 'At a late hour last night, as I was sitting in my room, engaged in writing, I was astonished by the entrance of a visitor who, without a word, took a seat opposite me at my table. This surprised me, as I had given particular orders to the servant that I should on no account be disturbed. The manner in which the intruder entered, so self-possessed, taking his seat opposite me without a word, as though my room and all within it belonged to him, excited in me as much surprise as indignation. As I raised my head to look into his features, over the top of my shaded lamp, I discovered that he was wrapped in a thin cloak, which effectually concealed his face and features from my view; and, as I raised my head, he spoke; "What are you writing, senator from South Carolina?" I did not think of his impertinence at first, but answered him involuntarily, "I am writing a plan for the dissolution of the American union." (You know, gentlemen, that I am expected to produce a plan of dissolution in the event of certain contingencies.)

"'To this the intruder replied in the coolest manner possible, "Senator from South Carolina, will you allow me to look at your hand, your right hand?" He rose, the cloak fell, and I beheld his face. Gentlemen, the sight of that face struck me like a thunder clap. It was the face of a dead man, whom extraordinary events had called back to life. The features were those of Gen. George Washington. He was dressed in the revolutionary costume, such as you see in the patent office.' Here Mr. Calhoun paused, apparently agitated. His agitation, I need not tell you, was shared by the company. Toombs at length broke the embarrassing pause. 'Well, what was the issue of this scene?' Mr. Calhoun resumed. 'The intruder, as I have said, rose and asked to look at my right hand, as though I had not the power to refuse. I extended it. The truth is, I felt a strange thrill pervade me at this touch; he grasped it and held it near the light, thus affording full time to examine every feature. It was the face of Washington.

"'After holding my hand for a moment he looked at me steadily and said in a quiet way: "And with this right hand, senator from South Carolina, you would sign your name to a paper declaring the union dissolved?" I answered in the affirmative. "Yes," I said, "if a certain contingency arises, I will sign my name to the declaration of dissolution." But at that moment a black blotch appeared on the back of my hand, which I seem to see now. "What is that?" I said, alarmed, I know not why, at the blotch on my hand. "That," said he, dropping my hand, "is the mark by which Benedict Arnold is known in the next world." He said no more, gentlemen, but drew from beneath his cloak an object which he laid upon the table—laid upon the very paper on which I was writing. This object, gentlemen, was a skeleton. "There," said he, "there are the bones of Isaac Hayne, who was hung at Charleston by the British. He gave his life in order to establish the union. When you put your name to a declaration of dissolution, why, you may as well have the bones of Isaac Hayne before you—he was a South Carolinian and so are you. But there was no blotch on his right hand." With these words the intruder left the room.

"'I started back from the contract with the dead man's bones and awoke. Overcome by labor, I had fallen asleep, and had been dreaming. Was it not a singular dream?' All the company answered in the affirmative, and Toombs muttered, 'Singular, very singular,' and at the same time looking curiously at the back of his right hand, while Mr. Calhoun placed his head between his hands and seemed buried in thought."

Seance at White House.

TO persons inclined to be incredulous as to occult and psychic matters, it has always seemed strange that so practical a life as that of Abraham Lincoln should be in any wise interwoven with such things as dreams, premonitions and spiritualism. But more than abundant evidence remains to show that from the beginning Lincoln was surrounded by the weird and the uncanny.

Perhaps the extraordinary national struggle which he so thoroughly typified during his later years was partially responsible for this. For students of history and of psychology have long since shown the peculiar susceptibility of individuals and peoples alike to phenomena of a psychic nature at times of great tension. The slavery issue was already hovering like a shadow over the nation when Lincoln was born. It had more or less to do, as the Biographer Binns shows so aptly in the continued meanderings of Lincoln's father. It surrounded Lincoln as he grew up to manhood and it finally so worked its way into his nature that it needed but the repeal of the Missouri compromise act to make him the inevitable national spokesman.

