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“WHATEVER WE CAN BELIEVE, WE WILL BELIEVE:
WHATEVER WE CAN EXPLAIN, WE WILL EXPLAIN.”

SPIRIT RAPPING

IN

ENGLAND AND AMERICA:

ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY.

INCLUDING
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SPHERES, THE SPIRITS AND THEIR PURSUITS,
AND THE VARIOUS CLASSES OF MEDIUMS;
ALSO,
RECORDS OF NUMEROUS INTERVIEWS WITH SPIRITS AND MEDIUMS,
WITH FULL PARTICULARS AND EXPLANATIONS OF
THE RAPPING PROCESS.



A. J. DAVIS, THE POUGHKEEPSIE SEER.

LONDON:
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“ALAS, methinks we have fallen on an evil age! If these phenomena have not humbug at the bottom, so much the worse for us. What can they indicate, in a spiritual way, except that the soul of man is descending to a lower point than it has ever reached while incarnate? We are pursuing a downward course in the eternal march, and thus bring ourselves into the same range with beings whom death—in requital of their gross and evil lives—has degraded below humanity! To hold intercourse with spirits of this order, we must stoop and grovel in some element more vile than earthly dust. These goblins, if they exist at all, are but the shadows of past mortality, outcasts, mere refuse stuff, adjudged unworthy of the eternal world, and, on the most favourable supposition, dwindling gradually into nothingness. The less we have to say to them the better, lest we share their fate.”—*Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance*, vol. ii. p. 181.



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“Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door—
‘Tis some visitor,’ I muttered, ‘tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.’

* * * * *
Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
‘Sir,’ said I, ‘or madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you’—here I opened wide the door;
Darkness there, and nothing more.

* * * * *
“‘Tis the wind, and nothing more.”

The Raven, by EDGAR E. POE.

LATE on a certain evening in a certain month of the years 1846 or 1847, a Mr. Michael Weekman, who lived in the little village of Hydesville, township of Arcadia, Wayne county, New York, heard a rapping noise at his door. On opening it, not a soul was to be seen.

Just, however, as he had returned to his seat in the chimney corner, the rappings were repeated more briskly than before, and Mr. Weekman again sallied forth, to be again made a fool of. Determined to trap this disturber of his peace, Weekman silently lay in wait, with his hand upon the lock ready to make a spring at the slightest signal. As he anticipated, the raps were soon repeated, and Weekman darted out hoping to seize the intruder, instead of which, he only managed to clutch hold of his own door-post, against which he somewhat slightly damaged his own nose. Weekman was not gratified, like Poe, with the sight of a raven even.

Had a similar circumstance happened to ninety-nine other men, not one among them would have thought anything more of it. Weekman, however, was of a different turn of mind, and expressed himself as terribly frightened. As might have been expected, after this admission, more mysterious noises were heard at intervals; but, like eels to their skinning, Weekman and his family at length got used to them, and when these noises were followed by sundry fantastic tricks, such as the moving of tables, the displacing of chairs, and the breaking of crockery by some invisible power, very little regard was paid to such manifestations. It was from this germ that a most gigantic imposture has sprung, which already numbers its believers in the new world by hundreds of thousands, and is rapidly securing numerous converts among the simpletons of the old.

In process of time, this mysterious house of Weekman came to be occupied by a Mr. J. D. Fox, who had two daughters, cunning girls, just verging upon womanhood. Their names were Catherine and Margaretta. To them belongs the glory of making the knockings available. Weekman, in his weakness, never dreamed

of turning them to personal or pecuniary advantage; but the Foxes discovered the method of rendering alike intelligible and profitable the knockings which had hitherto been "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." By raps, made of course only in their presence, questions were answered on subjects of which the girls were ignorant. These answers were frequently incorrect, but then they were sometimes right, which of course was deemed conclusive evidence that a communication with the "interior," or spirit world had been opened up.

According to the Fox statement, it was late one night in the month of March, 1848, that the rappings were first heard by them in the house formerly occupied by Mr. Weekman. The noises appeared to proceed from one of the bed-rooms, and sounded as though some one was rapping and tapping on the floor, and scuffling and shuffling the chairs about. The family were in bed,—they all bundled out to endeavour to discover the cause of the mysterious sounds, but they had to turn in again, without their curiosity being gratified. The rappings, however, continued throughout that and the following night; and the matter, we suppose, being now ripe for publicity, the neighbours were called in, and Mrs. Fox made the annexed statement:—

"On Friday night, we concluded to go to bed early, and not let it disturb us; if it came, we thought we would not mind it, but try and get a good night's rest. My husband was here on all these occasions, heard the noise, and helped to search. It was very early when we went to bed on this night, hardly dark. We went to bed so early, because we had been deprived of so much of our rest that I was almost sick.

"My husband had not gone to bed when we first heard the noise on this evening. I had just lain down. It commenced as usual. I knew it from all other noises

I had ever heard in the house. The girls, who slept in the other bed in the room, heard the noise, and tried to make a similar noise by snapping their fingers. The youngest girl is about twelve years old. As fast as she made the noise with her hands or fingers, the sound was followed up in the room. It did not sound different at that time, only that it made the same number of sounds that the girl did. When she stopped, the sound itself stopped for a short time.

“The other girl, who is in her fifteenth year, then spoke in sport, and said, ‘Now do just as I do. Count one, two, three, four,’ etc., striking one hand in the other at the same time. The blows which she made were repeated as before. It appeared to answer her by repeating every blow that she made. She only did so once. She then began to be startled; and then I spoke, and said to the noise, ‘Count ten,’ and then it made ten strokes or noises. Then I asked the ages of my different children successively, and it gave a number of raps, corresponding to the ages of my children.

“I then asked if it was a human being that was making the noise? and if it was, to manifest it by the same noise. There was no noise. I then asked if it was a spirit? if it was, to manifest it by two sounds. I heard two sounds as soon as the words were spoken. I then asked if an injured spirit, to give me the sound. I then heard the rapping distinctly. I inquired if it was injured in this house? it rapped. Was the injurer living? same answer. I further understood that its remains were buried under the dwelling; that it was thirty-one years of age, a male, and had left a family of five children, all living. Was the wife living? silence. Dead? rapping. How long since? two raps.”

At this point, with the view of improving the mode of communication between the “interior,” and this mun-

dane sphere, a person present suggested that the spirit should be interrogated by means of the alphabet. It was thereupon asked, whether "if the alphabet were called over, it would rap for the letters composing its name?" It replied with a rap, and the name of "Charles Rayn," was spelled out.

On continuing the inquiry, the spirit was good enough to inform the audience that in its bodily shape it had been the victim of a foul crime,—in other words, that it had been murdered in cold blood, and buried in the coal cellar.

This disclosure, as may be expected, created something like a sensation, and the wisacres of the village set deliberately to work to ascertain the truth of this dreadful revelation. One of them has left us the following particulars of their proceedings:—

"I went over again on Sunday, between one and two o'clock P.M. I went into the cellar with several others, and had them all leave the house over our heads; and then I asked the spirit, if there had been a man buried in that cellar, to manifest it by rapping, or any other noise or sign? The moment I asked the question, there was a sound like the falling of a stick, *about a foot long and half an inch through*, on the floor in the bedroom over our heads. It did not seem to bound at all; there was but one sound. I then told Stephen Smith to go up, and examine the room, and see if he could discover the cause of the noise. He came back, and said he could discover nothing; that there was no one in the room, or in that part of the house. I then asked two more questions, and it rapped in the usual way. We all then went up stairs, and made a thorough search around the rooms, but could find nothing.

"I then got a knife and a fork, and tried to see if I could make the same noise by dropping them, but

I could not. This was all I heard on Sunday. There is only one floor, or partition, between the bed-room and cellar—no place where anything could be secreted to make the noise. When this noise was heard in the bed-room, I could feel a slight tremulous motion or jar.

“There was some digging in the cellar on Saturday night. They dug until they came to water, and then gave it up.

“On Monday night, I heard this noise again, and asked the same questions I did before, and got the same answers. This is the last time I have heard the rapping. I can in no way account for this singular noise, which I and others have heard. It is a mystery to me, which I am wholly unable to solve. I am willing to testify under oath that I did not make the noises or rapping which I and others heard; that I do not know of any person who did or could have made them; that I have spent considerable time since then in order to satisfy myself as to the cause of it, but cannot account for it on any other than supernatural ground. I inhabited the same house about seven years ago, and at that time never heard any noises of the kind in and about the premises.

“I never believed in haunted houses, or heard or saw anything but what I could account for before; but this I cannot account for.

“ (Signed) WM. DUESLER.

“April 28, 1848.”

Duesler must have had a fine ear for sound, to be able to speak so particularly to the dimensions of the stick, both as regarded its length and its diameter. He had, however, very indifferent reasoning faculties, we should imagine, or he would have suspected, when they dug till they came to water without finding anything,

that the whole affair was a hoax. Charles Rayn appears to have been as much a phantom in the flesh as in the spirit—though the date of his apotheosis could not have been very remote, for his children were said to be still alive, as also his murderer.

We are told that “the high character and respectability of the Foxes, did not protect them from certain unpleasant results of these manifestations. Immense excitement was created in the neighbourhood, and considerable prejudice, extending even to threats of violence, existed against them.” Now we cannot, for the life of us, comprehend what was the cause of the *excitement*. Had the previous existence of Charles Rayn been ascertained, and his body found in the cellar, there might have been excitement enough, but nothing of the kind appeared. The *prejudice*—though we should have given the feeling quite a different name—is intelligible without explanation.

The Fox family, it would appear, was peculiarly beloved by the spirits; for two of the ladies—Mrs. Fish, a widowed daughter of Mrs. Fox, and Margaretta—having removed to Rochester, in the state of New York, the rappings followed them thither; and a third, Catherine, who seems to have been the Cassandra of the party, was similarly accompanied to Auburn. In short they were “mediums,” or particularly favoured persons in whose presence only the spirits will deign to make themselves audible. Mediums are now very common. It is calculated that there are at the present moment, something like *thirty thousand* of them practising in various parts of the United States. As soon as the two ladies arrived at Rochester, and the spirit manifestations commenced, a proper amount of sensation was excited, followed by a public meeting, and the appointment of a couple of committees to investigate the matter, and sift it to the bot-

tom. The members of these committees, however, proved incompetent to probe the mystery; and a new investigation, instigated by the spirits themselves, who, in November, 1849, announced that some one had "a duty to perform, and that the matter was to be made public," was set on foot. The following is the report of the committee, which comprised Messrs. A. J. Combs, Daniel Marsh, Nathaniel Clark, A. Judson, and Edwin Jones, among its members:—

"That without the knowledge of the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, the committee selected the hall of the Sons of Temperance for investigation—that the sound on the floor near where the two ladies stood, was heard as distinctly as at other places, and that part of the committee heard that rapping on the wall behind them—that a number of questions were asked, which were answered, not altogether right, nor altogether wrong—that in the afternoon they went to the house of a private citizen, and while there the sounds were heard on the outside (apparently) of the front door, after they had entered, and on the door of a closet. By placing the hand upon the door, there was a sensible jar felt when the rapping was heard. One of the committee placed one of his hands upon the feet of the ladies and the other on the floor, and though the feet were not moved, there was a distinct jar on the floor. On the pavement and on the ground the same sound was heard—a kind of double rap, as a stroke and a rebound, were distinguishable. When the ladies were separated at a distance, no sound was heard; but when a third person was interposed between them, the sounds were heard. The ladies seemed to give every opportunity to the committee to investigate the cause fully, and would submit to a thorough investigation by a committee of ladies, if desired. They all agreed that the sounds were

heard, but they entirely failed to discover any means by which it could be done."

Baffled in their investigation, the members of the committee yielded their places to, as was thought, abler and better men. These gentlemen met at the Rochester House, and were sharp enough to appoint a committee of ladies, who disrobed the young women in a private apartment, and examined their persons and clothing, to make certain that nothing was secreted about them that could produce the mysterious sounds. These ladies, after their examination, gave the suspected mediums the following certificate:—

"When they were standing on pillows, with a handkerchief tied round the bottom of their dresses tight to the ankles, we all heard the rappings on the wall and floor distinctly.

(Signed)

"MRS. STONE.

MRS. J. GATES.

MRS. M. P. LAWRENCE."

Among the good people of Rochester who felt interested in these spirit manifestations was a clergyman of the name of Hammond, and as he seems to have been blessed with more than an average share of credulity, or perhaps we should rather say duplicity (for he eventually expanded into a full-blown medium himself, and at this very moment drives a roaring trade in communications with the spirit world), it will not be amiss to quote his own account of his conversion, particularly as, from his simplicity, or his ready complicity with the imposture, the mediums on one occasion made choice of him out of a party of half-a-dozen gentlemen to be the gratified spectator of a "table" movement.

Mr. Hammond's statement is in the shape of a communication to a friend, and is as follows:—

“In compliance with your solicitation, I will proceed to lay before you a brief statement of what has fallen under my observation, in regard to the ‘mysterious sounds’ and ‘demonstrations,’ purporting to be made by intelligent spirits, who once inhabited an earthly tabernacle. It is quite probable that many others may have had more convincing and satisfactory evidences of the real presence of their departed, or, as I should say, deceased friends, than myself; yet I am free to acknowledge my inability to account for these marvellous manifestations by any law recognised in science or philosophy,—nor am I aware of having an organisation so extra-credulous as to admit theoretical propositions, without facts to sustain them. If, therefore, imposition and deception have ‘humbugged’ me into a conviction that the ‘sounds’ and ‘demonstrations’ which I have witnessed originate in any cause other than those assigned in this narrative, the person who shall disclose the mystery and detect the fraud, will receive my grateful acknowledgments.

“In the early part of January last, in company with other persons, I gained an introduction to the family in this city in whose residence these sounds had been heard. They received us politely, and seemed rather more cheerful than what I had supposed would be natural for those who were hourly exchanging communications with the spirits of the revered dead. A company of twenty or more persons had assembled—the ‘three sisters’ came into the room—the sounds were heard—and through the medium of the alphabet, they, and about half the company, were directed to retire to another apartment. Our company, in the absence of the ‘three sisters’ whose presence is generally deemed essential to those spiritual communications, were all seated closely around an ordinary dining-table, when.

one of the ladies, bowing her head, inquired in rather a solemn tone, 'Will the spirit answer questions now?' No response being made, I felt the disappointment of the lady, and was half inclined to smile at the ludicrous scene; when the searching glance of her suspicious eye falling upon me, bade me maintain my usual gravity and respect toward the company, and the occasion which had called us there. After several ineffectual attempts to get responses, the sounds were heard, and the company generally were privileged with answers to their respective interrogatories. I availed myself of the opportunity, but gained no other satisfaction than a prompt assurance that all my 'test questions' should be answered when I should come there again. I went away sceptical, though unable to account for the 'sounds,' which caused the floor occasionally to vibrate under my feet.

