

ON THE BORDER LINE.

A TRUE STORY CONNECTED WITH MY FATHER'S
DEATH ON FEBRUARY 14TH, 1866.

BRONSON MURRAY.

An early Greek historian assigned as a reason for writing his history, that "The doings both great and wonderful not only of inhabitants of his country but also of those beyond its border should not become extinct and unknown among men." Quite as worthy of record and remembrance to my mind are the occurrences that take place on the border line between earth life and the Country beyond, and this is my reason for recording what follows.

In 1908 there was printed in London a booklet entitled "The Auto-biography of the late Colonel James B. Murray of New York (1789-1866)". Attached to this was printed a note, entitled "A Note added by Mr. Bronson Murray." The note purported to give all that I had written connected with the remarkable events surrounding the death-bed where my father's spirit took passage for the land beyond this earthly planet.

Inasmuch as what I did write on that subject had been, in part, added to and in part omitted, I have thought it proper, in this little leaflet to give in full a just and true account of what did occur on that, to me, memorial event.

The cause of my father's death was a cold, taken while attending the burial of James Boorman, an old New York merchant—a long time friend. His illness was of about ten days duration. During

his last illness, his attending physician, Dr. George T. Elliot, made him daily visits and Dr. Barron, his next-door neighbor spent the nights with him.

Three days before his death, he asked that the Christian Sacrament should be administered to him by his Pastor, Rev. R. R. Booth, of the Mercer Street Presbyterian Church, now at Tenth Street and University Place, saying he had never united with any church, though he had sometimes felt it his duty to do so.

On the day before his death, as Dr. Elliot entered his room, the patient looking him steadily in the face, said: "Elliot I am in the hands of the GREAT Physician." From about this time, his voice so far failed him that until the moment of his decease, he was unable to speak above a very feeble whisper.

The ending of his life on earth was accompanied by a remarkable circumstance.

It was the morning of February 14th, 1866.

He had just uttered in a low whisper the word "All." I asked him "Do you mean you want all your children?" He bowed his head in the affirmative. There were five besides myself in the house; one, John, being absent. When the six of us were arranged around the sides of his bed, a deep silence prevailed; he looked first at the one standing on his left and then successively pausing at each till

his eyes rested on the one at his right. In his feeble voice he then said, "Let us pray: Our Father, —'er'—'er'—'er'—'er'" (Then in a deep tone, almost unearthly and sepulchral, as one might say, with a voice that filled the room with vibration, there came from his lips these words): "I am transmuted; mortals, mortals, open the windows, open the windows and let me go."

Around his bedside still stood the six children, Maria, Caroline, Agnes, Anna, Washington and myself. Deep silence still pervaded the room, I slipped to the window and raised the sash. His spirit passed from its mortal frame and all present felt that he was at peace. So, on the 14th day of February, 1866, died James B. Murray, my father, at his residence, 13 Washington Place, New York. His remains were taken to Greenfield Hill, Connecticut, where they were buried by the side of his late wife in the family vault of her father.

I related this singular occurrence to my father's spiritual adviser on the occasion of his next visit; and thereafter for more than forty years in private and in public I have repeated these remarkable utterances, never doubting that they had been heard by all present at his death, as they had been by myself. I do not think I ever referred to them in the presence of my brothers or sisters. But now I

am told that one of these sisters, still living, declares she did not hear them and is very sure they were not uttered. The only other witness still living is confined to her room by old age and is reported as saying; "I remember something being said about opening the window."

Here is presented to my mind a curious question—was I really the only hearer? If so, why? Were they for any cause audible to me, while inaudible to others? Were some of those present so absorbed in the circumstance that their father was dying, that the mind failed to take in the words which their ears received? Again, if the words were uttered—and I solemnly assert they were—did they proceed from the mind and mouth of my father, or were they uttered by some unseen messenger sent to attend the arrival of a newcomer into that abiding place to which we are all destined?

It seems singular to me that a father, in speaking to his children, should address them as "mortals" and not as "my children." It is this expression—its peculiarity—which suggests to me, and may suggest to others the possibility of the presence of an invisible speaker, or one able to use the vocal powers of a dying mortal.

BRONSON MURRAY.

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NOTE.—This leaflet is intended to be of such size that it can be fastened before or after the first page of the London booklet, should any of the possessors of that book desire to so attach it.