Therefore, when it is recalled that personal sorrow and personal struggle overshadowed his own life, it is hardly to be wondered at that both he and his relationship to his country should be invested with things strange and unnatural. Perhaps some day when there has been a sufficient lapse of time some new Shakspeare will arise to preach upon this aspect of Lincoln as the Shakspeare of England treated of similar aspects in the lives of Cæsar, Hamlet, and other characters of history.

A writer from Washington, under date of April 23, 1863, says: A few evenings since Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States, was induced to give a spiritual soirée in the crimson room at the White house to test the wonderful alleged supernatural powers of Mr. Charles E. Shockle. It was my good fortune, as a friend of the medium, to be present, the party consisting of the president, Mrs. Lincoln, Mr. Welles, Mr. Stanton, Mr. L. of New York, and Mr. F. of Philadelphia. We took our seats in the circle about 8 o'clock, but the president was called away shortly after the manifestations commenced, and the spirits, which apparently had assembled to convince him of their power, gave visible tokens of their displeasure at the president's absence by pinching Mr. Stanton's ears and twitching Mr. Welles' beard. He soon returned, but it was some time before harmony was restored, for the mishaps to the secretaries caused such bursts of laughter that the influence was unpropitious. For some half hour the demonstrations were of a physical character—tables were moved and the picture of Henry Clay which hangs on the wall was swayed more than a foot, and two candelabra, presented by the dey of Algiers to President Adams, were twice raised nearly to the ceiling.

It was nearly 9 o'clock before Shockle was fully under spiritual influence, and so powerful were the subsequent manifestations that twice during the evening restoratives were applied, for he was much weakened, and though I took no notes I shall endeavor to give you as faithful an account as possible of what took place.

Loud rappings about 9 o'clock were heard directly beneath the president's feet, and Mr. Shockle stated that an Indian desired to communicate.

Hear from Gen. Knox.

"Well, sir," said the president, "I should be happy to hear what his Indian majesty has to say. We have recently had a visitation from our red brethren and it was the only delegation, black, white or blue, which did not volunteer some advice about the conduct of the war."

The medium then called for pencil and paper and they were laid upon the table in sight of all. A handkerchief was then taken from Mr. Stanton and the materials were carefully concealed from sight. In less space of time than it has required for me to write this knocks were heard and the paper was uncovered. To the surprise of all present it read as follows:

"Haste makes waste, but delays cause vexations. Give vitality by energy. Use every means to subdue. Proclamations are useless; make a bold front and fight the enemy; leave traitors at home to the care of loyal men. Less note of preparation, less parade and policy talk and more action.

"HENRY KNOX."

"That is not Indian talk, Mr. Shockle," said the president. "Who is Henry Knox?"

I suggested to the medium to ask who Henry Knox was and before the words were from my lips the medium spoke in a strange voice:

"The first secretary of war."

"O, yes; Gen. Knox," said the president, who, turning to the secretary, said: "Stanton, that message is for you; it is from your predecessor."

Mr. Stanton made no reply.

"I should like to ask Gen. Knox," said the president, "if it is within the scope of his ability to tell us when this rebellion will be put down."

In the same manner as before this message was received:

"Washington, Lafayette, Franklin, Wilberforce, Napoleon, and myself have held frequent consultations on this point. There is something which our spiritual eyes cannot detect which appear well formed. Evil has come at times by removal of men from high positions, and there are those in retirement whose abilities should be made useful to hasten the end. Napoleon says, concentrate your forces upon one point; Lafayette thinks that the rebellion will die of exhaustion; Franklin sees the end approaching, as the south must give up for want of mechanical ability to compete against northern mechanics. Wilberforce sees hope only in a negro army. KNOX."

"Well," exclaimed the president, "opinions differ among the saints as well as among the sinners. They don't seem to understand running the machines among the celestials much better than we do. Their talk and advice sound much like the talk of my cabinet—don't you think so, Mr. Welles?"

"Well, I don't know—I will think the matter over and see what conclusion to arrive at."

Heavy raps were heard, and the alphabet was called for, when "That's what's the matter" was spelled out. There was a shout of laughter, and Mr. Welles stroked his beard.