"On my next visit I was much more successful. During the interval I had prepared my mind with certain questions, touching events unknown to the family, and of a remote date. The sounds told me my age precisely, though my appearance is such as to indicate a difference of eight or ten years. The names of six of my nearest deceased relatives were given me. I then inquired, 'Will the spirit, who now makes these sounds, give me its name?' Five sounds directed me to the alphabet, which I repeated until the name of 'Charles' appeared, which answered to an infant child whom we consigned to the grave in March, 1843. To my inquiries, it gave me a true answer in regard to the time it had been in the spirit land, and also the period since my eldest sister's death, which was nearly eighteen years,—the latter fact not being recollected then, I found true by dates on my return home. Many other test questions were correctly answered; and yet, notwithstand-

ing the origin of these sounds seemed inexplicable, I was inclined to impute them to Mesmerism or clairvoyance. However, as the spirit promised to satisfy me by other demonstrations when I came again, I patiently awaited the opportunity.

“On the third visit, I was selected from half-a-dozen gentlemen, and directed by these sounds to retire to another apartment, in company with the ‘three sisters’ and their aged mother. It was about eight o’clock in the evening. A lighted candle was placed on a large table, and we seated ourselves around it. I occupied one side of the table, the mother and youngest daughter the right, and two of the sisters the left, leaving the opposite side of the table vacant. On taking our positions the sounds were heard, and continued to multiply and become more violent, until every part of the room trembled with their demonstrations. They were unlike any I had heard before. Suddenly, as we were all resting on the table, I felt the side next to me move upward—I pressed upon it heavily, but soon it passed out of the reach of us all—full six feet from me, and at least four from the nearest person to it. I saw distinctly its position—not a thread could have connected it with any of the company without my notice, for I had come to detect imposition, if it could be found. In this position it was situated when the question was asked, ‘Will the spirit move the table back where it was before?’ And back it came, as though it were carried on the head of some one who had not suited his position to a perfect equipoise, the balance being sometimes in favour of one side and then the other. But it regained its first position. In the meantime the ‘demonstrations’ grew louder and louder. The family commenced and sung the ‘spirit’s song,’ and several other pieces of sacred music, during which accurate time was marked on the table, causing

it to vibrate—a transparent hand, resembling a shadow, presented itself before my face—I felt fingers taking hold of a lock of hair on the left side of my head, causing an inclination of several inches—then a cold, death-like hand was drawn designedly over my face—three gentle raps on my left knee—my right limb forcibly pulled, against strong resistance, under the table—a violent shaking, as though two hands were applied to my shoulders—myself and chair uplifted, and moved back a few inches, and several slaps, as with a hand, on the sides of the head, which were repeated on each one of the company, more rapid than I could count. During these manifestations, a piece of pasteboard, nearly a foot square, was swung with such velocity before us as to throw a strong current of air in our faces—a paper curtain attached to one of the windows was rolled up and unrolled twice—a lounge immediately behind me was shaken violently—two small drawers in a bureau played back and forth with inconceivable rapidity—a sound resembling a man sawing boards and planing them, was heard under the table—a common spinning-wheel seemed to be in motion making a very natural buzz of the spindle—a reel articulated each knot wound upon it, while the sound of a rocking cradle indicated maternal care for the infant's slumbers. These were among many other demonstrations which I witnessed that evening, amid which I felt a perfect self-possession, and in no instance the slightest embarrassment, except a momentary chill when the cold hand was applied to my face, similar to a sensation I have realised when touching a dead body.”

Mr. Hammond was no doubt perfectly bewildered by this strange scene—at any rate he was forthwith “hooked” as a convert—and he thus continues his narrative. His grammatical deficiencies must, we suppose, be attributed to the nervous excitement he had undergone.

“That any of the company could have performed *these things*, under the circumstances in which we were situated, would require a greater stretch of credulity on my part, than it would to believe *it* was the work of spirits. *It* could not, by any possibility, have been done by them, nor even attempted, without detection. And I may add, that near the close of the demonstrations at this visit, there was a vibration of the floor, as though several tons in weight had been uplifted and suddenly fallen again upon it. This caused everything in the room to shake violently for several minutes, when the force was withdrawn.

“I have also tested the intelligence of these spirits in every way my ingenuity could invent. On one occasion, I wrote a word on a slip of paper privately, placed it in my wallet, went there—and the sounds, through the alphabet, spelled that word correctly as I had written it. That word was ‘Sibyl.’

“On the 20th of February instant, the two youngest sisters made my family a visit. Here the sounds were heard—questions, involving subjects wholly unknown to them, were answered—a large heavy dining-table was moved several times; and on expressing thanks at the table to the Giver of all good, some six or eight sounds responded to every sentence I uttered, by making loud and distinct sounds in various parts of the room.

“C. HAMMOND.

“*Rochester, Feb. 22nd, 1850.*”

We may remark, *en passant*, that “six or eight sounds responding by making loud and distinct sounds,” is, to say the least of it, a peculiar form of expression.

Matters were in this position when the mediums, thinking their fame sufficiently established, betook themselves to the city of New York. The same routine of

investigation by committees was again gone through; the Misses Fox were again disrobed by ladies in a private room, without any satisfactory result, and another clergyman came forward in the person of the Rev. Dr. Griswold—well known in both American and English literary circles—to lend his assistance in clearing up the mystery. He arranged a party to meet the mediums at his own house, in the Broadway, and the gentlemen who composed it are undoubtedly entitled to every possible respect, for nearly all of them are held in esteem on this side of the Atlantic, for their literary or scientific attainments. The following are their names:—Mr. George Bancroft, Mr. Bigelow, Mr. W. Cullen Bryant, Mr. Fenimore Cooper, Dr. J. W. Francis, Rev. Dr. Hawkes, Mr. R. Kimball, General Lyman, Dr. Marcy, and Mr. N. P. Willis. As this is the first “spiritual” *séance* at which any men of mark, according to our English ideas, were present as investigators, we think it desirable to give a detailed account of it, derived from a work on the subject, styled *Sights and Sounds*, by Mr. Henry Spicer, to which work we beg to refer all those who desire to make a more extended acquaintance with “the mystery of the day.”

Dr. Griswold appointed the *re-union* to take place at his own house, that he might ensure a proper inspection and control over all closets, furniture, etc. Neither of the ladies had ever entered the house before, so that they could not come prepared to counteract any difficulties they might find themselves placed in. “Shortly after eight o’clock, Mrs. Fox and her three daughters, accompanied by two gentlemen of Rochester, made their appearance. Half an hour elapsed and no sounds were heard, and the company began to exhibit obvious symptoms of impatience. At this point they were requested to draw nearer the table, in front of the ladies, and form them-

selves into a compact circle. Soon after, faint sounds began to be heard from under the floor, around the table, and in different parts of the room. These increased in loudness and frequency, becoming clear and distinct, but no one could trace them to any visible cause. The question was now asked, 'Will the spirits converse with any one present?' No satisfactory answer was obtained, though there was a rumbling succession of sounds, the purport of which appeared to be ambiguous to those who professed to be most conversant with the language. The question was then put more definitely with regard to several gentlemen present. After a good deal of coquetting, it was said that replies would be given to any questions proposed by Dr. Marcy. He inquired whether the spirit with whom he wished to converse, was a relation—was a child—and what was its age at the time of its death. Dr. Marcy was understood to say that the answers were correct, but nothing worthy of special notice was elicited."

Mr. Henry T. Tuckerman, well known for his *Essays on the Poets* and his *Characteristics of Literature*, was the next, Mr. Spicer tells us, to propound inquiries. These, contrary to the usual custom, he expressed audibly, so as to be heard by the ladies and the whole company. Having fixed in his mind the name of an individual, he asked, "Did he live in New York?" No answer. "In Baltimore? In Cambridge? In Boston?"—three distinct raps. Mr. T. continued, "Was he a lawyer? A merchant? A physician? A clergymen?" Knocks. "Was he an Episcopalian? A Presbyterian? A Unitarian?"—going over the names of the principal sects. No answer. At the suggestion of a gentleman, Mr. T. asked, "Was he a Christian?" Knocks. Mr. T. then asked the age of the person in a series of tens. "Was he twenty years old at the time of his death? Was he

thirty? Fifty? Sixty?" Knocks. "Has he left a family?" Knocks. "Children?" Knocks. "Five? Three? Two?" Knocks. "Did he die in Boston? In Philadelphia? In Albany? In Northampton? Bennington?" Knocks. "Did he die of consumption? Of fever? Of cholera? Of old age?" Knocks.

The person in Mr. Tuckerman's mind was the late Dr. Channing, who died, as stated, at Bennington, in the State of Vermont, while on a journey. During the latter part of his life, Dr. Channing disclaimed all sectarian names, preferring to be called only Christian; and, though under seventy, had nearly exhausted his physical powers.

The Rev. Dr. Hawkes next made an attempt to converse, but was not successful in obtaining replies. Eventually, he gave way to Dr. J. W. Francis, who was welcomed with a general roll of knockings, from the mysterious agents, as though they claimed with him the privilege of old and intimate acquaintance. Dr. Francis fixed on a person in his mind, and in reply to a series of questions, extracted the information from the spirit that the person thought of was an Englishman, a poet, and further that his name was Robert Burns. These answers were, it seems, correct.

"Mr. J. Fenimore Cooper was then requested to enter into the supra-mundane sphere, and proceeded to interrogate the spirits, with the most imperturbable self-possession and deliberation. After several desultory questions, from which no satisfactory answers were obtained, Mr. C. commenced a new series of inquiries: 'Is the person I inquire about a relative?' Yes, was at once indicated by the knocks. 'A near relative?' Yes. 'A man?' No answer. 'A woman?' Yes. 'A daughter? A mother? A wife?' No answer. 'A sister?' Yes. Mr. C. then asked the

number of years since her death. To this an answer was given in rapid and indistinct raps, some counting 45, others 49, 54, etc. After considerable parleying, as to the manner in which the question should be answered, the consent of the invisible interlocutor was given to knock the years so slowly that they might be distinctly counted. This was done. Knock—knock—knock—for what seemed over a minute, till the number amounted to fifty, and was unanimously announced by the company. Mr. C. now asked, ‘Did she die of consumption,’ naming several diseases, to which no answer was given. ‘Did she die by accident?’ Yes. ‘Was she killed by lightning? Was she shot? Was she lost at sea? Did she fall from a carriage? Was she thrown from a horse?’ Yes.

“Mr. Cooper admitted to the company that the answers were correct, the person alluded to by him being a sister, who just fifty years ago that very month, was killed by being thrown from a horse.”

The evening being now far advanced, Mr. Spicer winds up his account by stating that it was not thought desirable to continue the colloquies any further. “At the suggestion of several gentlemen, the ladies removed from the sofa, where they had sat during the evening, and remained standing in another part of the room. *The knockings were now heard on the doors at both ends of the room, producing a vibration on the pannels which was felt by every one who touched them.* Different gentlemen stood on the outside and the inside of the door at the same time, when loud knockings were heard on the side opposite to that where they stood. The ladies were at such a distance from the door in both cases, as to lend no countenance to the idea that the sounds were produced by any direct communication with them. They now went into a parlour under the room in which the

party was held, accompanied by several gentlemen, and the sounds were then produced with great distinctness, causing sensible vibrations in the sofa, and apparently coming from a thick hearth-rug before the fire-place, as well as from other quarters of the room."

This report of the Fish and Fox performances no doubt raised their reputation in public favour. Mr. N. P. Willis gave the world the benefit of his cogitations on the subject in the columns of the *Home Journal*, wherein he sapiently moralises according to the following fashion:—"The suggestions and 'outside' bearings of this matter are many and curious. If these knocking answers to questions are made (as many insist) by *electric detonations*, and if disembodied spirits are still moving, consciously, among us, and have thus *found an agent, at last, ELECTRICITY, by which they can communicate with the world they have left*, it must soon, in the progressive nature of things, ripen to an intercourse between this and the spirit world.

"There seems an alphabet in this to learn, as in other new fields of knowledge; and, indeed—considering the confusion of ideas in the minds of those who visit and try to talk off-hand with these newly-discovered 'natives,'—it is wonderful that the 'Knockers' make themselves as well understood as they already do. If Providence designed to subject an *intelligent* power to our service—(in addition to the *unintelligent* miracle-workers, steam and electricity, which have successively been given us)—the beginnings would, by all precedent, be at least as imperfect and dimly understood as these are."

Mr. Horace Greeley, the editor of the *New York Tribune*, also came to the assistance of the mediums, and took upon himself to "vouch for the perfect honesty and good faith of the Fox family. There we stop, awaiting more evidence. That some influence, outside and unconnected

with the volition of the family, causes these manifestations, we are confident. What that is, we have yet to be assured."

And he went on to say that,—

"He must be well acquainted with the arcana of the universe, who shall presume dogmatically to decide that these 'manifestations' are natural or supernatural. The ladies say that they are informed that this is but the beginning of a new era, or economy, in which spirits, clothed in flesh, are to be more closely and palpably connected with those which have put on immortality—that the 'manifestations' have already appeared in many other families, and are destined to be diffused and rendered clearer, until all who will, may communicate freely and beneficially with their friends who have 'shuffled off this mortal coil.' Of all this we know nothing, and shall guess nothing. But, if we were simply to print (which we shall not) the questions we asked, and the answers we received, during a two hours' uninterrupted conference with the 'Rappers,' we should at once be accused of having done so expressly to sustain the theory which regards these 'manifestations' as the utterance of departed spirits."

We have no means of judging how far the account published by Mr. Spicer may be relied on, as he gives it merely on the authority of an eye-witness—which eye-witness we presume was not one of the distinguished gentlemen whose names we have quoted. As a counterpart to this statement, we annex a report of a visit made by one of the New York *literati* to the Fox family (Mother, Margaretta, and Catherine) in New York, 1st May, 1851, about eight o'clock in the evening. Mr. Elliott's narrative is as follows:—

After a number of applications, the spirits declining to manifest themselves, they at last yielded to my importunity.

I said to Mrs. F. that I was not familiar with their methods, being an inquirer anxious for the truth only, and must leave it to her to open and conduct the interview. She said it was customary to sit around a table; we drew near to one which was light, seemingly placed for this purpose, upon which stood a small japanned lamp. Mrs. F. sat at one end, the two girls at the other, I at one side.

