

## EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM.

No. II.

By H. T. HUMPHREYS.

*(Continued from page 557.)*

In the latter part of 1866, Mr. S. C. Hall, who took the initiative in the establishment of the Spiritual Athenæum in Sloane street, invited me with others to join the council, and one evening when he, Mr. Jencken, Mr. Perdicaris, Mr. D. D. Home, and myself had met at the rooms, which had been taken in Sloane-street, and were engaged in the discussion of some of the preliminary arrangements, I noticed from the expression of Mr. Home's face that he was looking at something which we could not see. He then told Mr. Hall that a spirit was present, a daughter of Robert Chambers, and gave her name, saying that she wished him to write to her father with reference to her husband. Mr. S. C. Hall said that he did not believe R. Chambers had a daughter so named, and Mr. Home replied, "You may be sure he has," on which there came three raps about us.

Several weeks later I was present with Mr. Home and some others at Mr. S. C. Hall's, Essex-villas, when this spirit again came, and urged Mr. Hall to write to her father, which he had not done, though he had ascertained that the name was correct. She brought with her another spirit, said to be that of a younger sister, who gave as a message simply the two words "Pa, love." Mr. Hall thereupon wrote to Robert Chambers, who perfectly comprehended the message sent, and further stated that the two words "Pa, love," were the last spoken in the world to himself by his little child.

On another occasion Mr. S. C. Hall and myself were sitting with Mr. D. D. Home, at the Spiritual Athenæum, when a chair was carried, without any of us touching it, up to my side. Mr. Home said that he saw my sister carrying it.

On Friday, December 14th, 1866, I went, pursuant to invitation, to the house of Mr. A. R. Wallace, in St. Mark's-crescent, Regent's Park, to spend the evening, and met Miss Nicholl, better known since as Mrs. Guppy. I was on the pavement trying to find out the number of the house, the pavement being separated from the houses by small gardens, some five yards in length, when suddenly Mr. Wallace opened the door. I said, "Did you know I was here?" "No," he replied, "but we heard a knock." I had heard no knock, but it had been heard inside and had led to the door being opened, saving me some doubtful searching for the house. I went in and we sat down to tea, after which we went into the back-room, where a round table near the window was cleared of everything on it. The cloth was then taken off, leaving the bare polished surface of the table exposed. The room was lighted by a single window over which a white blind was drawn, so that, though the gas was turned down to a faint blue point, it was impossible to sit in anything like total darkness as the light of a bright moonlight night made its way through the white blind, sufficiently to enable us all to see each other's outlines at least.

We were eight in number: Mr. and Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Sims, Miss Nicholl, Dr. Wilenshurst, Mr. and Mrs. J. Marshman and myself. Mr. Wallace sat with his back to the window; I sat opposite to him, and could see in the polished surface of the table a patch of white light reflected from the window opposite. We had all entered the room through folding doors which were behind my seat. Miss Nicholl sat about a yard from me, to my left hand, with her back to the fireplace. We sat without touching each other or the table, being in what must be described as an imperfect circle round it.

After we had sat quietly and motionless for a few seconds, I noticed that the bright patch on the table was

obscured by something dark, and gazing intently at this I saw the darkness spreading, though there was not the faintest sound audible. I put out my hand and took hold, to my surprise, of a sprig of solanum with its berry. I said, "Why! there are flowers on the table." I then withdrew my hand and observed the obscuration of the reflected light increasing until a message came to give light, when the gas was turned up, and we found on the table thirty-seven stalks of flowers, all of which were fresh, cold and damp, with a frosty dew, as if they had that moment been brought out of the night air. This cold dew passed off in a few minutes. Mr. Wallace, on going into his study, which was directly over the room we sat in, found that a few additional sprigs of flowers had been placed on his writing-table.

In December, 1866, a little son of mine, then eleven months old, was attacked with scarlet fever, and left me for the spirit land. My wife could not remain in the apartments which we then occupied, and we took a small house at Finchley. On the 3rd February, 1867, as my wife and I were sitting, my sister's spirit announced "Joseph is here," and then the message was given from him—

"Higher than the heavens are the ways of God. He took me from my dear father and mother that I might prepare their mansion for them in Heaven when they have finished their time on earth—I will fill it with flowers."

His mother said a few words to him, rather charging him with having shewn, while on earth, more affection for me than for her, and the reply was:—

"Mamma, I gave you my hand to kiss just before I went away, and I loved you always and papa too."

The first statement was accurate, for the child had put out his little hand to his mother just at the moment of parting.

As relating to this I here narrate a message in 1875. In March of that year it was found necessary to sacrifice the life of a baby to save that of Mrs. Humphreys, and after she had somewhat recovered, she and I sat on the 18th April, and we had the following message:—

"Ismail sends Joseph to tell you he is happy."

I said, "Who is Ismail?" and received for reply that he was the baby above-mentioned.

I said, "Who gave him the name of Ismail?"

The reply was, "God, innocent Son of the Creator; He stands by the throne of God."

I said, "Joseph, you said you would fill our house with flowers. Will Ismail help you?"

The reply was, "Yes. We will fill your house with flowers and light from the throne of God. It will be the most beautiful house in Heaven when you come into it."

Now whencesoever the above messages, said to be from my little Joseph, really came, one thing is perfectly clear to me, namely, that neither Mrs. Humphreys nor myself had any such ideas in our minds before the messages were spelled out.