"That means, Mr. Welles," said the president, "that you are apt to be long winded, and think the nearest way home is the longest way round. Short cuts in war times. I wish the spirits could tell us how to catch the Alabama."

The lights, which had been partially lowered, almost instantaneously became so dim that I could not see sufficiently to distinguish the features of any one in the room, and on the large mirror over the mantelpiece there appeared the most beautiful though supernatural picture ever beheld. It represented a sea view, the Alabama with all steam up flying from the pursuit of another large steamer. Two merchantmen in the distance were seen, partly destroyed by fire. The picture changed, and the Alabama was seen at anchor under the shadow of an English fort—from which an English flag was waving. The Alabama was floating idly, not a soul on board, and no signs of life visible about her. The picture vanished, and in letters of purple appeared: "The English people demanded this of England's aristocracy."

Message About the Alabama.

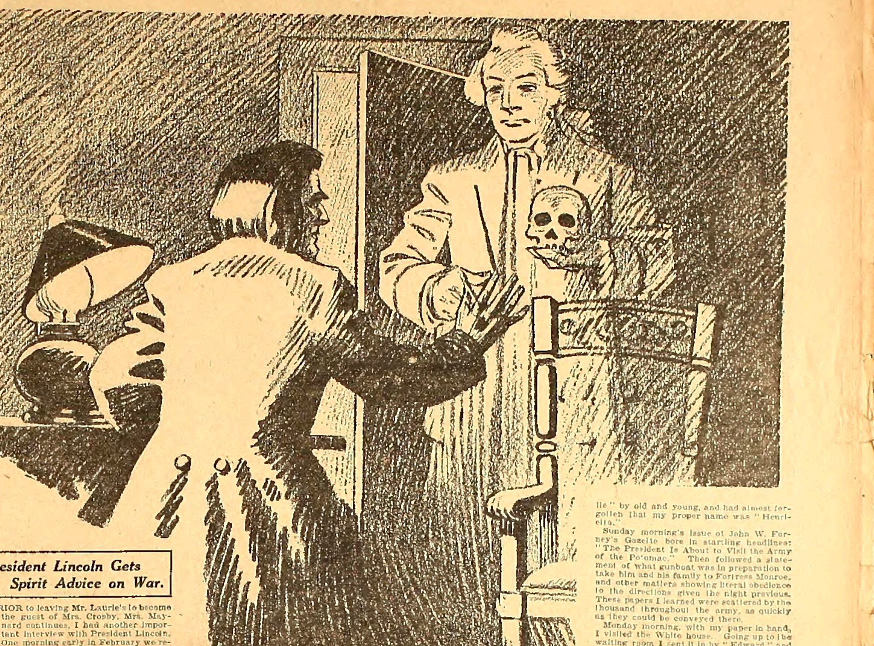
"So England is to seize the Alabama finally?" said the president. "It may be possible; but, Mr. Welles, don't let one gunboat or monitor less be built."

The spirits called for the alphabet, and again "That's what's the matter" was spelt out.

"I see, I see," said the president. "Mother England thinks that what's sauce for the goose may be sauce for the gander. It may be tit, tat, too, hereafter. But it is not complimentary to our navy, anyhow."

"We've done our best, Mr. President," said Mr. Welles. "I'm maturing a plan which, when perfected, I think, if it works well, will be a perfect trap for the Alabama."

"Well, Mr. Shockle," remarked the president, "I have seen strange things and heard odd remarks, but nothing which convinces me, except the pictures, that there is anything heavenly about this."



Famous Maynard Seance at White House in 1862.

PROBABLY the most responsible authority with regard to Lincoln's interest in spiritualism is Mrs. Nettie Colburn Maynard, who published a book in 1891 under the title, "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?"