Mrs. F.—Will the spirits hold communication with this gentleman? Very quick and repeated rolling raps on the floor under the two girls are the reply. [Curious in their character, much like what one might make by loud drumming with the ends of the fingers upon a table or sounding-board covered with cloth. They varied in force from faint to loud, rising and falling gradually, producing the effect of “moving” along the carpet under the girls.]

Mrs. F.—Has he a guardian spirit? Rap.

Mrs. F.—How many? Six raps.

Catherine.—That’s a good many.

I.—Wish to ask of the spirit of my friend.

Mrs. F.—Will the spirit answer? Rap.

I.—Shall I mention the name, or will the spirit give the name of the one I wish?

Mrs. F.—Either.

I.—Will the spirit spell its name? Silence.

I.—We’ll mention names: “John, Henry, James, Abram, David.” Silence.

[Let me say here that I was exceeding careful not to indicate, by intonation or movement, any name; or afterward in writing, to rest the pencil upon any name.]

Raps are heard calling for the alphabet.

Mrs. F. calls over the letters, and receives a rap at W. “Write?” Rap.

I write down the names, and receive a rap when the

pencil rests on Abram when going over them the second time.

Mrs. F.—Quickly, “Was that right?”

I mention another question which I wish to ask; state that there was something unexplained in the manner of the death, which I would be glad to have made clear. Mrs. F. then calls my attention to a creaking sound apparently near the leg of the table next to which Margaretta sat.

Mrs. F.—Does that remind you of his death?

Margaretta.—It is like a ship.

Catherine.—It sounds like it.

I.—It certainly does, and my friend’s death was in some incomprehensible way connected with the water.

Mrs. F.—Will you (to me) write on the paper names of diseases and modes of death?

I do so: fever, drowned, knocked on the head, apoplexy; placing my pencil upon each name. I receive a rap at “knocked on the head.”

At this important moment, and before I have at all completed my conversation with my departed friend, the table moves a little, rising at the end where the girls sit.

Mrs. F. calls my attention to it as a “manifestation.” I am, of course, surprised.

Mrs. F.—Nobody does it!

I—Who does?

Mrs. F.—The spirits.

[I omitted to ask whether it was my friend’s spirit who had thus unceremoniously closed our interview.] I state, however, that I have a question to ask of them as to this “table manifestation,” when I shall have completed the other matter with my friend. A great rapping is heard, and the raps for the alphabet; Mrs. F. asking me to write down what was spelled

which I did ; being, of course, in great excitement and wonder :

Yes-we-can-hold-the-table-down.

You-was-going-to-ask-a-question ?

Mrs. F.—Was that the question (to this reply) you was about to ask ?

[The spirits are supposed at times to answer mental questions.]

I.—No.

Mrs. F. then proposes that we all stand up, and perhaps the spirits will hold the table down. We stand near the table (at the distance of six inches or a foot from it) and the spirits signify that they will oblige us.

I take hold and raise it without much effort, though it seems heavier than such a table should be, and particularly at the end where the girls stand—not at all surprising surely, they being “mediums.”

I say, “Very surprising,” and look under the table with the small lamp afterwards, but discover nothing strange there. The interesting family were doing me a favour by their exhibition, and I did not wish to be or seem suspicious and unkind. [It struck me afterwards, that, perhaps, I ought not to have lifted the table ; but it was an after-thought, and I could not help what was done.]

Mrs. F.—We will now ask for the raps on the door.

The two “mediums” rise, stand near the door of the room, one holding on by the knob, when the same rolling raps are heard on the door—louder, of course, as the sound on the floor was deadened by the carpet.

Margaretta and Catherine.—We do not, of course, touch the door ; no one could make such sounds with their feet !

I.—Should think not.

Mrs. F.—Sometimes the sounds are heard upon the upper part of the door.

I.—Should be glad to hear them.

They are made, *Mrs. F.* thinks, above the girls' heads: I think them the same as before.

Mrs. F. calls my attention to faint sounds, and says they are in other parts of the room: there! and there!

I am doubtful; perhaps faintness makes them seem distant. A more distinct noise is then heard toward a part of the room, which *Margaretta* says is spirits' noise. *Mrs. F.* thinks it is only a noise in the street. I, of course, do not decide the question.

Mrs. F.—Will the spirits beat time to "Hail, Columbia"? Rap.

She then chaunts the national air, when very pretty taps beat the time. I am much pleased. This being all which seems to be expected, I thank them kindly, ask permission to call again, and exit.

It is proper to say, that the name given of my friend was not correct; that he had no connection with a ship; and that it is quite certain that he did not die, as the spirit seemed to think. As I wish to withhold nothing, I will say, that while I was writing down the answers from the spirit, one of the girls was practising "hand-talking," in the deaf and dumb method. The "mediums," I thought, were much amused at my eagerness and readiness to believe, and two or three times were obliged to cover or turn away their faces to conceal their ridicule. Perhaps I was too easily occupied, and no one will despise them for my greenness. My own impression is, that they are very poor actors who cannot command their own countenances. I learned one more fact, which to some may appear important, from one who was intimate and friendly with them, viz., that they were, during this winter, for several months

supported by a committee of inquiring gentlemen, who, for their kindness in the matter of the "spirits," were gladly giving the young persons every advantage—of teachers, accomplishments, etc.; and thus they were not obliged to sell their wares in the market, but only displayed their gifts to satisfy real and honest inquirers.

In conclusion let me say, that, according to my judgment, nothing of a preternatural or supernatural character took place; and that I was very strongly impressed with the conviction that the three women were shallow and simple cheats and tricksters, who, perhaps from an accident, had been led on by credulous people to impose upon them.

CH. W. ELLIOTT.

That the reader may judge of the very remarkable difference in the impressions produced by these spirit manifestations upon believers and unbelievers, we quote two reports of a *séance* held on the 21st of May, 1851, at the house of Mr. Charles Partridge, himself a noted "medium" at the present moment. The present account, which we derive from Mr. Spicer's book, has, as he informs us, been taken by him from the elaborate report furnished by Partridge himself to the New York journals. It runs as follows:—

"There were present about fifteen to twenty persons, among whom may be mentioned the names of Judge Edmonds, Dr. and Mrs. Gray, Mr. E. Fowler and his sister, Mrs. Fox and her daughters, Messrs. Gordon, Cooley, J. Partridge, etc., etc. Rappings were heard, and a communication from the 'spirits' requested the company to play upon a piano in the room. This was done, the raps beating accurate time to the measure. Mr. Gordon, who was a 'medium,' was thrown into a magnetic sleep, during which he gave utterance to some remarks directed against the too-ready yielding to sister

superstitions with those which, in past ages, obstructed the advance of gospel light and the pure influx of the Holy Spirit."

Various sounds were now heard on the door and about the apartment, resembling violent thumping with a man's fist. The tables and chairs, Partridge tells us, were moved into extraordinary positions; but these being phenomena of common occurrence, they excited hardly any interest.

"At this stage of the proceedings, it was proposed by some one to darken the room, in order to try whether the lights or sparkles, known frequently to accompany the manifestations in former instances, would be perceptible. It was accordingly done, and the lights were observed at different times, and in different parts of the room—sometimes resembling phosphorescent flames—sometimes forming luminous clouds moving about—sometimes like glistening stars, crystals, or diamonds. Physical demonstrations increased in variety and force, and continued for three hours, 'during which,' says Mr. Partridge, '*the Judge (Edmonds) seemed to be in possession of the spirits.*' Many things occurred to him which he mentioned that he alone could be conscious of; though we could perceive that something extraordinary was going on with and around him. Many things, however, also occurred which all could witness.

"The card-table before mentioned began to move with violent force from one side of our circle (which was large) to the other, rocking and rising up and coming down; and finally the leaf was shut up, the cover turned round to its place, the table was gently turned upside down, and laid at our feet. In this situation, myself and others took hold of it and ascertained its position; and, after a short interval, it was turned up, the leaf opened, and the table placed as before. A.

chair, which stood outside of our circle, and several feet from any one, was suddenly moved up to the circle and back, rocked, and finally, with great rapidity, conveyed from one end of the room to the other, winding its way among the people who sat there without touching them, and yet at times passing with fearful rapidity within an inch or two of our persons.

“Some of the party, among whom was Judge Edmonds, were requested to go into another closet from that where Gordon was, where there were a guitar, bass viol, and violin, each of which was played upon, separately at first, and finally all together, in marked time, which was beat out by raps, sometimes upon the viols, floor, ceiling, etc., the bow often touching the persons there.

“Afterwards the bass viol and violin were raised above their heads, and out of their reach (except one end, which sometimes rested on their hand, head, or shoulder, often changing), and in this position they were played and rapped upon as by human fingers, and the time marked as before.

“A dinner-bell on the shelf was raised up, and rung over their heads; then taken out into the parlour, and carried round the room, ringing over the heads of fifteen or twenty persons, sitting in the circle there, and then into the adjoining parlour (where there was no person), and carried nearly its length and dropped on the floor some fifteen or twenty feet from any human being. Another small bell was taken off the shelf, rung, and placed into and taken out of the hands of several persons. A pocket-handkerchief was taken from the Judge's pocket, and tied into many knots, and put back again; a table-brush was taken from the shelf, and put into the hands of several persons successively, and taken out again, and their hair brushed with it.”

A writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*, smitten by the raciness of the foregoing account, comments upon it in the following humorous terms:—"O Partridge, Partridge!" exclaims he, "what manner of man thou art, or what is thy calling, we know not, and we never may know; but this we will say for thee, that thou art a consummate master of bathos! Why wert thou not content with the crystals, and diamonds, and phosphorescence, and coruscations? These might have won the hearts of young believers; but who can figure Ariel tying knots upon the handkerchief, or what stomach revolts not at the apparition of that beastly brush?"

"We shall, however, be told not to scoff, but to reason; and there are one or two points in the preceding narrative which we think it right to notice. In the first place, after a preliminary rapping, such as constantly occurred when Miss Catherine Fox was present, music was demanded by the spirits. That may be a peculiar and favourite taste of theirs, for anything we know to the contrary; it is enough for us that natural sounds were required, to allow the development of the non-natural. In this we observe a strong family likeness to legerdemain exhibitions, which seldom go on smoothly unless the attention of the audience is distracted. Next, Mr. Gordon, a medium, drops into a magnetic sleep, and makes use of expressions from which, we sincerely hope, his waking sense would revolt. An inspired chair jumps about without any obvious reason, but no one pays attention to it; and the next notable occurrence is, that 'some one' proposes to darken the room. We should like to know who made that proposition? If it was Mr. Partridge, it is deeply to be regretted that his modesty has kept him in the background: it is always well, in matters like this, to be specific. The room was darkened accordingly, 'to try

whether the lights or sparkles' would appear. And it seems that they did appear. *But to whom!* The gifted narrator does not tell us *who* observed the lights. Is he recounting his own impression, or that of the whole company? On a late grand occasion, about which there could be no dispute—the eclipse of the sun—our scientific men were not at one about the colour and shape of certain rays and flames which were thought to issue from the verge of the solar disc, towards the moment of obscuration. The spiritual phenomena, being more recondite, and certainly less generally understood than those which are purely natural, require more exactitude in the telling. *Who* saw those crystals, diamonds, phosphorescence, etc.? Was it Partridge only—or did the Foxes likewise see them—or were they visible to the rest of the company? On these very essential points we are left utterly in the dark—as utterly as Judge Edmonds, who, with a halo of glory around him, 'seemed to be in the possession of the spirits!' As Mr. Partridge cannot tell us what occurred to the Judge, we shall not be inquisitive to know. No doubt 'something extraordinary was going on with and around him.' Gentlemen's handkerchiefs do not usually emerge from their pockets from an innate desire of being tied into knots; and surely it would be a great satisfaction for the Judge to know what spirit took that liberty with his moveables.

"However, the room being darkened, the furniture began to race about at a speed of 'fearful rapidity' which no article seems to have attained when the candles were lighted. It was all the difference between a mild sidling and the fanaticism of a Highland reel. In the day-time your chair might deceive you, jerking back as you confidently surrendered your nether man to it; and you might be greeted with a spiritual guffaw, and a general rapping, indicative of the delight which the

ghosts received from your hurt upon the *os coccygis*. But, douse the glim, and there is the very devil to pay. Tables are turned upside down, *the room being so dark that their position can only be ascertained by touch*. An arm-chair conceives that it is a steam-engine, and whisks recklessly by. We remember, in days long past, having played at blind-man's-buff in a darkened room, and we at once recognise the truth of the American phenomena. How the furniture did use to go about! You thought you were catching a nymph, and a screen came slap in your face, eliciting diamonds and coruscations more brilliant than any which Rundell and Bridge could exhibit. An ancestral chair by the fire-place became, on these occasions, a perfect demon. It would have been easier to stand the shock of Cœur-de-Lion, than the tilt of that venerable mahogany. But then we were not magicians. Granting that we occasionally caught a spirit, a very slight shriek was elicited, and the 'rappings' were decidedly few."

We must now turn to the counter-statement promised to the reader, and which emanates from one of the unbelievers present at the meeting described in such glowing language by the sapient Partridge. It will be observed, that it is quite silent with reference to the "phosphorescent flames, luminous clouds, glistening stars, crystals, and diamonds," with which Partridge so liberally embellished his account.

"New York, 25th May, 1851.