In the latter part of 1867 I received a brief note from my old friend, Mr. S. C. Hall, informing me that Mr. D. D. Home was at his house and wished to see me. I went out to Essex-villas, where he then resided, in the evening, and met Mr. Home and three or four others. The other visitors left early, and Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall were standing in a recess leading from the drawing-room into a conservatory, when Mrs. Hall remarked that it was a long time since they had had a séance. Mr. Home said, "I can't sit now; I am not well, and have been talking about matters that excite me." He then sat down to a piano, but before he could open it a shower of raps were heard, as if from the inside of the instrument. "Do you hear the raps?" he said. "Come, we will have a sitting." Mr. S. C. Hall, Mr. Home, Mrs. S. C. Hall, and myself then sat round a small octagon table, the top of which was covered with cloth. It was what is known as a kettle-drum table,

standing upon three turned legs, which were screwed into the top. Presently raps were heard on the table, which was tilted and raised straight up into the air, then rolled into the lap of Mrs. S. C. Hall, and next into my lap. It was then placed on my foot, on which it was balanced and swayed to and fro. Next it was turned upside down, the top being at about the height of our heads, and the legs in the air above. Raps were then heard, and a message was given that *this* was the then condition of Spiritualism, but that it would soon come—and at the word the table was placed on its legs in our midst. “Right,” said Mrs. S. C. Hall, her guess being answered by numerous affirmative raps.

Mr. Home then rose and walked to and fro, and presently began to grow taller, for though we had no lights, there was enough in the room from outside to see the outline of his figure. He then shrank to some six or eight inches below his natural height. He said he felt as if his hair was being pulled, but without causing pain; on the contrary, he described the sensation as pleasant. He came over to me, and at his request, I placed my feet on his up to the instep, in order to be satisfied that he did not stand on his toes. At the same time I placed my right hand on his body horizontally, partly on his waistcoat and partly on his trousers. The upper part of his body then rose to such an extent that my hand in a few moments was on his shirt, while the vest and trousers were an inch or so above and below it respectively. After remaining for a few moments at the height of about seven feet, Mr. Home shrank to his usual stature, and gradually down to only some five feet. This was three or four times repeated, and we were given to understand that it would have a curative effect.

Mr. Home then resumed his seat at the table, and raps were heard in different parts of the room. The table was again lifted, and placed inverted on the head of Mr. Home, he remaining perfectly motionless. The words were then spelled out by raps on the table, “It is hard to bear, but it is a crown.” The table was then replaced in our midst, and in a few seconds more was lifted up and thrown on the floor about six feet behind Mr. S. C. Hall. We remained in our seats, and presently, as I held my hands down between my knees, I felt something touch my knuckles. I opened my right hand and took hold of the leg of the octagon table, which it now appeared had been unscrewed and brought to me. Sentences were then spelled out, “Let it represent the weapon of truth,” “Truth is strength,” “We will give you strength where you most need it.” Presently I felt that something was dragging the leg of the table away from me. For a time I resisted, but at length it was dragged from me with a considerable amount of force, and was stuck down Mr. Home’s back between his coat and his spine. While in this position some messages were given by its tipping against my hand, which I held up to it. It was then worked about Mr. Home’s back, and finally slid down it beneath his coat. I had my hand on the end of it as it was sliding down, but though I left my seat at once and went round to find out whither it was going, I failed to feel it underneath Mr. Home’s coat. I then returned to my seat opposite to him, to find that the leg of the table was on it, resting on the seat and the middle bar of the back of the chair. While it had been in the back of his coat, Mr. Home said he felt as if under the influence of shocks from an electric battery. The octagon table was then placed again upright in our midst, and maintained in this position, though on only two of its three legs. Messages were again given, and at length I asked what was to be done with the leg of the table, which remained where I had found it on my chair, I sitting beside it.

As I spoke the leg of the table rose from its position upright in the air, was bent towards me, and gently touched me on the eye; next bent towards and touched Mrs. Hall, saluted Mr. S. C. Hall in the same manner, and then darted rapidly across the table and down to the floor. We then heard the sound of screwing it into its place, and I put my

hand under the table and touched it. This stopped the work, which was, on my taking away my hand, resumed and completed, after which the table was jumped upon the floor on this leg, as if to shew that it had been firmly replaced; raps were heard all over the room, and sounds like the laugh of a child resounded in the air.

A large and heavy sofa, which stood against the wall some seven feet from us, was drawn up quietly till it touched the chair on which Mr. S. C. Hall sat, and at the same time two large photograph albums were removed from a shelf behind the sofa. We remained seated during the whole time.

Soon after this, a luminous coronet of star-like points appeared on the head of Mr. S. C. Hall and remained for some time. A somewhat luminous cloud-like appearance was seen close to him, and he said he felt as if it were pressing against him. It assumed the outline of a face with two star-like eyes.

Mr. Home then rose from his chair, and appeared to be walked to and fro, complaining of pressure on his head. I then noticed that he appeared to be wearing a crown shaped like a Greek patera, the base of which fitted like a skull cap. As he passed where the admission of more light allowed me to see this more clearly, I observed tendrils and leaves as of a vine hanging over the edges of the patera. Mr. Home appeared much agitated, and repeated, “I am crowned,” “I am free from pain,” “I am receiving a new mission,” “The pain in my head is gone.” He continued to walk up and down the room in great excitement, till the crown was removed from his head, while sweet-toned notes appeared to proceed from it. It approached us where we sat and moved off gently up to the corner of the room, just above the door, where the light from it was visible for some minutes.

Mr. Home, who had been previously very ill, was restored to perfect health on that evening. This was the second occasion on which Mr. Home was elongated.

*(To be continued.)*