The genuineness of her testimony is verified by Mark M. Pomeroy, more commonly known as "Brick" Pomeroy, by Francis B. Carpenter, who painted the famous "Emancipation Proclamation" and spent six months in the White house; by Mrs. E. D. N. Southworth, the well known authoress; by Col. Simon P. Kase of Philadelphia, who was present at a séance with Mr. Lincoln and asserted that he sat upon a piano with the president while that instrument was lifted bodily from the floor by some unknown power, the combined strength of Mr. Lincoln and Col. Kase being insufficient to put it back upon the floor. There are also many other persons who participated in these séances, of which Lincoln was frequently an observer, and some of them are yet living. They all acknowledge the genuineness of Mrs. Maynard's narrative:

The day following my brother's departure for home a note was received by Mrs. Laurie, asking her to come to the White house in the evening with her family and to bring Miss Nettie with her. I felt all the natural trepidation of a young girl about to enter the presence of the highest magistrate in our land; being fully impressed with the dignity of his office, and feeling that I was about to meet some superior being; and it was almost with trembling that I entered with my friends the red parlor of the White house, at 8 o'clock that evening (December, 1862).

Music from Spirit Master.

Mrs. Lincoln received us graciously, and introduced us to a gentleman and lady present whose names I have forgotten. Mr. Lincoln was not then present. While all were conversing pleasantly on general subjects Mrs. Miller (Mr. Laurie's daughter) seated herself, under control, at the double grand piano at one side of the room, seemingly awaiting some one. Mrs. Lincoln was talking with us in a pleasant strain when suddenly Mrs. Miller's hands fell upon the keys with a force that betokened a master hand, and the strains of a grand march filled the room. As the measured notes rose and fell we became silent. The heavy end of the piano began rising and falling in perfect time to the music. All at once it ceased, and Mr. Lincoln stood upon the threshold of the room. (He afterwards informed us that the first notes of the music fell upon his ears as he reached the head of the grand staircase to descend, and that he kept step to the music until he reached the doorway.) Mr. and Mrs. Laurie and Mrs. Miller were duly presented.

Then I was led forward and introduced. He stood before me, tall and kindly, with a smile on his face. Dropping his hand upon my head, he said, in a humorous tone: "So this is our 'little Nettie,' is it, that we have heard so much about?" I could only smile and say, "Yes, sir," like any school girl; when he kindly led me to an ottoman. Sitting down in a chair, the ottoman at his feet, he began asking me questions in a kindly way about my mediumship; and I think he must have thought me stupid, as my answers were little beyond a "Yes" and "No." His manner, however, was genial and kind, and it was then suggested we form a circle. He said: "Well, how do you do it?" looking at me. Mr. Laurie came to the rescue and said we had been accustomed to sit in a circle and to join hands; but he did not think it would be necessary in this instance.

Lost All Consciousness.

While he was yet speaking, I lost all consciousness of my surroundings and passed under control. For more than an hour I was made to talk to him, and I learned from my friends afterward that it was upon matters that he seemed fully to understand, while they comprehended little until that portion was reached that related to the forthcoming emancipation proclamation. He was charged with the utmost solemnity and force of manner not to abate the terms of its issue, and not to delay its enforcement as a law beyond the opening of the year; and he was assured that it was to be the crowning event of his administration and his life; and that while he was being counseled by strong parties to defer the enforcement of it, hoping to supplant it by other measures and to delay action, he must in nowise heed such counsel, but stand firm to his convictions and fearlessly perform the work and fulfill the mission for which he had been raised up by an overruling providence. Those present declared that they lost sight of the timid girl in the majesty of the utterance, the strength and force of the language, and the importance of that which was conveyed, and seemed to realize that some strong masculine spirit force was giving speech to almost divine commands.

I shall never forget the scene around me when I regained consciousness. I was standing in front of Mr. Lincoln, and he was sitting back in his chair, with his arms folded upon his breast, looking intently at me. I stepped back, naturally confused at the situation, not remembering at once where I was; and then glanced around the group, where perfect silence reigned. It took me a moment to remember my whereabouts.

Lincoln Is Impressed.

A gentleman present then said in a low tone: "Mr. President, did you notice anything peculiar in the method of address?" Mr. Lincoln raised himself, as if shaking off his spell. He glanced quickly at the full length portrait of Daniel Webster that hung above the piano and replied, "Yes, and it is singular, very!" with a marked emphasis.