"You ask me to give you some account of our *spiritual* experience on Wednesday evening last, when we went by invitation to the Partridges'. If I were to enter into all the particulars of what occurred, it would consume much more time and paper than I think it worth; but if I can manage to condense the more im-

portant matters into a small compass, so as to give you some idea of the proceedings, I suppose that will do. Although we were regularly invited, as we thought, by our *own* spirit, we found on our arrival some twenty persons or more assembled, including the family, among whom were Dr. Gray and wife, and Judge Edmonds, and from all I observed in the course of the evening, every one of these, with the exception of C. and myself, were profound believers in the phenomena. There were also two mediums from Springfield, Massachusetts, young men of about twenty years of age. There was evidently preparation for a great time, and I felt extremely sorry that you should lose so excellent an opportunity to witness the proceedings. As usual, a circle was formed; but from the number being too great to sit round the table, we made a continuous circle all round the room. As soon as this was done, the rappings commenced—always *under* or *about* the mediums—the sounds which proceeded from the young man were different, louder and more distinct, *as if not smothered by petticoats*. He was a most peculiar and unwholesome-looking individual, with hair nearly white, a restless eye, and a nervous and flurried manner; he indulged in strange starts and jerks, and we were told added the gift of clairvoyance to his other spiritual endowments. (This person is evidently the Mr. Gordon mentioned in the other report.) I speak of but one of the young men, because he was evidently the active partner in the concern; the other appeared to be his magnetiser, and only professed to be partly a medium. In the course of the evening, the white-haired medium, as we called him, took occasion to fall into a magnetic trance: his eyes were bandaged, and he then proceeded to act as interpreter or mouth-piece for the spirits, by whom he said he was surrounded; after various thea-

trical starts, jerks, and curious snortings and sniffings, interspersed with a sort of humming noise in his chest, he gave utterance to many sentences of the same tenor as most of those we hear and read about, gathered, as I imagine, from the Swedenborgian writings, such as: "Old theological systems and superstitions must be done away"; "Priests and demagogues must give way before the pure influx of the Holy Spirit"; and much more which I cannot remember. He also conveyed messages to the Partridges from their friends, and went through with various performances which strongly impressed me with a sense of humbug. He then (still asleep) came to the table, and wrote with a pencil other answers to questions, the spirits being supposed to guide his hand, though why they should take this trouble when they could speak through his mouth, I could not understand. His eyes were still bandaged, but not so carefully that he could not see from under the band. After this the spirits desired the lights put out, and every vestige and gleam of light being excluded, in the most pitchy darkness a series of proceedings took place, which utterly and entirely disgusted me. Of course anything done in the dark is useless, so far as convincing people goes. We sat and listened for about one hour and a half, to a perfect pandemonium of noises,—bangs on the table as loud as could be made by the hand or foot, loud slaps, bells ringing loudly, the table creaking, flapping its leaves, and turning quite upside down, as was announced by the exclamations of those about it: Judge Edmonds continually exclaiming, 'I'm touched—now I am tapped on the shoulder—hear that—now they are at my feet, now my head,' and then he would cry out, 'They are pulling my coat-tails—they are pulling me toward Margaretta,' at which C. and I pinched each other instinctively. Meantime the white-

haired was going on in the most extraordinary manner, crying out, seemingly scuffling and contending with spirits who wanted to take possession of him. At one time Dr. Gray says, 'They have lifted him up in the air,' and some one else rejoined, 'No, he is standing on his chair;' at length, amid a loud outcry, and exclamations of 'Don't, I don't want to, leave me alone,' accompanied by the noise of a struggle, he was dragged into the closet, and shut up there; this we knew from Dr. Gray's exclamations. Presently Dr. Gray was sent in there, then Judge Edmonds, finally all the mediums and some others. We were then favoured with the most absurd series of noises from this closet that ever was heard: loud bangings, a chorus of 'Auld Lang Syne,' sung by all the *closetees*, accompanied by raps on the door, and scrapings on an old violincello, which was in the closet, violent ringing of bells, which were afterward hurled out into the room, and then rang all around a sort of accompaniment to the music in the closet. 'All this and more could I rehearse,' but I think you will by this time have had enough, as we had, for at this crisis we adjourned to the entry, and waited patiently for the orgies to cease, the air having become close and stifling in the room—I leave you to imagine what it must have been in the closet. We left them at last, at half-past eleven, still in there, the noises going on as loud and meaningless as ever. I shall not hold forth as usual, except to tell you that the twelve good rules are fairly commenced, and that I am your most obedient," etc.

This report of an unbeliever is sufficiently damaging to the spirit cause; but we are concerned to state that the greatest doubt thrown upon the performances of the Fox family, arose from the revelations of one of its own members. These are contained in the document which follows.

Deposition of Mrs. Norman Culver, taken at Arcadia, New York, April 17, 1851.

“ I am, by marriage, a connection of the Fox girls; their brother married my husband’s sister. The girls have been a great deal at my house, and for about two years I was a very sincere believer in the rappings: but some things which I saw when I was visiting the girls at Rochester, made me suspect that they were deceiving. I resolved to satisfy myself in some way; and some time afterwards I made a proposition to Catherine to assist her in producing the manifestations. I had a cousin visiting me from Michigan, who was going to consult the spirits, and I told Catherine that if they intended to go to Detroit, it would be a great thing for them to convince him; I also told her that if I could do anything to help her I would do it cheerfully—that I should probably be able to answer all the questions he would ask, and I would do it if she would show me how to make the raps. She said that as Margaretta was absent, she wanted somebody to help her, and that if I would become a medium, she would explain it all to me. She said that when my cousin consulted the spirits, I must sit next to her, and touch her arm when the right letter was called. I did so, and was able to answer nearly all the questions correctly. After I had helped her in this way a few times, she revealed to me the secret. The raps are produced with the toes. All the toes are used. After nearly a week’s practice, with Catherine showing me how, I could produce them perfectly myself. At first it was very hard work to do it. Catherine told me to warm my feet, or put them in warm water, and it would then be easier work to rap; she said that she sometimes had to warm her feet three or four times in the course of an evening. I found that

heating my feet did enable me to rap a great deal easier. I have sometimes produced a hundred and fifty raps in succession. I can rap with all the toes on both feet; it is most difficult to rap with the great toe.

“Catherine told me how to manage to answer the questions. She said it was generally easy enough to answer right if the one who asked the questions called the alphabet. She said the reason why they asked people to write down several names on paper, and then point to them till the spirit rapped at the right one, was to give them a chance to watch the countenance and motions of the person; and that in that way they could nearly always guess right. She also explained how they held down and moved tables. (Mrs. Culver gave us some illustrations of the tricks.) She told me that all I should have to do to make the raps heard on the table would be, to put my foot on the bottom of the table when I rapped, and that when I wished to make the raps sound distant on the wall, I must make them louder, and direct my own eyes earnestly to the spot where I wished them to be heard. She said if I could put my foot against the bottom of the door, the raps would be heard at the top of the door. Catherine told me that when the committee held their ankles in Rochester, the Dutch servant girl rapped with her knuckles, under the floor from the cellar. The girl was instructed to rap whenever she heard their voices calling the spirits. Catherine also showed me how they made the sounds of sawing and planing boards. (The whole trick was explained to us.) When I was at Rochester, last January, Margaretta told me that when people insisted on seeing her feet and toes, she could produce a few raps with her knee and ankle.

“Elizabeth Fish (Mrs. Fish's daughter), who now

lives with her father, was the first one who produced these raps. She accidentally discovered the way to make them, by playing with her toes against the foot-board while in bed. Catherine told me that the reason why Elizabeth went away far west to live with her father, was because she was too conscientious to become a medium. The whole secret was revealed to me, with the understanding that I should practise as a medium when the girls were away. Catherine said that whenever I practised, I had better have my little girl at the table with me, and make folks believe that she was the medium, for she said that they would not suspect so young a child of any tricks. After I had obtained the whole secret, I plainly told Catherine that my only object was to find out how these tricks were done, and that I should never go any farther in this imposition. She was very much frightened, and said she believed that I meant to tell of it, and expose them; and if I did, she would swear it was a lie. She was so nervous and excited that I had to sleep with her that night. When she was instructing me how to be a medium, she told me how frightened they used to get in New York, for fear somebody would detect them, and gave me the whole history of all the tricks they played upon the people there. She said that once Margaretta spoke aloud, and the whole party believed it was a spirit.

“MRS. NORMAN CULVER.”

To this document was appended the following certificate:—

“We hereby certify that Mrs. Culver is one of the most reputable and intelligent ladies in the town of Arcadia. We were present when she made the disclosures contained in the above paper; we had heard the same from her before, and we cheerfully bear testi-

mony that there cannot be the slightest doubt of the truth of the whole statement.

“C. G. POMEROY, M.D.

“REV. D. S. CHASE.”

If, after this express and circumstantial declaration on the part of a connection of the Foxes, and without refutation of its falsity, it is really the case that their spiritual exhibitions are still attended “by the *élite* of the city of New York, including several eminent judges and divines,” we are forced, says a writer in *Blackwood*, to conclude that there is no bottom to the stomach of American credulity, and we begin to understand the secret of the success of Barnum. It is, to our apprehension, an uncommonly ugly story, and we really should like to know what steps were taken in consequence. Mrs. Culver stated that she was taught by the fair Catherine to make the rapping—was that tested? The Fox family, in vindication of themselves, were bound to have challenged her forthwith to exhibit her toes, and to have snapped them in the approved manner. A girl, in the alleged possession of a miraculous faculty, not only states, to a female relative, that the whole thing is an imposture, *but explains the nature of the process, and teaches her to perform the tricks of the trade!* “After nearly a week’s practice, with Catherine showing me how, I could produce the raps perfectly!” Very odd that the ghosts’ confidant should have the knack of producing sounds exactly similar to those which indicated their spiritual presence! And why did the little Sapphira criminate herself? The motive is perfectly obvious, and is assigned—“she wanted some one to help her.” With the Foxes the spirit theory originated—with them the rappings commenced. Now, if it turns out that these rappings are the result of a

trick, and that one of the family has confessed to the imposture and divulged the secret, down goes the whole edifice. It does not matter what has taken place afterwards; if the originators of the idea are impostors, so must all be who have followed after them.

CHAPTER II.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE SPIRIT SPHERES.

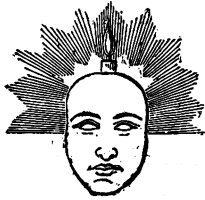
No sooner is any new doctrine broached—no matter how absurd it may be—than a certain number of believers forthwith spring up, eager to embrace it and ready to defend it against the attacks of the sober-minded and the sceptical. What little intelligence they possess, is painstakingly exercised to adapt the wildest and most ridiculous conceptions of the weakest and most commonplace intellects, into something like a theory, until at length, step by step, an apparently consistent framework of belief is eventually developed. The spirit rappings, which most likely originated in the desire of the Fox girls to attract an idle attention towards themselves, came in due course to be regarded as a new faith; a motley crew, composed of learned professors, ministers of religion, judges, quakers, clairvoyants, adventurers, newspaper editors, and others, assisting at its inauguration.

First of all, these individuals, by the aid of their friends in the spirit world, have managed to construct a regular theory of spheres and circles, which, so far as we can gather from their own expositions, appears to be of the following character:—Commencing at the earth's centre and proceeding outward in all directions, the surrounding space is divided into seven concentric spheres, rising one above and outside the other. Each of these seven "spheres" or spaces is again divided into

seven equal parts, called "circles;" so that the whole "spirit world" consists of an immense globe of ether, divided into seven spheres and forty-nine circles, and in the midst of which our own globe is located.

The good, bad, and indifferent qualities of the spirits located in these seven separate spheres, are carefully classified for our edification. Those of the 1st sphere are said to be endowed with Wisdom, wholly selfish, or seeking selfish good. 2nd.—Wisdom, controlled by popular opinion. 3rd.—Wisdom, independent of popularity, but not perfect. 4th.—Wisdom, which seeks others' good and not evil. 5th.—Wisdom in purity, or a circle of Purity. 6th.—Wisdom, in perfection to prophecy. 7th.—Wisdom, to instruct all others of less wisdom.

According to the new philosophy, when a man dies, his soul ascends at once to that sphere for which it is fitted by knowledge and goodness on earth; and from that point ascends or progresses outward from circle to circle, and from sphere to sphere, increasing in knowledge and happiness as it goes, till it reaches the seventh circle of the seventh sphere, which is the highest degree of knowledge and bliss to which it is possible to attain in the spirit world. The authors of the *Supernal Theology* assert that heaven is beyond all the spheres, and represent the change from the seventh sphere



to heaven as equivalent to the change from the life on earth to a dwelling in the lower spheres. Though there are many low spirits in the second sphere, as well as in the rudimental sphere in which we poor mortals live, yet they are ever advancing or growing better, and can never grow worse. Although the spirits of the upper spheres can descend through all intervening spheres and circles to the rudimental, and help their tardy brethren *up*, yet the low or vulgar spirits can never pull their more advanced brethren *down*.

The theory of "progress" as the spirit advances through the spheres, is strikingly illustrated by the preceding cut. It is copied verbatim from *Love and Wisdom from the Spirit-world*, by Jacob Harshman, medium; and purports to have been drawn by the spirit of J. V. Wilson, who states that it "shows a law of progression—how the spirit must, progressing, go from one degree to that of another. This is the spiritual nature in man that makes him a progressing being, and prepares him for a higher sphere."

In the same work we have another diagram, designed to illustrate the same law of progress.

"This diagram," says the spirit of Mr. J. V. Wilson, through the medium of Jacob Harshman, "represents the spirit's progression; the spirit in its rudimental sphere takes its starting point at the small end of the diagram, and as it advances it increases in truth and wisdom, and in all the moral, intellectual, and spiritual attributes of a superior being; and so it will continue on throughout infinite duration; this is the course that spirits must go, and the sooner the spirit strives to de-

velop its spiritual nature in order that it may contain more wisdom to enable it to progress more rapidly, the sooner it will be enabled to enjoy the happiness that is laid out for spirits in their progress."

If all spirits possess bodies, as taught by the new philosophy, and their heads become as large in the distant spheres as is represented by the spirit of J. V. Wilson, we should very much like to know how it is that these immense heads can swarm around our little globe without coming in contact, to the great injury of their cerebral developments, or, indeed, actually knocking out each other's brains!

In the technical language of the new philosophy, all messages from the higher spheres are "disclosures from the *interior*," that is, the outer spheres. This use of the term "interior," which, according to the prevailing ideas of mortals, would indicate some place in the bowels of the earth, is used by the spirits to signify the more remote circles and spheres; or, in other words, *interior* means *exterior*, and *vice versâ*.

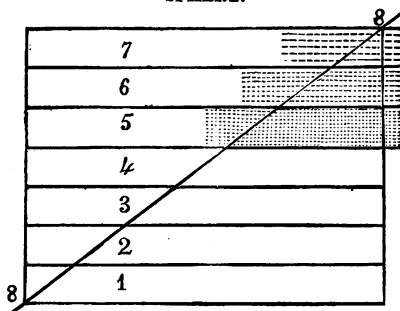
A publication, called the *New Leaf*, gives us some further insight into the geography of the spheres, through the medium of an article *dictated by a spirit*. In fact, there is more dogmatic teaching afloat relative to the spirit land, and those who are willing believers have more positive information about it, than can possibly be gathered from the pages of geographers relative to the surface of this little planet on which we dwell.

"When we tell you," observes the spirit before mentioned, "that yet very few who once inhabited earth have attained the third sphere—undergone the third phenomenon of birth—you may think that the inhabitants of this sphere are most of them either ignorant in regard to sphereognostics, or have wilfully deceived you in regard to this matter. There are many here who

know little or nothing respecting spheres, and who suppose, from no promptings of vanity, that they have attained the highest, or nearly the highest, human elevation possible—the spheres which they so minutely have depicted being a distinction of grades, or classes *in this sphere*, which possesses no more distinct lines of demarcation than do the different societies of your sphere.

