

**STEPHEN TRACHT'S  
LIFE AND  
EXPERIENCE**

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Stephen Tracht's Life and Experience by Stephen Tracht

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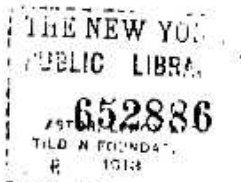
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We all have got a debt to pay,  
And that before the judgment day,  
If we would with the Saviour stay,  
Within the home that's far away.

'T would matter not when we began,  
We surely ~~may~~ do all we can,  
And thereby each and every man  
Must run the race that others ran.

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## STEPHEN TRACHT'S LIFE AND EXPERIENCE

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A short history of life I wrote for this free land;  
For the free-thinking ones my work to understand.  
If you wish to advance in this here line of thought,  
You have a chance to read and see what can be wrought.  
It's but my telling it, the reader thus might say.  
If you invest and learn, you'll find it just that way.  
My friend, do remember, when these few lines you read,  
For love, not boast, I wrote, and hungry souls to feed.  
Many do condemn me throughout the wide, wide world,  
Yet I honestly see the things that I unfurled.  
Into life I first crept, and then began to walk,  
And at but five years old with Spirits I could talk.  
My brother, who taught me, did surely mean it well;  
A medium from his youth, I often heard him tell.  
Then as I grew older, and I did prophesy,  
To beat each other then, both of us hard did try.  
To prophesy the rain, how long a storm would last,  
Or how near a shower at our farm would go past.  
Our pleasure was to know what would be our dinner,  
And we would prophesy, see who would be winner,  
We found it was not well, which we did plainly see,  
And try to tell before ma knew what it would be  
Oftentimes we missed if trying to tell too soon;  
Ma either did not know, or changed her mind till noon;  
When once discovered it, one oftentimes would say:  
"Can you yet prophesy, so early in the day?"  
And then the answer, "No" was a common reply,  
For we could easily tell after we once did try.  
And in the harvest-time we oft did wish to know  
How many shocks of wheat the storm would over blow.

We oft would prophesy how long corn-shocks would stand,  
And try to upset them by force of our command;  
I do remember well, as though it was this day,  
My brother used to set, about ten feet away,  
A bundle of fodder, and then would give command,  
And over it would fall when he would wave his hand;  
It also would rattle when he would tell it to,  
And then again hush up when he said it was through.  
He would take a fork twig and hold it in his hand,  
And down then it would draw, by force of his command;  
Then the twig would twist down, forward, back and around  
Until it did tear off and fell down to the ground.  
Oftimes a walk we took, through house, 'cross woods or  
ground,

To see if the next one could trace his footsteps round.  
Articles oft we took, and go and them would hide,  
To see how long it took until he prophesied.  
Thus we continued on, and wisdom was our fate,  
Until I grew in years and reached the age of eight,  
By that time I knew well I could with Spirits talk  
When I sat on the ground, or else when I did walk.  
I knew the difference in Spirits when they came,  
Some of them would tell lies—it really was a shame.  
I could pick out the class; conditions gave the cause  
And seldom I would miss and did not stop to pause.  
I did not believe all; I had all of them classed,  
I knew which told the truth as thus by me they passed,  
Thus was my knowledge then, and I feel safe to say  
I could speak with Spirits at any time of day.  
At ten my brother said that I did exceed him,  
But did not think that I was full up to the brim,  
Thus still advanced in strength and knowledge just the same,  
Expect some day to reach some of the great men's fame.  
At length my parents sent me to Confirming School,  
The church to which they held had made of that a rule.  
And during all this time, while I to Church would walk,  
A number of Spirits would always to me talk;  
We would discuss lessons which I did have that day,  
And I would learn great things of what I heard them say.  
One particular place I do remember well,  
I often would stop there and hear the Spirits tell