Mr. Somes said: "Mr. President, would it be improper for me to inquire whether there has been any pressure brought to bear upon you to defer the enforcement of the proclamation?" To which the president replied: "Under these circumstances that question is perfectly proper, as we are all friends [smiling upon the company]. It is taking all my nerve and strength to withstand such a pressure." At this point the gentlemen drew around him and spoke together in low tones, Mr. Lincoln saying least of all. At last he turned to me and, laying his hand upon my head, uttered these words in a manner that I shall never forget: "My child, you possess a very singular gift; but that it is of God I have no doubt. I thank you for coming here tonight. It is more important than perhaps any one present can understand. I must leave you all now, but I hope I shall see you again." He shook me kindly by the hand, bowed to the rest of the company, and was gone. We remained an hour longer, talking with Mrs. Lincoln and her friends, and then returned to Georgetown.

President Lincoln Gets Spirit Advice on War.

PRIOR to leaving Mr. Laurie's to become the guest of Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. Maynard continues, I had another important interview with President Lincoln.

One morning early in February we received a note from Mrs. Lincoln saying she desired us to come over to Georgetown and bring some friends for a séance that evening, and wished the "young ladies" to be present. In the early part of the evening, before her arrival, my little messenger, or "familiar" spirit, controlled me, and declared that "the long brave," as she designated him, Mr. Lincoln, would also be there. As Mrs. Lincoln had made no mention of his coming in her letter, we were surprised at the statement. Mr. Laurie questioned its accuracy, as he said it would be hardly advisable for President Lincoln to leave the White house to attend a spiritualistic séance anywhere, and that he did not consider it "good policy" to do so. However, when the bell rang Mr. Laurie, in honor of his expected guests, went to the door to receive them in person. His astonishment was great to find Mr. Lincoln standing on the threshold, wrapped in his long cloak, and to hear his cordial "Good evening" as he put out his hand and entered.

Mr. Laurie promptly exclaimed, "Welcome, Mr. Lincoln, to my humble roof; you were expected" (Mr. Laurie was one of the "old fashioned gentlemen"). Mr. Lincoln stopped in the act of removing his cloak, and said, "Expected! Why, it is only five minutes since I knew that I was coming." He came down from a cabinet meeting as Mrs. Lincoln and her friends were about to enter the carriage, and asked them where they were going. She replied, "To Georgetown; to a circle." He answered immediately, "Hold on a moment; I will go with you." "Yes," said Mrs. Lincoln, "and I was never so surprised in my life." He seemed pleased when Mr. Laurie explained the source of our information; and I think it had a tendency to prepare his mind to receive what followed and to obey the instructions given.

Enters the Circle.

On this occasion, as he entered the parlor, I made bold to say to him: "I would like to speak a word with you, Mr. Lincoln before you go, after the circle." "Certainly," he said, "remind me should I forget it."

Mr. and Mrs. Laurie, with their daughter, Mrs. Miller, at his request, sang several fine old Scotch airs—among them, one that he declared a favorite, called "Bonnie Doon." I can see him now, as he sat in the old high backed rocking chair; one leg thrown over the arm; leaning back in utter weariness, with his eyes closed, listening to the low, strong and clear yet plaintive notes rendered as only the Scotch can sing their native melodies. I looked at his face and it appeared tired and haggard. He seemed older by years than when I had seen him a few weeks previously. The whole party seemed anxious and troubled, but all interest centered in the chief and all eyes and thoughts were turned on him. At the end of the song he turned to me and said: "Well, Miss Nettie, do you think you have anything to say to me tonight?" At first I thought he referred to the request I had made when he entered the room. Recollecting myself, however, I said: "If I have not, there may be others who have." He nodded his head in a pleasant manner, saying: "Suppose we see what they will have to tell us."

Among the spirit friends that have ever controlled me since my first development was one I have before mentioned—known as "old Dr. Bamford." He was quite a favorite with Mr. Lincoln. His quaint dialect, old fashioned methods of expression, straightforwardness in arriving at his subject, together with fearlessness of utterance, recommended him as no finished style could have done. This spirit took possession of me at once. As I learned from those in the circle, the substance of his remarks was as follows: "That a precarious state of things existed at the front, where Gen. Hooker had just taken command."