“ Reflection and every-day experience can but evince to your minds, that in your sphere there is no absolute number of societies. A certain number may, perhaps, seem to delineate the number of societies which would be most readily and generally perceptible. One may make forty or a hundred classifications or societies in one sphere, and be as much right as he who makes three or seven. A diagram will illustrate to you more fully and forcibly this idea.

SPHERE.



“ Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 are in the spaces, which are intended as a representation of a sevenfold division of a sphere—8-8 is the line of progress. The dotted lines represent a more minute division, which may be, in truth, intro-multiplied until it leaves a separate society for each individual; for no two individuals ever at one time inhabited precisely one plane of development, as

such an event can but result in the coalescence or unity of the two into one."

This ought to satisfy a reasonable inquirer—that *sphereognostics* be a very difficult science. In fact, these circumstances are so "*intro-multiplied*" that very few of the inhabitants of the "interior" can describe their "*plane of development*,"—in other words, they don't know where they are.

The latest authority that we have seen (*New Era*, No. 30) on the spirit spheres, makes the first circle several thousand miles above the earth, and it describes three celestial heavens as being above the seven spheres. In these different regions different grades of spirits dwell, and rise by progression from the lower to the higher, as before mentioned. Many contradictory accounts are given of the nature and extent of their happiness, but all agree in putting a decided negative on the frightful doctrine of a hell, as commonly understood. These spirits speak, like Swedenborg, of the pleasures of hell—a place of low, wild, and riotous mirth and mischief, where spirits burn in love divine, and the evil of their nature is the fuel that is consumed for ever. Some say that all are happier and better than the happiest and best upon earth; others deny this, and say that some become worse than they were upon earth. We are told that Dr. Gridley, an American physician, when inquiring into this matter, put the spirits on their oath, not trusting to their word, and they took the oath, and affirmed that about one in fifteen became worse for ever. To make the spheres, we suppose, as comfortable as possible for old maids, we hear there are inferior animals in the spirit world, just the same as here; for instance, dogs, rabbits, birds, and gold fishes, are spoken of, with other pet animals, which have on earth contracted affinity with human beings.

CHAPTER III.

THE "SPIRITS"—THEIR OCCUPATIONS, AMUSEMENTS,
AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

John Calvin and little Frank Copeland—English the favourite Spirit language—Concerts in the Spheres—Balls and Parties in the Spheres—Card-playing in the Spheres—Spiritual Lectures on Architecture and "Beneficent Machinery"—"The Universal Hum."

THE spirit of the morose old reformer, Calvin, who no doubt will be regarded as a better authority than any less famous dweller in the spheres and circles, has been so obliging as to communicate, through D. G. Green, medium, the following interesting particulars respecting the spirits, and the laws which regulate their progress towards development. He says:—

"In regard to the question which I promised to answer, I will state what I feel I can be clearly and fully sustained in saying. The laws which govern us in the spirit land, in some respects, are not dissimilar to those which govern men upon the earth. Yet we have greater facilities for acquiring knowledge by far, than you who are yet in the body. And so it is with those in the higher spheres—we can the more readily learn, the nearer we approach the goal to which we are all tending, the great harmonial circle of God's more immediate presence. And although those who are in the lower spheres can operate powerfully upon those on earth, they cannot give as correct ideas in regard to the working of the plan of our Father, as those above them. When you fully realise that a spirit can accomplish in one moment,

by the mere effort of the will, more than a mortal can do in a number of days—I mean in regard to passing from place to place—you will not be astonished to learn that we can as readily comprehend the language as we can the thoughts of those with whom we wish to converse. And as I have said, we are, in a degree, subject to the same laws as yourselves. Yet, instead of being obliged to study for a long time to obtain a knowledge of any particular language, we are enabled to receive it as by intuition. And it is just as easy for me, when I wish to converse with one on earth, to impress the thought upon his mind, in his own language, although I never understood it when I was on your earth, as I could in my native tongue.

“JOHN CALVIN.”

Calvin's statement, however, is hardly reconcilable with the “manifestations” given to the world by Mr. Ballou, as, alluding to a visit from the spirit of one Frank Copeland, who was unable to spell out any thing, because he was “an illiterate youth” when he died, these inform us that—“Marcus Wilcox, knowing Frank had an intelligent and amiable sister in the spirit world, advised him to get her to teach him. She also manifested herself, and it was agreed that the advice should be followed. The result was, that at the end of three months, Frank desired to show his earthly friends what improvement he had made. This he did by spelling many words and names correctly, and by various proofs that his moral nature was experiencing a very great change for the better.”

There, reader, think of that! The idea of learning to write in eternity! Think of your spiritual paper, spiritual ink and quills, and the spiritual rappings (on the knuckles) by a spiritual writing-master!

Really this is a hopeful system for boys who play truant instead of attending to their studies in this world, as, come what may, they can learn to read and write in the next.

It would be thought somewhat remarkable, did it not help to confirm the foregoing revelation as to the studies undertaken by the spirits in the spheres, that all of them—Hebrew, Greek, Roman, French, German, and Irish—rap out their replies to questions in the English language. The second number of *The Mountain Cove Journal* contains a passage said to have been received from the spirit of the man healed by Peter and John (Acts iii. 1-9); and yet, though nothing is more certain than that this spirit never heard a word of English in all his life, he now raps out his thoughts in this language with perfect fluency. This, at any rate, says something for his philological attainments. The spirit who communicated a message in Hebrew to Professor Bush, made so great a bungle of it that the message had to be suppressed; and on another occasion a spirit made four grand mistakes, in regard to his age when he died, and the time, place, and circumstance of his death: these could only be accounted for by the fact that he was an Indian, and had not yet learned the English language. We wonder what punishment is accorded to dunces in the spheres—whether the fool's cap or the birch rod is found the more efficacious!

Some other interesting disclosures with which the spirits have favoured us relate to the amusements in vogue among the inhabitants of the spheres. The first we shall quote is from *The Supernal Theology* (p. 98), and refers to the "crush nights" at the Spherical Opera. The occasion is the *début* of some distinguished *prima donna*:—"Often, in asking some spirit the reason why he could not be present with us on some occasion, he

has told us that he was going to a concert. Some great singer was to sing, and the number of spirits congregated to hear was incalculable. It seemed, they would remark, that all in the sphere were present."

We wonder whether or no a Barnum has ever been developed in the seventh or highest sphere, to take charge of the disposal of the tickets on these most exciting occasions!

These musical spirits do not confine their performances to their own proper spheres, and their own musical instruments, but sometimes indulge us mortals with a specimen of their attainments. Thus we learn that at a *séance* at which the Misses Fox were present, a guitar was placed under the table, and whilst all were sitting upright around it the guitar played well-timed and well-toned music. To satisfy the company, a dinner bell (a large hand bell) was placed beside it, and that was rung as loud as if Sambo himself had rung it for the family repast. But all present were strictly forbidden to look under the table. The spirits did not choose their performances to be too public.

According to the same authority (*Supernal Theology*, p. 53) balls and parties are of frequent occurrence in the spirit world, and *dancing* is described as a favourite recreation:—"We have many parties in the spheres. At one of them, in the sixth, there were two or three thousand spirits present. We always dance, and always have music."

And further on we are told—"The most frequent of all their assemblies, however, are when spirits of their acquaintance rise to a higher sphere. Then the spirits of the sphere to which they rise bring all their friends to welcome the new spirit on its advent. A grand entertainment of music and dancing is always given."

Singing and dancing, in the eyes of the Sabbatharians, would be thought frivolous enough amusements,

in all conscience, for immortal spirits to indulge in; but what would they say to the very striking disclosure that has been made, that even the high spirits of the "fifth sphere" often *play at cards!* Nevertheless, if the spirits who communicate with the editor of *The Supernal Theology* are to be believed, such appears to be the lamentable fact.

"On one occasion," we are told (*Supernal Theology*, p. 55), "a whist party was formed, and, one of the four being disinclined to play, the spirit volunteered to take the hand. Little Mary was therefore seated, and though she could not herself play the game, it was well played through her hands by the spirit. In the course of it he remarked, that he frequently played whist in the fifth sphere."

The spirits differ in one respect from the more respectable denizens of this world, as among them, we learn, "there is no marriage; every spirit, however, has its partner of the opposite sex. These two are very seldom united on earth; but the natural partners have generally lived on the earth together, often unknown to each other, and in very different ranks of life. After death they find each other out by mutual attraction."

With regard to dress, we learn that the inhabitants of the spheres dress as they please, often as we ourselves do. "They wear trousers, turbans, hats, gowns, and other articles of clothing, coloured according to fancy. The males generally wear the beard." The bodies of spirits, we are told, are as really material as our own, only the matter is of an opposite nature, so that the one is not easily perceptible or resistible to the other.

It is some satisfaction to us to learn, that certain of the spirits have a taste beyond such frivolous pursuits as those just described, and we hail with pleasure the revelation which Mr. S. Hewett, the editor of a "spirit"

paper, is the means of making us acquainted with. He announces that the spirits have turned their attention to practical matters, and that Roger Sherman has given a course of twelve lectures upon architecture, through John M. Spear, a remarkably good medium, and through whom no serious errors have ever been communicated. According to these lectures, houses are to be built of a material formed by mixing with sea water, in equal proportions—iron ore, pulverised granite, fine clay, and sand from the sea shore. The house is to be modelled after the human body when in a sitting posture, and the family are to reside in the apartment which corresponds to the cavity occupied by the brain. The house is to be warmed in a way revealed in a course of twelve lectures from Howard upon “Beneficent Machinery.” No fuel is to be used, and the principle is according to the arterial system of the circulation of the blood. A framework is to be built in the basement, of the same materials as the house. A large boiler is to be placed in the framework, and in the boiler a jar made of zinc and tin, with two wires, like arms, and five fingers tipped with brimstone. Linseed oil is to be poured into the jar, and the wires are to be rubbed, and somehow—the speaker did not understand exactly how—perpetual heat is to be produced. Villages are to be built under the new dispensation as follows:—First, a circular park is to be laid out; and in it a circular church and a circular school-house, with a triangular roof over all, are to be built. These are to be surrounded by a circular street, and then the houses are to be built in circles about them. “We are at first angular, being in the first stage of development; but the second form is circular; and when we come to take the second step in the advancement of art, we shall have nearly all arrangements circular.” These discoveries are not patented, and those to whom

they have been revealed do not wish to monopolise them; so any one who wishes is at liberty to build a house and warm it (if he can), or lay out a village, according to these plans.

We learn from another channel that the spirits have "impressed" Mr. Davis, a very distinguished medium, that the only real motive-power in existence is the human will, and that all sorts of machinery, locomotives, engines, etc., can be driven by it. Mr. Davis, we are informed, hopes, in course of time, to print his paper, *The Universal Hum*, by just looking into his office and nodding at the press.

The best joke of all we have reserved to the last, which is, that the spirits need *money* in the other world as much as mortals do in this.

According to our old authority, *Supernal Theology*, (p. 102), a spirit wanted "a certain sum of money in bank notes," and "he promised to pay it back soon." No doubt, had he found any one "verdant" enough to accommodate him, he would have had no objection to have given his I O U for the amount, or even his note, payable on his attaining a post in a higher sphere. But with all their skill in revealing mysteries, and with all the want of money that some are perplexed with, the spirits yet nevertheless refuse, with dogged obstinacy, to serve the press and turn an honest penny. The Hon. Horace Greeley, with an eye to business, enrolled himself amongst the foremost believers in the new philosophy, and even prostituted the columns of the *New York Tribune*, to aid the cause. In addition to this he offered a good round sum annually to any spirit, or medium even, who would furnish him with the London daily news every night, in time for the morrow's publication; but neither spirit nor medium has yet come forward and closed with his offer.

The same publication (*Supernal Theology*) tells us in a subsequent number that the spirits "have the power of creating whatever they desire. Whatever robes they desire to wear, they possess with the wish. They paint, sculpt, write, or compose music; and their productions are as tangible to them as ours are to us. The artist, by means of his will, paints a picture, and shows it to his friends, as really as it is on earth; and the poet writes, and finds admirers of his verses, as he would here. They enjoy whatever they desire, and this is one of the sources of their happiness. They eat fruit, or whatever they incline to, and indulge their appetites—not, however, from necessity; they never feel hunger or thirst, or cold or heat. . . . If they wish for a harp, they at once possess it, and it is a reality—a tangible thing—and, to their perception, as much a material substance as the things we handle here. When they no longer desire the object, it is a nonentity. They do not lay it by, to take it up again, but the idea remains, and they can recall the thing, as it were, in its perfect identity."

With this wishing-cap of Fortunatus always at command, is it not strange that the spirit who was hard up for "tin," did not clap it on and wish for dollars to his heart's content?

We have already described the various ascertained avocations of the spirits when they confine themselves, as we wish they would always do, to their own proper spheres. They indulge, however, as the reader is aware, in certain peculiar manifestations, of which our world forms the scene of action. The principal of these phenomena, according to Adin Ballou, a médium of mark, are the following:—

1.—Making peculiar noises, indicative of more or less *intelligence*—such as knockings, rappings, jarrings, creakings, tickings, imitation of many sounds known in

the different vicissitudes of human life, musical intonations, and, in rare instances, articulate speech. *Some* of these various sounds are very loud, distinct, and forcible; *others* low, less distinct, and more gentle, but all audible realities.

2.—The moving of material substances, with like indications of intelligence—such as tables, sofas, light-stands, chairs, and various other articles, shaking, tipping, sliding, raising them clear off the floor, placing them in new positions (all this sometimes in spite of athletic and heavy men doing their utmost to hold them down); taking up the passive body of a person, and carrying it from one position to another across the room, through mid-air: opening and shutting doors; thrumming musical instruments; undoing well-clasped pocket-books, taking out their contents, and then, by request, replacing them as before; writing with pens, pencils, and other substances, both liquid and solid—sometimes on paper, sometimes on common slates, and sometimes on the ceilings of a room, etc.

3.—Causing catalepsy, trance, clairvoyance, and various involuntary-muscular, nervous, and mental activity in mediums, independent of any *will* and *conscious* psychological influence by men in the flesh, and then through such mediums, speaking, writing, preaching, lecturing, philosophising, prophesying, etc.

