been drawn before the black cabinet, big with mystery.

The woman who had lost her husband was expectant. Ah! if he would only come. So many times when he was with her daily had he spoken to her with a sad, sweet smile, as if he even then realized what a zest the pleasure would have for her if she should have communion with him when this corporal dross should have been purged away. The dear good man! How kind he always was! How softly he always spoke! Oh! would he come to-night?

Presently in the midst of the screechy rendering of "Sweet By and By," came a loud tap from the cabinet:

"Iliard to materialize to-night," came in deep gruff tones from behind the black drapery.

"Is that you, Billy?" asked landlady in dulcet tones.

"Yes 'm," was returned.

"What do you want to-night, Billy?" asked the hostess, in the same sweet accents. A long pause ensued. At last,—

"I could n't come right away; I was only partly materialized." Billy certainly had an undeniable Irish brogue. His voice was very deep, too. Presently, when he got more thoroughly materialized he came out into the room and condescended to lift a chair or two at arm's length at the special request of an inquisitive young man of the circle. Violet came out too, and though it was the dead of winter and a parlor carpet might have been thought the last place where violets would grow at any time, she succeeded in gathering quite a handful,—at least those who expected to do so could see them. Mrs. Vane favored the circle for a few minutes with her gracious presence, and conversed in lisping tones with some who had been her companions before she had taken her flight into the abode of the ethereal; at last she tore herself away, after bestowing a lingering parting kiss on him who had once been her husband—he had another wife now, who henpecked him, and he fled in despair to the spiritual companionship of his former spouse.

Others of the choice departed arrived from time to time; but it was all by-play to Maria. The man who had just conversed with his wife had been telling her of the sweets of such communion, and she was growing distracted with nervous desire and yet fear, to see her husband in his spirituality. At last she mustered up courage to ask Billy, while he was in one of his good-natured moods, if her husband would not come that night.

"Yes 'm," returned Billy; "he's here already; but he can't materialize; it's too light or suthin."

"Too light, Billy?" protested the hostess.

"Dr Brown, would you be so kind as to shut that lantern a little more? Thanks. Shall we sing 'By the River,' Billy?" As no answer came, she nudged the colored accompanist, and the music began again.

A loud rap interrupted the singing.

"Do you want somebody?" asked the hostess, kindly.

Yes; somebody was wanted. So, beginning at the right of the front line, each one would have asked, "Is it I?" but the first man happened to say, "Is it me?" and the rest of the circle was too well-bred to correct him, and the question went the length of the line and half the row behind, till it came Maria's turn. With trembling voice she uttered the words, "Is it me?" Two loud distinct raps followed. She wiped her mouth in preparation.

A shadowy figure glided hesitatingly from the medium's cabinet. With a flutter Maria bounded forward to meet it.

"Is it you, Henry? Don't you recognize your Maria?" she whispered.

"Yes — Maria — yes — yes — be — a good girl — Maria — yes — yes — be a good — girl —yes." The spirit's tones were soft and sweet, and died away into silence as his form disappeared into the cabinet. Then he ventured back again, and Maria kissed him; finally he departed.

Maria was overwhelmed. The sweet rush of joy in beholding him again had taken her breath away. "And to think" she said to the lady who sat next her, "to think he recognized me immediately!" Her cup of joy was full to overflow-