Go to the Front.

The army was totally demoralized; regiments stacking arms, refusing to obey orders or to do duty; threatening a general retreat; declaring their purpose to return to Washington. A vivid picture was drawn of the terrible state of affairs, greatly to the surprise of all present, save the chief to whom the words were addressed. When the picture had been painted in vivid colors, Mr. Lincoln quietly remarked: "You seem to understand the situation. Can you point out the remedy?" Dr. Bamford immediately replied: "Yes; if you have the courage to use it." He smiled, they said, and answered: "Try me." The old doctor then said to him: "It is one of the simplest, and being so simple it may not appeal to you as being sufficient to cope with what threatens to prove a serious difficulty. The remedy lies with yourself. Go in person to the front; taking with you your wife and children; leaving behind your official dignity, and all manner of display. Resist the importunities of officials to accompany you, and take only such attendants as may be absolutely necessary; avoid the high grade officers, and seek the tents of the private soldiers. Inquire into their grievances; show yourself to be what you are, 'the father of your people.' Make them feel that you are not unmindful of the many trials which beset them in their march through the dismal swamps, whereby both their courage and numbers have been depleted." He quietly remarked: "If that will do any good, it is easily done." The doctor instantly replied: "It will do all that is required. It will unite the soldiers as one man. It will unite them to you in bands of steel. And now, if you would prevent a serious, if not fatal, disaster to your cause, let the news be promulgated at once and disseminated broadcast that you are on the eve of visiting the front; that you are not talking of it, but that it is settled that you are going, and are now getting into readiness. This will stop insubordination and hold the soldiers in check, being something to divert their minds, and they will wait to see what your coming portends." He at once said: "It shall be done." A long conversation then followed between the doctor and Mr. Lincoln regarding the state of affairs and the war generally. The old doctor told him, "that he would be renominated and reelected to the presidency." They said that he sadly smiled when this was told him, saying: "It is hardly an honor to be coveted, save one could find it his duty to accept it."

Looking for Help.

After the circle was over Mr. Laurie said: "Mr. Lincoln, is it possible that affairs are as bad as has been depicted?" He said: "They can hardly be exaggerated, but I ask it as a favor of all present that they do not speak of these things. The major there," pointing to an officer of that rank who was in their party, "has just brought dispatches from the 'front' depicting the state of affairs pretty much as our old friend has shown it; and we were just having a cabinet meeting regarding the matter, when something, I know not what, induced me to leave the room and come downstairs, when I found Mrs. Lincoln in the act of coming here. I felt it might be of service for me to come; I did not know wherefore." He dropped his head as he said this—leaning forward in his chair as if he were thinking aloud. Then, looking up suddenly, he remarked: "Matters are pretty serious down there, and perhaps the simplest remedy is the best. I have often noticed in life that little things have sometimes greater weight than larger ones." As they rose to depart he turned to me and said: "Now, I will hear what you wish to say to me." Going to one side of the parlor, we sat down, and I laid before him the case of a friend who had been nearly two years in the service in the army of the Potomac, and who was a lieutenant in the Thirteenth New York regiment. He had seen hard service in camp and field and had never asked for a furlough during that period.

Didn't Wait for Furlough.

At this time, as his colonel was ordered to Washington on duty for a few weeks, he sent in a petition to the war department for a furlough, signed by all the superior officers of his regiment and brigade. Not doubting the granting of the furlough, nor waiting for its arrival, feeling sure of its coming and being forwarded, he went with his colonel to Washington. Unfortunately the day before he had received the announcement that the application had been rejected, and that an order was then at the department for his arrest for "absence without leave." I stated these facts in full to Mr. Lincoln, and said to him, "This young man is a true soldier, and was one of the first to respond to the call for troops.

