

A Unique Séance.

A séance, which must surely be unique in the history of Spiritualism, took place, in 1871, in the home of Dr George Taylor and his wife, Sarah.

They had lost two children in an epidemic; Franklin aged two and their only daughter, Leila, less than a year old.

Sarah's brother, Olin, was also on the Other Side having been killed in an accident.

Over the years, through Kate Fox, they received evidence of their children's survival including portraits painted by spirit hands and apported into the séance room.

Benjamin Franklin, again, claimed to be the motivating force behind the phenomena.

He had promised that one day they would hear Leila playing the harp which she had learnt in the Spirit World.

One afternoon, almost as soon as they were seated, the raps spelled out, "We are all here. We have devoted all our power to this subject. B.F."

As the last word was spelt a new sound echoed in the room – the resonance of a harp string firmly touched.

Sarah, who had kept a meticulous record of all her séances takes up the story:

"...Then we kept perfectly still, held both of Kate's hands and listened in rapture for about three-quarters of an hour to music performed in our room by an angel, on a harp brought from Paradise, from Heaven.

The notes were clear, full, strong and penetrating. The music sweeter than anything I had ever heard.

Ten pieces were played and one was long, and none were familiar.

"At an interval between the tunes, Dr Franklin said, 'I am proud of my pupil'.

"Then she struck the strings again, and again with full power played and played.

...Then the harp was brought so near to me that when the first note was touched it hurt my head, and again she played stronger, sweeter, purer than before...

The music from the harp was so loud and clear that the people in the next house

must have heard it.

The ladies on the floor above us went to their windows, opened them and listened, but did not know what the instrument was.”

As the music faded away the raps spelled out the closing message:

“We have all been here.

“Our efforts have been great to play upon the harp so that you could hear its heavenly strains.

“Leila is guarded by Dr Franklin, and I assure you that we are more than pleased, for we are awed by our own power in thus being permitted to come.

“Few on earth have ever been so blessed, and oh, few there are who will ever be permitted to listen to these strains.

“Be thankful and happy. We are happy!

“Leila is perfectly wild with delight, and so is Frankie, and we feel awed with gratitude, Olin.”