4.—Presenting apparitions.—in some instances, of a spirit hand and arm; in others, of the whole human form; and in others, of several deceased persons conversing together; causing distinct touches to be felt by the mortal living, grasping and shaking their hands, and giving many other sensible demonstrations of their existence.

5.—Through these various manifestations communicating to men in the flesh numberless affectionate and

intelligent assurances of an immortal existence, messages of consolation, and annunciations of distant events unknown at the time, but subsequently corroborated; predictions of forthcoming occurrences subsequently verified; forewarnings against impending danger; medicinal prescriptions of great efficacy; wholesome reproofs, admonitions, and counsels; expositions of spiritual theological, religious, moral, and philosophical truths, appertaining to the present and future states, and important to human welfare in every sphere of existence, sometimes comprised in a single sentence, and sometimes in an ample book.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GENUS MEDIUM.

Rapping Mediums—Writing Mediums—Spirit-impression Mediums—
Phonographic Mediums—Speaking Mediums—Dancing Mediums.

IT is a cardinal principle in the new philosophy, that a small portion of the human race have such an amount of "electricity" in their composition, that the "spirits" can use them as "mediums;" while others, and by far the larger portion, being destitute of this electricity, are consequently non-conductors of spirit-messages. One thing, however, is quite certain, that the spirits display a decided partiality towards mediums of the fair sex. Why is this? Have they a stronger electrical affinity for ladies than for gentlemen? Or is it, as some one has ill-naturedly remarked, because ladies are, for certain reasons, less liable to detection and exposure? Whatever the spirits may think of the suggestion, we mortals cannot but be aware that their sex and costume are a fine security against detection.

As the rapping process was that by which the spirits first manifested their presence in this sublunary sphere, we shall first dispose of the mediums engaged in its interpretation, and for this purpose shall use the spiritual publications as our authorities.

1.—"In order to have spiritual manifestations, it is necessary that a medium be present."—*History of Recent Development, etc., in Philadelphia, by a Member of the First Circle*, p. 11.

2.—“Though the presence of a medium is necessary for the production of the sounds, he or she cannot control them. Sounds cannot always be produced in the presence of a medium; there are other conditions required. But all the other conditions may be as favourable as possible, yet the sounds cannot be produced without a medium.”—*Ibid*, p. 13.

3.—“The character of the communications depends very much on the condition of the medium. A high order of communication cannot be obtained through, or in the presence of, a low medium; neither can low communications be received in the presence of a high medium. It is the physical condition of the medium that favours the production of sounds or raps; but it is the intellectual and moral conditions that give character to the intelligence connected with the sounds, manifestations, or communications.”—*Ibid*, p. 11.

4.—“In order to prepare a medium, the person must give up all self-control, all resistance, and resign him or her self to the entire direction and control of the spirits. Sometimes the process of preparation or development is easy and quick, at other times it is protracted and difficult; but it is always rendered more easy and quicker of accomplishment, by perfect resignation and entire non-resistance.”—*Ibid*, p. 11.

5.—“There is a peculiar electrical condition that is necessary for the production of sounds or raps.”—*Ibid*, p. 11.

“It is essential that circles be always organised upon positive and negative principles. . . . Let the person whose electrical temperament is usually indicated by cold hands, and who possesses a mild and loving disposition, take his or her place on the immediate right of the medium or clairvoyant, upon whose immediate left should be seated one of a magnetic or warm

physical temperament, being a positive and intellectual individual," etc.—*Spiritual Telegraph*, No. 26.

6.—“ I am impressed to further direct that the rooms where the circles meet should, as much as possible, be retired from noise and interruption ; that they should also be *darkened*, so that the persons present, not having their minds attracted and diverted by external things, may the more easily concentrate their thoughts upon the object for which they have met together.”—*Spirit of J. R. Fulmer*—*Ibid*, No. 26.

7.—It is very important that no “materialists” or “sceptics” be present. “None but the candid, honest, truth-seeking inquirers should be admitted.” “The captious and sneering should be excluded.”—*Phil. Hist.*, p. 28. That is, let no person be admitted who has any doubts, or who will be likely to detect and expose the deception. This is probably the most important “condition” of all.

Everything being after the most approved fashion, the performance forthwith commences with certain rapping noises, which are described as varying from a light metallic clear sound, to a dull muffled one, like a rap with the knuckles upon a partition covered with cloth. Others describe them as resembling the sound one might make by loud drumming with the ends of the fingers upon a table or sounding-board covered with cloth ; varying in force from faint to loud, rising and falling gradually, and producing the effect of moving or running along the carpet directly under the medium.

The raps being heard, the medium inquires if the spirit of such a one is present. If answered by three raps, an affirmative is meant. Silence, instead of giving consent, as it is considered to do in this world, in the spheres implies a negative. The question is then asked : “Will the spirit of —— communicate with us ?”

Rap, rap, rap. "Shall we call over the alphabet?" Rap, rap, rap. The medium or some other person then begins, "a, b, c, d," etc., with a pause between each letter, till she comes to the first letter of the first word wanted by the spirit, when a "rap" is heard, and that first letter is recorded by the medium's "secretary." The medium then goes back to "a" again, and proceeds down the list till she comes to the next letter wanted, when another rap is heard, and this second letter is recorded; and so on, letter after letter, and word after word, till the whole communication is obtained.

This process, as the reader may suppose, is tedious in the extreme. A writer has recorded that a mere compliment of a dozen words, proceeding from some inhabitant of the spheres, which an ordinary mortal would have rapped out in less than half a minute, took the spirit a full quarter of an hour. The phrase in question was nothing more interesting than this:—"My dear friends: I am glad of an opportunity of communicating with you." Mr. A. began, "a—b—c—d—e—f—g—h—i—j—k—l—m" (*rap*). Again: "a—b—c—d—e—f—g—h—i—j—k—l—m—n—o—p—q—r—s—t—u—v—w—x—y" (*rap*). We had then the word "My;" and in this way we proceeded through the sentence.

Now this short sentence, of only thirteen words, or fifty-six letters, took us full *fifteen* minutes to get it rapped out, even with the message written out beforehand, so that the spirit could see the letter desired, and rap as soon as it was named. And there was scarcely any pause between each letter, as the rappers say there should be, and as is very necessary in order that the rap may be made at the right letter; so that it was got through faster than ordinary spirit messages can be telegraphed by rapping. But even this rapid process gives us only 240 letters per hour.

If the foregoing fact is applied to the communications which are said to have been rapped out by the spirits on various occasions, it will be found that instead of being given at a "sitting," as they profess to have been, many of them must have required from *five to thirty hours!* They must, therefore, have been obtained or composed in some other way than by being rapped out letter by letter, as the rappers pretend.

The demand for spirit communications being brisk, and the rapping-out process being proportionably slow, a method was discovered by some ingenious medium by which the raps might be dispensed with. It consisted in the medium being provided with a card, on which the letters of the alphabet were printed, and when a communication was desired, all the medium had to do was to pass the hand over it, touching every letter with the forefinger. One of the spirit works before quoted says, in reference to this process:—"Often the hand will be required to pass over it repeatedly, before any unnatural sensation is experienced; when a feeling of numbness will begin to be perceived, which will increase, attended by a more or less convulsive motion; as the hand continues its exercises, the movement becomes altogether involuntary; the motion now becomes increased, and the hand is made to pass over the card with almost incredible rapidity, attended with convulsive jerkings more or less severe. Sometimes it is very great, causing the hand to strike the card or the table upon which it lay with great violence. This is continued for some time, when the finger will be observed to rest on a certain letter, attended with a shoving or rubbing motion: instantly it will be seen to fly to another, and then another. These letters taken down will be found to make words, and these words placed together make sentences. In this way long and highly interesting communications

are spelled out with a rapidity requiring a very expert penman to write them down as fast as they are given. The medium or any other person, watches the finger, and gives out the words as they are formed. The violence with which the hand is used becomes abated as the medium becomes more fully developed, and better control is got of its movements. At length no inconvenience is experienced, and words are spelled out with the utmost ease and comfort. In this manner spirits are able to converse through mediums, long before they can make the sounds."

There is just one little doubt thrown on this method, which is known as the card-process, by some ill-natured unbelievers. They have raked up the fact that it was in full vogue in Philadelphia in April 1851, and yet, when the spirits of the sixth circle wrote their lecture on the "Modes of Spiritual Intercourse," by the hand of Mr. Ambler, in March 1852, nearly twelve months afterwards, they ignore the card-process altogether. Was this from ignorance on the part of the Springfield spirits of what the spirits were well up to in Philadelphia?

Of course, it required no very great stretch of intellectual capacity to conceive the idea that, by the same power by which the spirits could rap, and cause a man's hand to pass along a card at pleasure, they might take the same hand and make it write. Accordingly, no sooner was the idea started, than a score or two of writing mediums were forthwith developed. We can easily understand how this was brought about. It required no knowledge of the rapping process, and, as the spirits wrote in the ordinary way, it was proof against all chance of detection. All that was necessary was a more verdant class of believers; and these being soon found, the trade of writing medium ranked as not a whit inferior to that of

a rapping one. The explanation of this process is, that the spirits take the hand of the medium, and paralyse it so that the medium shall have no control over it, and then write with it, as if it were their own. The mediums do not agree as to the *manner* in which their hands are controlled. Some say the spirits *take hold* of the medium's hand and write with it, and that the mediums can *feel* the spirit's hand, and sometimes *see* it holding theirs.

In all instances, the writing mediums claim to have no agency whatever in the production of the writing, beyond lending their arm and hand to the spirit. Our old friend, the Rev. C. Hammond, says of one of his works:—"In regard to the merits of the production, it must speak for itself; for, whatever merit or demerit it may possess, I am worthy of neither praise nor censure. Astounding as may be the assertion that I had no will to write it, or exercised any other control than to let my hand be moved by an invisible influence, and write as it would without any volition on my part, yet it is nevertheless true. . . . Indeed I have found, by actual experiment, that in a great many instances the spirit who controls my hand has succeeded in writing sentences contrary to my will, and while I was endeavouring with all my volition to write something else."

Another authority, speaking of the production of a certain work, says that "the medium's arm was moved entirely independent of, if not against, her will, and made to write without her even seeing the page, or having any means of knowing what had been written."

A third tells us that a work "has been written without the necessity of thought on the part of the medium, and with the use of his hand independent of the action of his own will."

Mr. Boynton, in his *Spirit Unfoldings*, goes beyond the foregoing authorities, and explains to us that the spirits actually made him write the very opposite of what he intended. He says:—"For several months prior to February 1852, my hand was frequently used by some power and intelligence entirely foreign to my own, to write upon subjects of which I was uninformed, and in which I felt little or no interest. The sentiments conveyed were entirely adverse to my most cherished views," etc. "The subjects treated of were not chosen by me, and the sentiments expressed were entirely opposite to my own; consequently, I held myself committed to no sentiment contained in them, for reason of the use that has been made of me to write it."

But perhaps the most remarkable piece of information we have been enabled to discover on this subject, is the description given by Mr. Ambler, of a current of electricity which the spirits sent down from the spheres, and by this means controlled his hand and made it do their bidding. The account, however, is too good to be told second-hand, and we, therefore, quote the medium's precise words:—

"The spirit who was best adapted to this purpose, approached the medium whose hand and arm were to be employed, at a distance of about two miles from the earth; then he breathed out the spiritual atmosphere which he inhaled towards the individual who was writing, and in this manner caused a complete chain of spiritual substance to be established between the directing spirit and the system of the medium, by which chain a perfect connection was formed from one to the other, so that the hand and arm were moved by the will of the spirit, while at the same time the mind of the medium was entirely passive."

In further describing this method of writing, the wife

of the medium's bosom, and other witnesses of the miracle, say:—

“The hand and arm of the medium were suspended, during the whole time of writing, in such a manner as *not to rest on the desk or manuscript*, and upheld in this way, the pen glided rapidly over the paper with an even and continuous movement, without any apparent thought or care on the part of the writer, and without any perceptible pause at the commencement of sentences or paragraphs; and in this connection it may be mentioned, that frequently, when one lecture was finished, another was commenced in the same sitting, without any previous knowledge on the part of Mr. Ambler.”

One would have thought that Mr. Ambler's statement was sufficiently extravagant of itself to be too readily credited, but brother Jonathan appears to have a most capacious swallow, as the reader will admit, when he learns that the following forms part of the new spirit philosophy. It is a revelation from the spirit of Adin A. Ballou, in reply to questions asked, and is published in *Spirit Manifestations*, p. 222:—

“*Ques.* Can you describe how you are able to write through a medium, etc. *Ans.* I feel as though I enter into her for the time being, or as if my spirit entered into her. I am dismembered of my spiritual form, and take hers.” And further on:—

“I have my spiritual form or body when I communicate by tippings or rappings, but to *write*, my spirit must enter the medium, otherwise I am unable to control her will or muscles. The moment I leave the medium's body I assume my own.”

The following is equally rich:—A Mr. Dexter tells us that the family of Mr. Snyder, of Astoria, are all mediums, even to a little infant not two years old, through whom most remarkable demonstrations have been had,

even to sitting down at a table and writing out lengthy communications in Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and many of the living languages!

On a par with the above is the account given by the *New Era* of a drawing medium, who fills up various sheets of paper with outlines, one after another, in succession, as they are placed before him, and when all these various sheets are put together, they form "one large cartoon, admirably drawn, and the pieces so exquisitely fitted, that the drawing seems as if it had been done first on one great sheet, and afterwards cut up into fragments."

There is another class of writing mediums, who write by what is styled in spirit phraseology the "spirit impression." They represent that they are unconscious of their hands being used by an invisible power, and are equally unconscious of their bodies being entered by the spirits of the dead. One of this class, a Mr. Harshman, describes the process. We are pleased to see that he does this with more regard to the rules of orthography than he has shown in many of the revelations from the spheres we have met with, which he has been the medium of making known on earth, and which revelations, moreover, are described to have emanated from spirits who were certainly able to spell correctly when they left this sublunary world on their voyage through eternity. Mr. Harshman, in his *Love and Wisdom from the Spirit World*, p. 7, says:—

"When the spirit influence commenced, present thoughts and preconceived ideas vanished and disappeared from my mind, and after a few minutes, without thought or knowledge of the subject-matter that was to be written, I would be impressed with the word or sentence to be written, although my hand was not moved by any mysterious power, but my mind was guided by

the spirit's will, and they tell me that they had to impress every word and sentence upon my mind before it was written; and as fast as it was written it vanished from the mind, while other words and sentences were impressed upon the mind."