"He has no desire or disposition to avoid or shirk his duty, and is intending to return and give himself up as soon as his colonel's business is completed. It occurred to me that you would be kind enough to interpose your hand between him and the consequences of his rashness in leaving the camp before the arrival of his furlough." He pleasantly smiled and said, "I have so much to think of now, I shall forget all about this. You write it all out to me, giving me his name and regiment, and bring it to me tomorrow." Feeling sure of my cause, I was delighted, and thought of the pleasant surprise I had in store for my friend.

Mr. Lincoln bade us all a pleasant "good night" and departed, leaving us to talk over the curious circumstances of his coming and of its results.

It was at this seance that Mrs. Belle Miller gave an example of her power as a "moving medium," and highly amused and interested us by causing the piano to "waltz around the room," as was facetiously remarked in several recent newspaper articles. The true statement is as follows: Mrs. Miller played upon the piano (a three cornered grand), and under her influence it "rose and fell," keeping time to her touch in a perfectly regular manner. Mr. Laurie suggested that, as an added "test" of the invisible power that moved the piano, Mrs. Miller (his daughter) should place her hand on the instrument, standing at arm's length from it, to show that she was in nowise connected with its movement other than as agent. Mr. Lincoln then placed his hand underneath the piano, at the end nearest Mrs. Miller, who placed her left hand upon his to demonstrate that neither strength nor pressure was used. In this position the piano rose and fell a number of times at her bidding. At Mr. Laurie's desire the president changed his position to another side, meeting with the same result.

Sitting on Piano.

The president, with a quaint smile, said, "I think we can hold down that instrument." Whereupon he climbed upon it, sitting with his legs dangling over the side, as also did Mr. Somes, S. P. Kase, and a soldier in the uniform of a major (who if living, will recall the strange scene) from the Army of the Potomac. The piano, notwithstanding this enormous added weight, continued to rise and fall until the sitters were glad "to vacate the premises." We were convinced that there were no mechanical contrivances to produce the strange result, and Mr. Lincoln expressed himself perfectly satisfied that the motion was caused by some "invisible power"; and when Mr. Somes remarked, "When I have related to my acquaintances, Mr. President, that which I have experienced tonight, they will say, with a knowing look and wise demeanor, 'You were psychologized, and as a matter of fact (versus fancy) you DID NOT SEE what you in reality DID SEE.'" Mr. Lincoln quietly replied, "You should bring such person here, and when the piano seems to rise, have him slip his foot under the leg and be CONVINCED (doubtless) by the weight of EVIDENCE."

When the laughter caused by this rally had subsided the president wearily sank into an armchair, "the old tired, anxious look returning to his face."

This never to be forgotten incident occurred on the fifth of February, 1863.

I believe that Mr. Lincoln was satisfied and convinced that the communications he received through me were wholly independent of my volition, and in every way superior to any manifestation that could have been given by me as a PHYSICAL being. THIS HE AFFIRMED IN MY PRESENCE AND IN MY HEARING to answer to a question by Mr. Somes as to what he thought of the source of what he had experienced and heard from time to time in the form of spiritualistic manifestations. He replied, "I am not prepared to affirm or deny the spiritual origin or the intelligence claimed by this girl. She certainly could have no knowledge of the fact communicated to me, nor of what was transpiring in my cabinet meeting prior to my joining this circle, nor of affairs at the front (the army), nor regarding transpiring events WHICH ARE KNOWN TO ME ONLY, AND WHICH I HAVE NOT IMPARTED TO ANY ONE, AND WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC."

As he spoke his face was intensely earnest and he laid one hand in the other impressively (as was his custom). He likewise comprehended that I was ignorant of the facts surrounding the information of which I was the agent.

The next day was Sunday and Mr. Lincoln had evidently forgotten that fact when he bade me bring him my request in writing. I therefore used a part of the day to write out a plain statement of the case. I considered it almost a state document, addressed it "To the President of the United States," and thoughtlessly, or rather with great deliberation, believing it necessary, signed my full baptismal name to the paper. Since I had responded to a name I had been called "Nettie," by old and young, and had almost forgotten that my proper name was "Henrietta."