Mr. Harshman, however, appears to have some little doubt himself as to the genuineness of these "spirit impressions" of his, for we find Mr. A. J. Davis, clairvoyant and high priest of the new philosophy of spiritualism, publicly stating that Mr. Harshman wished him to aid in determining whether the book was really dictated by spirits, or was the product of his own (addled) brain. Davis, it seems, judiciously evaded the task, by not finding time to read Harshman's book.

One would have imagined that having brought spiritual communications to such a degree of perfection that the revelations could be made with as much rapidity as they could be written, no further improvements would have been attempted. But the "smartest nation in creation" must still go a-head, and the next new dodge was the discovery of a spirit phonography, thus described by a Dr. Bristol, in No. 34 of the *Spiritual Telegraph*:—

"The following is a specimen of the language used by spirits of the higher spheres, in conveying their ideas. It is written in characters entirely different from those of any earthly language, and with astonishing rapidity by a medium near here. It is translated and spoken by a young lady who resides in my family. I give the *sounds* of a short sentence, as nearly as they can be represented by the English alphabet: 'Ki-e-lou-cou-ze-ta.' The translation given of these few *sounds*, is as follows: 'As heaven or the spirit spheres are to be the future home of all mankind, so is knowledge to accompany them in the paths of wisdom; while peace and

love, in a chain of goodness, shall bind the universal whole in the bonds of harmony.'

"It will readily be seen, by the brevity of the language, that the facility of obtaining communications from the spirit land is greatly increased. More can be written at one sitting than was formerly done in weeks. The young lady, Miss H., translates the manuscript in her natural state, having learned the language in the spirits' home. So, the heretofore tedious methods of obtaining long communications, a few words or sentences at a time, will soon be dispensed with. A half-dozen lines written in the superior condition, and translated in the natural state at leisure, becomes an interesting essay, or a splendid sermon an hour long. What will not progression yet reveal to us?" What, indeed!

Another set of mediums claim to be speaking mediums, but this is an old idea stolen from the quakers. The only difference appears to be, that the spirits move the mediums rather more freely than they do our drab-coated friends. Speaking of Mr. Finney, one of those gentlemen who claim to discourse by what is styled "spiritual afflatus," Mr. Ambler in his *Spirit Messenger* remarks:—

"Mr. Finney claims to speak under the direction of spirits, and he asserted last evening that he never premeditated what he said, that he was not liberally educated, and that he had read but very little; he also said that he never spoke in public till about six months since, and that he was forced from the carpenter's bench (he being then a journeyman joiner), to take the stand before the public, by spiritual influences." Not only does Mr. Finney claim to speak by direction of the spirits, but Ambler himself puts forward similar pretensions, for shortly afterwards he tells us:—"By invitation, we visited the friends in Hartford on Sunday,

the 21st instant, and delivered two lectures, under spiritual influence, to large and attentive audiences."

Of Mr. Spear, another speaking medium, Mr. Hewett, his secretary, and editor of a spirit paper, remarks:—

"Early in Mr. Spear's spiritual experience, a peculiar speaking inspiration came upon him, and through that he delivered several discourses to as many congregations. Since then, he has been the instrument of the same kind of influence, in giving discourses at Hopedale, Milford, Mass., and at Milford, N.H.; and subsequently he has delivered several in the city of Boston, at private circles and conferences."

Judging from the following description of one of Mr. Ambler's spiritual spoutings, these lectures delivered by "afflatus," would be a disgrace to a Hottentot, much more to any man of common intelligence. The *Brooklyn Eagle* thus remarks:—"An individual named Ambler, delivered a lecture last evening at the Brooklyn Museum, on the subject of the spirits. According to the announcement published in our columns, the lecture was delivered by 'spiritual impression.' We cannot say whether the lecture was actually dictated by spirits; but if it was, it must have been the spirits of a number of superannuated donkeys; for nothing so stupid could emanate from the spirit of any thing save an ass, and a very dull one at that. The lecturer, after appearing on the stage, sat down and threw himself into a number of attitudes, meant to be desperately graceful, and remained for some time without commencing his performance, no doubt waiting to be moved by the spirits. At last he commenced his discourse, and poured out a stream of mouthing nonsense without the fraction of an idea at the bottom of it: it was not merely muddy, it was all mud; it was not simply chaffy, it was all chaff. There was, moreover, beneath the volume of vapid rant, an

apparent effort to inculcate infidelity, and subvert Divine Revelation, showing plainly enough that the object of the trashy discourse was as vicious as it was silly. At the conclusion of the scene a 'collection' was taken up by the lecturer's direction, which realised some half-dozen pennies. The audience was composed of the most indulgent class of the community, and yet there was considerable hissing, expressive of universal disgust. One useful purpose would be served by a multiplication of such lectures, and that would be the extinguishment of a dangerous humbug."

The last description of medium of which we have to treat, is the dancing one. The idea of this, we expect, has been suggested by the dancing dervishes or the shaking quakers, although a Mr. M'Cann Dunn, in chronicling the novelty, regards it as indigenous to the West. He says:—

"It is now nearly one year since the first manifestations, claiming to be spiritual, were made, which were in the form of 'raps,' as they are familiarly termed. This order of manifestations was soon superseded by the higher—such as *writing* and clairvoyance, but more generally by a species of dancing or exercising which we have not seen described in any of the spiritual periodicals now published, and are, therefore, inclined to the opinion that these phenomena are indigenous to the West. In these dances the former individual, as well as national, character of departed persons, is often portrayed by those entirely unacquainted with them—in such a striking manner as to be recognised by their acquaintances.

"We think that we can safely state, there are one hundred persons in this vicinity who have been thus influenced; representing all classes and ages, from the child of two years, to the parent of fifty, or upward.

We have frequently seen twenty-five, and sometimes as many as fifty persons at one time, dancing to the merry music of the violin—a scene so novel and interesting in its character, as not to fail to elicit the attention and consideration of the most sceptical.”

Mr. M'Cann Dunn, however, had only lighted upon an old idea, even so far as the West was concerned, for Medium Rev. C. Hammond had sometime previously described the phenomenon in the following terms:—

“The dancing mediums are old and young, and of both sexes. Sometimes the dance is performed in a circle of three or four persons, but not always. The movements are very eccentric, yet often exceedingly graceful. This part of the manifestations came rather in contact with my sense of propriety, but as I was willing to let the spirits do as they pleased, and as I saw nothing repulsive to my moral feelings, I gradually inclined to relish it much the same as the rest of the company. There was a peculiar feature in this display of spirit-power which arrested my attention. No one who danced desired it, neither could they stop it. They sometimes made an effort (for they were conscious) to sit down or fall down, but they could not do either. When music was heard, I observed that accurate time was kept by the mediums.”

Again a believer writing from Cleveland, Ohio, says:—

“A lady who had joined the Methodist Church, in Cleveland, only two weeks previous, was thrown into a magnetic, or, as our western friends call it, a spiritualised condition, and called for music; and after she had danced fifteen or twenty minutes, was suddenly released, and returned home, I presume, none the worse for what she could not help. But lest the reader may indulge some scruples, I may be permitted to say, that I regard the dancing as a preparatory exercise to other

more useful developments. . I saw several exhibitions of dancing during my stay in Cleveland, and I have reason to believe that such exercises may be necessary to prepare persons for a membership that will confound the ignorance and prejudice of intolerant hypocrisy, that dare not own the truth until popular opinion yields to the force of facts. . . . On Sunday all the circles meet in a large hall, and various exercises are enjoyed, as the spirits direct."

Now that we have described the various kinds of mediums which the new philosophy has called into existence, we will open the reader's eyes as to the estimation in which the genus is held by two of the chief organs of spiritualism :—

"Mediums, too often, are too impatient to get all their exciting questions answered, and we spirits do our work in regular order, under the government of regular laws, and this mode of operation becomes too tedious for some mediums, they become impatient, and then they go to work and answer their own questions, and these questions will generally be answered, as far as a knowledge in regard to them is stored up in the mind of such medium, or in those persons that have control of such medium's mind."—*Love and Wisdom*, p. 24.

"If mediums would be patient, and wait until we give them communications, then all would go right; but sometimes they will make themselves communications."—*Ibid.*, p. 26.

"Under these influences, they become impatient with the spirits, who do our work by immutable laws. And under such a state of excitement, they respond to their own questions, by a law which they do not understand, and consequently mistake it for a spiritual operation."—*Ibid.*, p. 28.

“Most of the communications here through mediums, I am disposed to believe, are unreliable.”—*Mountain Cove Journal*, No. 6.

“There is scarcely a medium for spiritual communications in the United States of long experience who is confident that the spirits who communicate are the individuals whom they purport to be.”—*Ibid.*, No. 8.

CHAPTER V.

LITERATURE AND LOGIC OF THE SPHERES.

THE writing mediums have this advantage over their fellows of the rapping tribe, namely, that the communications made by the spirits through them are less liable to error, and are more likely to be durable. Through them we have been favoured with abundant specimens of the literature of the spheres, and by their aid the logic of this realm has been transferred to material types. Not only prose, but poetry, professedly therefrom, may be had in quantities equal to the demand. In the United States there are papers and periodicals devoted to nothing else,—weekly, semi-weekly, and quarterly,—terms two or three dollars per annum, payable in advance. For those whose appetites cannot be satisfied with less than a full meal at once, there are also bound volumes, goodly in size, and closely printed. The price, of course, is considerably more than is charged for books of the same size on mere mundane topics, and the typographical errors are rather more numerous.

The growth of this species of literature has been rapid in the extreme. We know nothing in the natural world with which to compare it. The *Victoria regia*, which, by its amazing developments, drove Sir Joseph Paxton to the invention which subsequently resulted in the Crystal Palace, grew at a snail's pace in comparison. Indeed, by those who are ignorant of Mormon

statistics, the extension of this species of literature, and the greediness by which it is swallowed, will appear almost incredible. In tracing it from its origin to its present gigantic developments, we shall confine ourselves to the publications of professed mediums, individuals who, as we have before explained, are used by the spirits to convey their sentiments, their poetry and prose, to those yet in the body.

Our old friend the Rev. C. Hammond ranks among the most highly favoured. We incline to give him the first place; at any rate, he has made most money by publications to which he has the shrewdness to give most startling and *ad captandum* titles. Of course, everybody would like to see, when satisfied of its being the real thing, "The Pilgrimage of THOMAS PAINE to the Sixth Circle in the Spirit-World, by Rev. Charles Hammond, Medium. Written by the Spirit of Thomas Paine." The price, "bound in muslin," is about three shillings. It is a dingy, shabbily-printed little volume; dear, were it on mere mundane topics, at even a shilling. It had a most extensive sale, and was soon followed by another book, similar in size, price, and appearance. We copy the title-page entire:—"LIGHT FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD, comprising a series of articles on the Condition of Spirits, and the development of Mind in the Rudimental and Second Spheres. Written wholly by the control of Spirits, without any volition or will by the Medium, or any thought or care in regard to the matter presented by his hand.—C. HAMMOND, *Medium*." In his introduction, bearing date Rochester, U. S., Oct. 31, 1851, he advises the reader that the spirits have suggested a desire to use him in the preparation of another volume which is to go still deeper into the spiritual abyss.

We have Mr. Hammond's own testimony to his per-

fect honesty of purpose and staunch fidelity to his employers, who are, he says, four spirits, with two of whom he was acquainted while they were in the exterior, and the others belonged to a former generation. But the reader shall have Mr. Hammond's own declarations. "The book"—*Light from the Spirit-World*—"was written without any will or volition, except that I consented to sit, and let my hand write as it was controlled by spirits; and as it was written by them, so I have caused it to be published. Not a word or sentence have I changed from the manuscript as *they* prepared it for the printer. The writers of this book are well satisfied, as they inform me; and what satisfies spirits I have no reason to complain of myself."

But for this declaration on the part of the medium, we should have had no hesitation in giving it as our opinion, from internal evidence, that the entire volume proceeded from one and the same mind. There is throughout a wonderful similarity of style; and the reputed authors, if not in the "same plane of development," are certainly very equally matched in intellectual caliber. This refers to the volume entitled *Light from the Spirit World*. As to *Paine's Pilgrimage*, it puzzles us still more. The author of *The Age of Reason*, whatever may have been his faults, knew how to write the English language. His style was nervous and concise. He was not only intelligible, but his readers could not misunderstand him. If he had written in the style—slipshod, ungrammatical, confused—in which the medium gives us his productions from the "interior," his books would have done no mischief. They would never have had a second perusal. A worthless, drunken scoundrel, as he was, there was a time when Tom Paine would have blushed at the thought of being the author of such a farrago: and how it is

possible that he could have thus dictated to the Rev. Charles Hammond, utterly passes our comprehension.

• We copy a few rays of "light" from the "spirit world," as a specimen of its style, and of the information to be obtained from Mr. Hammond's book. We make our extracts at random; for the volume is pervaded by such a sameness, such a dead level of flatness and inanity, that there is no room for ingenuity in the selection. After reading the few sentences which follow, the reader will probably come to the same conclusion we did after wading through the entire volume:—"There needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us this."

Our extract is from the chapter or section on "Wisdom:"—

"Wisdom is Wisdom. All is not wisdom. All is not folly. Wisdom wills good. Folly wills otherwise. One is right. One is wrong. Wisdom will do right. Folly will do wrong. He that is wise, let him take heed. He who is unwise, let him get wisdom. And let him get it where it is to be found. Let him not seek for it in the folly of fools, but in men of understanding, in spirits commissioned by God, to give light to those who grope in darkness. Let him cast off the shackles, tear asunder the false robes, rend the galling chains, and burst the bonds that enslave his captive soul. Let him launch his mind into the stream of wisdom flowing from the mountain of God, and bathe in the limpid waters, that he may be healed.

"Wisdom is not selfish. Wisdom is not partial. Human wisdom is both. Men are considered wise, but their wisdom is comparatively foolishness. Men are wise only as they gain knowledge. Men are unwise when they neglect what they need to make them wise. Men are wise when they do good—unwise when they do evil. Men are wise in what they know—unwise in what they do not know. Knowledge of God is wisdom. Knowledge is power. Knowledge is good. Knowledge will save. Knowledge will cure. Knowledge will do what ignorance cannot do. Hence knowledge of God

is the wisdom of God, the power of God, and the goodness of God. Neither could wisdom exist without God."—*Light from the Spirit World*, pp. 39. 40.