Sunday morning's issue of John W. Forney's Gazette bore in startling headlines: "The President Is About to Visit the Army of the Potomac." Then followed a statement of what gunboat was in preparation to take him and his family to Fortress Monroe, and other matters showing literal obedience to the directions given the night previous. These papers I learned were scattered by the thousand throughout the army, as quickly as they could be conveyed there.

Monday morning, with my paper in hand, I visited the White house. Going up to the waiting room I sent it in by "Edward," and anxiously awaited the result. Twenty minutes or more must have passed when "Edward" came out and said: "The president desires that you will call tomorrow." I was thunderstruck, not knowing what this might indicate. I knew that without the consent and knowledge of my friend I had furnished the full facts of his whereabouts and his acts to headquarters; and knew not how my action might be considered by him and his colonel. Startled and full of doubt, I walked to the broad stairway, and when half way down met the major (whose name I have forgotten, but who was with the president on the occasion of the sitting the Saturday previous), who instantly recognized me and raised his cap and bowed pleasantly. I left the White house, going to the postoffice department for my mail, then returned to Georgetown to find the major awaiting me.

He Did Not Forget.

He came to me as I entered and said, "Mr. Lincoln sent me to you with this note. He says he thinks it will answer every purpose. He told me to tell you he had left it without date, as you could not give him the precise date of your friend leaving the camp, and, being without date, it therefore covers all the back time. He would have given it to you in person, but he did not recognize the name attached to the foot of the paper containing the statement. When I went into the room," he said, "after meeting you on the stairs, the president took up the paper and said, in a perplexed way, 'This lady states that I requested her to write this out. I do not remember the name or the circumstance, and yet there is something familiar about it.' I stepped up to Mr. Lincoln, and, glancing at the name, replied: 'It is that little medium we saw in Georgetown.' 'O, yes,' he exclaimed, 'I fully remember now. Go out and bring her in.' I hurried out," added the major; "but you having left, I failed to find you. He then said, 'This matter must be attended to at once,' and writing on this card, as you see, he inclosed it in an envelope and bade me bring it to you." I opened it and read the following: "Leave of absence is granted to A. L. Gurney, Comp. G, Thirtieth N. Y. Reg., and he will report to his company Feb. 17, 1863"—thus giving him ten days' additional leave (the time was afterwards extended to the 27th, merely changing the date). I have no doubt this gentleman treasures to this day that souvenir of our martyred president. I thanked the major for his kindness, and bade him extend to Mr. Lincoln my grateful acknowledgment, impulsively remarking, "How good of him to do this thing!" To which the major replied, "It is a common thing for him to do these acts. He is all the time doing something of the kind."

The president's visit to the "front" and the ovation tendered him showed the spontaneous uprising of a people to receive a loved ruler. How he was literally borne on the shoulders of the soldiers through the camp, and how everywhere the "boys in blue" rallied around him, all grievances being forgotten, and his leaving a united and devoted army behind him when he returned to Washington—these are matters of history too well known to bear repeating.

Not Without Struggle.

He did not achieve the victory of carrying out to the letter, without a struggle, the directions of our unseen friends. Mrs. Laurie and myself visited the White house in the interval of the preparation and the time of departure; and Mrs. Lincoln informed us that they were being besieged by applications from members of both houses, and cabinet officers and their wives, for permission to go with them. And she remarked, in her quick, impulsive way: "But I tell Mr. Lincoln if we are going to take the spirit's advice, let us do it fully, and then there can be no responsibility resting with us if it fail." I was controlled at this time, and "they" impressed upon her the importance of carrying this out as strictly as was consistent, as it was all important that the "man," not the "president," should visit the army. Disunionists had labored to fill the minds of the soldiers with the idea that the government at Washington was rioting in the good things of life and surrounded by pomp and display, while the soldiers were left to die in the swamps, neglected and forgotten; it was, therefore, necessary "that they should see the man in all his simplicity," and that he should carry with him a personal influence which would be left throughout the camp. The wisdom of his action is told in the result.

I think it was in May of that year that the

(Continued on page 10.)

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