Space is not allowed us, in the present chapter, to notice other bound volumes of the literature of the spheres. They are peculiarly rich in periodicals, to which we must pay a little attention. The place of honour is certainly due to a quarto sheet, the first number of which bears date Auburn, N. Y., June 5, 1851. It is issued semi-monthly, and is called *The Spiritual and Moral Instructor*. The editor is J. S. Hyatt; but the principal contributor is the Rev. J. L. Scott, a clergyman of very liberal views, an ultra-universalist. He has no *church* yet, but preaches in the City Hall at Auburn, and wherever else he can get an opportunity. His sermons, the editor says, "are *inspired* at the time of their delivery, and are not a subject of premeditation, the texts being communicated to him by Paul, through the rappings immediately before or at their commencement." They are taken down by one of his hearers from his lips, and published in the *Instructor*. The sermons, those of them we have had the patience to read, are such as might be expected under the circumstances,—illogical, bombastical, and at times blasphemous. The suggestion of the texts, the reader will observe, is said to be by Paul. The preacher does not venture to charge the sentiments of his discourses upon the apostle, in which, as we shall see presently, he is far in the rear of some others of his kidney. To very little purpose, as it seems to us, are the *texts* given; that of almost any one of the sermons might as well be prefixed to another, and any passage from Genesis to Revelation would be just as applicable to the majority. We give the introductory passages of one of these pub-

lished discourses, from No. 5 of the *Spiritual and Moral Instructor* :—

“The noble powers of mind, how much debased to the production of thought bemeaning to its purposed dignity!

“Mind, the quickening principle of which originates in God, and is designed to range the majestic universe, to gather strength from every dropping sand within its sphere—from the contemplation of every moving atom in the vastness of unmeasured space—from the animating principle of every living thing—from the lute and mollusca, through the ascending degree of higher life and expanding intellectuality, to the flaming seraph who attends the Creator at His throne—in man is wounded by the deadly and demoralising nature of sin against goodness, and is thus prevented its lofty ascent; and, being impelled in pursuit of fancy pearl by the motive force of evil, is rendered a penal slave to vice, prejudice, and vain ambitious life. Hence from its secret chambers is poured forth a chaotic mass of garbled vindictive imprecations, terminating in oppressions, ambitious cruelties, and the catalogue indicative of a mind in perfect wreck, driven and dashed against the fatal rocks that rend in sunder the noble form and despoil the garnished soul of the human body.

“Mind, designed to harmonize in its own movements, and in ascension wing its way through portals of wisdom, bearing along by attraction the weaker elements around, is crushed and welters in gore at the base of the mountain of sin, and, tending to the dark abyss, drags with it that embraced by the power of its influence.”

This is a fair specimen of the style of this reverend gentleman, and of the important truths of which he claims to be the medium of communication. To us, notwithstanding the editor's assertion relative to the suggestion of texts and the inspiration of the preacher, Mr. Scott seems always foggy, frequently bewildered, and at times maudlin. By the way, as we learn from a letter in *The New York Tribune*, there is another gen-

tleman who professes occasionally to receive "texts" from departed spirits: namely, our old friend Ballou. The account is given in a letter signed E. A. Lukens, dated June 17, 1851, and has been copied extensively by periodicals devoted to the literature of the "interior." It seems from the narrative that Mr. Ballou was in a "circle." By means of the alphabet, the spirit asked him, "Have you a subject for next Sunday?" Curious, was it not, that the spirit, instead of *answering*, should *ask* questions; should become, instead of a rapper, a rappee? Mr. Ballou replied that he had no subject for the next Sunday. The spirit then said, "I want you to preach from 1 Cor. ii. 12, 13." Mr. Ballou thanked the spirit, and prepared the sermon. But the most wonderful part of the story remains. The spirit had requested a light table to be placed in front of the preacher, that, during the sermon, he might give evidence to Mr. Ballou's entire congregation of his presence and agency. By some means this reasonable request was forgotten; but, says Mr. Lukens, who was an eye-witness, "a large desk stood there, where the books, slates, etc., used in school during the week, were stowed for the Sabbath, and several times it was lifted and moved by an invisible power. The good spirit, whose reasonable request to have a light table to move had not been attended to, lifted the heavy desk in pure desperation of earnestness and love."

Of course, Mr. Lukens had not the most remote suspicion that Ballou had any agency, direct or indirect, in these fantastic desecrations of the Sabbath; and in the simplicity of his heart he adds, much in the style of a greenhorn after witnessing the feats performed by the Wizard of the North—"It was a rare and impressive scene; I shall not soon forget it."

We do not remember which spirit publication it was that made public the following message from George

Washington, which was printed precisely as it came from the medium, Mr. L. Bedell—orthography, capitals, punctuation, and all.

“I am hapy to see so meny here to nigh for purpass that shoudd ingage the attention of All serious Thinkers, Som Say that we are not Spirits, and they will not investigate the matter to prove what we are, but stand afar off and Cry out to all others to keep away two. Now these showd be made to Searc into the mater, and in God’s good tim will, we have often told you to believe in us and the Bible for we do not ask you to believe in eny thing else, As the people her hove but just begun to meet in numbers to write and talk of us and for us, I will only say that you are ingaged in A very Good cause, and should be firm in what you say. If ther eny here that do not believe what we Say, they must look and be convinced, but you must not trifle with us for we are no triflers. we meny times make mistakes and so we are called liars, but this is owing to our neglect of the records that are given us, and also to evel spirits, but we will try to be more careful or correct after we have becom more use to writing for our Friends.

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

Another communication, received the same evening, and signed “William Bedell,” father of L. Bedell, has the same orthography as the above, and shows conclusively that “George Washington” and “William Bedell” both spell exactly alike, and both stand much in need of Johnson’s *Dictionary*, or Carpenter’s *Spelling*.

The Spiritual Telegraph is the name of a weekly paper published in New York, the first number of which was issued on the 8th of May, 1852. Its typography is unexceptionable, and it is printed on good paper. It obtained a subscription list of over six thousand in three weeks, and affords a handsome revenue to the publisher, Mr. C. Partridge, and to the Rev. S. B. Brittan, of Bridgeport, who exercises the functions of editor. It is

the organ of "The New York Conference for the Investigation of Spiritual Phenomena," and contains reports of their sayings and doings. This conference is composed of men and women, most of them, so far as we know, of fair standing in the community, but evidently credulous in the extreme, with the bump of marvellousness largely developed. It is just as clear that there are among them two or three consummate knaves, who pull the wires and render the meetings interesting. The publisher of *The Spiritual Telegraph* is, of course, always present, and so is a Dr. Hallock, who acts as secretary.

More and more astounding are the developments from "the interior," as discussed in this conference, and published in *The Telegraph*, from week to week. At the first meeting of which we have an account, Dr. Hallock read a letter from a namesake of his, a Quaker, who went into "the interior" some thirty years since. Dr. Hallock said, the medium by whom the communication was made was a girl about fifteen, who knew nothing about Quakers or Quakerism. We quote the concluding sentences:—"The Bible, a great part of it, would be right, if people would only give it the right construction. When the Bible was translated into English, it was misconstrued; then I judge great mistakes were made in that operation. There is, I think, a great many good things in it; so I *think* part of it must have been translated wrong."

Most sapient spirit! you "think" there *is* a great many good things in the Bible; and therefore, O most logical spirit!—therefore, because a great many good things *is* in it, you *think* part of it must have been translated wrong. Verily, your logic is on a par with your grammar.

From the pages of *The Spiritual Telegraph* we might quote a multitude of similar illustrations of the most

greedily-swallowed absurdities. There is a letter purporting to come from John Calvin, of which the Genevan reformer would have been utterly ashamed; and John Wesley is represented as the author of some of the veriest trash, ungrammatical and illogical, to say nothing of the doctrines, that ever came from the brain or the pen of a demented transcendentalist. While speaking of the great dissenting divine, we cannot refrain from calling attention to the contradictions to which he is said to have given utterance since he has been a sojourner in the spheres. Communicating through the medium of Mr. Boynton, his spirit says:—

“I entertained many erroneous views while in the form, and I am very anxious the world should know wherein I was in error. I believed and preached many truths, but also many errors: the truth I wish to remain; the error I wish to have rejected. The sect who profess to pattern from my life and teachings have all my errors, besides the accumulation of many more; but have not much of the truth. . . . I have often looked back upon my former writings and preaching, and wished that oblivion might for ever cover them; and also, that if I could return to earth in my corporeal form again, I would teach quite another doctrine.”

But the spirit of this same John Wesley sends us a communication through Mr. Harvey's medium, in which he conveys a very different sentiment.

“My views on Christian theology, which I taught in my ministry, and are set forth in my public works, are, in all essential points, the same as I now have, only my present views are much enlarged.”

We will help the believers in spirit communications to an explanation of this phenomenon, for which we hope they will feel obliged to us. It seems that so little confidence have the rappingologists editors in the spiritual origin of these messages, that they do not scruple to alter, correct, or re-

ject them at pleasure, when sent to them for publication. A Mr. Bedell, who favoured us with a remarkably curious specimen of orthography, emanating, as he stated, from the spirit of George Washington, complained that Mr. Brittan refused—judiciously, as we think—to print his communications. Now, the first of the above messages from John Wesley, received through Mr. Boynton, was published, it appears, in two forms—as a pamphlet and in the columns of *The Telegraph*—with a wide difference between the two. This naturally excited the ire of Medium Boynton, and the two seers are now at arm's length. Brittan coolly enough states that he is in the habit of correcting spirit communications when they “do not come up,” as he phrases it, “to his standard of taste.” Only think of S. B. Brittan correcting the writings of the spirit of John Wesley! And may not the believers cheat themselves by supposing these contradictions in Wesley's messages to proceed from unauthorised alterations of pettifogging spirit newspaper editors?

Another specimen, said to be from Dr. Adam Clarke, through the above Boynton, will illustrate the transparency of the hoax and the grossness of the delusion. The article is headed “The Doctrine of Affinity,” and bears in full the signature of the learned commentator. It begins thus:—

“When we consider the doctrine of affinities, we are led at once to account for what we behold in the world of nature. We see why one substance adheres to another—why one form of matter becomes blended and assimilated with another. The doctrine is worthy the thought of the profoundest philosopher.

“We behold why there exists so much discord, uneasiness, and such differences among different species of animals and different kinds of matter; why some plants cannot grow and flourish in the vicinity of others; why some animals cannot dwell together; and also why a higher order of animals

cannot enjoy each other's society. This is all explained by the laws of affinities, as seen in nature.

"It is a fact beyond successful contradiction, that all pairs are not mates. Because a man or a woman is a parent, there is not of necessity an affinity with the children—because two persons are brothers or sisters, there is not necessarily an affinity between them; but observation proves that, though there is the same blood coursing through their veins, it does not follow that there is an affinity of mind or feeling: neither must we infer, because two are wedded according to law, that they have an affinity for each other. Facts are in the way of such an idea.

"There are two kinds of affinities: first, natural, or such as are found in the kingdom of nature; second, spiritual, or such as are found in the spirit world.

"It is erroneous to suppose that because a man is the husband of a woman in this world, that he will be so in the spirit-world; that children whom he has begotten here will be necessarily his in a future state."

This is very small talk; and, admitting for a moment the honesty of the medium, we are half inclined to be vexed with the good old doctor that he should waste our time—*his*, on the supposition, is of no consequence—with such puerile inanities, when he might have solved for us mysteries that perplexed *him* while in the body, and which, he must know, still perplex us. "All pairs are not mates:" that is a fact beyond successful contradiction! There is, nevertheless, an inkling of something we did not know before in the latter part of our quotation—but only an inkling: if a man's children are not *his*, whose are they?

The contents of *The Telegraph* are of a very miscellaneous character, for its columns are open to spirits of every degree. For instance, we have the spirit of one Jack Waters communicating to Mr. Partridge, lucifer-

match maker and publisher of spiritual publications (*The Telegraph* included), after the following fashion. The phrase, "I love you for you are onest," doubtless afforded Partridge considerable satisfaction, though we question if any mortal has a similar partiality for Partridge for a similar reason.

"I have told you that I want goin to leve you. Now Charles Partridge I have cride matches for you many a day, and I love you for you are onest, and I want you to hear my story. I am in a lone sphere; I have no friends here to teach me how to spell; then pity me wile I tell—My sorrows ways me down to earth—my sole is much deprest for all I loved are in another sphere—The world was cold to me—My children crid for bred—Nothing could make me steel, but my troubles turned me sad and in the forgetful dram I laughfed and wild away my time until to late—I returned to my poor home and all was gone—I never see them more in live. My God! pity me, and help me to progress so that I can sometime see them in a brighter sphere.

"JACK WATERS."

Decidedly the richest number of *The Spiritual Telegraph* is that issued on the 3rd of July, 1852. Nearly one entire page of it is covered with fac-similes of the handwriting of forty-three spirits in the "interior." They take hold of material pens, and dip them in material ink now. There will be no more need of writing "mediums." Mr. Boynton and Mr. Hammond, and the nine hundred and ninety-eight others, may seek some other employment. Their "occupation's gone." This wonderful event originated on this wise:—At a meeting of the New York Circle, on the 24th of November, 1851, the spirits commenced with their signal for the alphabet, and the following message was communicated:—

"My dear friends,—I am happy to announce to you

that the project which has engaged our attention for some years has at last been in part accomplished.—I am,
“ BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.”

At a subsequent meeting, held at the house of the publisher of *The Telegraph*, a Mr. Edward P. Fowler was directed by the spirits then present to place a piece of paper on the table in his bed-room, with a good pen and ink. He did so, of course; and in the morning found this sentiment inscribed on the paper—“Peace! but not without freedom.” And below this the paper was inscribed all over with the signatures of persons long since dead. Could anything be more convincing? Fortunately, too, there is opportunity for verifying these signatures; for it so happens that every one of these denizens of the “interior” left behind him, in this world, a specimen of his penmanship; and they all sign their names now just as they did then. We have the bold autograph of “John Hancock,” and that of “B. Franklin,” with the same flourish he made when in the body. Then follow G. Washington, Adams, father and son, Jefferson, Maddison, Monroe, Jackson, and Polk. Harrison’s name is there also;—but General Taylor, it seems, wouldn’t sign. The fact is, as would occur at once to any sane mind, the knave who perpetrated this contemptible hoax did not happen to have with him a copy of Taylor’s signature. The “circle,” upon receiving the precious document from Mr. Fowler, with the assurance that thus he found it upon his table, were in a perfect frenzy of astonishment and delight. Those who were present signed a certificate, testifying to their full belief “*that these are the signatures of the spirits themselves;*” and the whole account is published for the astonishment and delight of the thousands whose appetite for the marvellous grows by what it feeds upon, and whose deglutition dilates just

in proportion to the demands made upon their gullets. Whether Mr. E. P. Fowler prepared this document himself, or whether it was written by another member of the "circle" who had access to his room, we are unable to say. If the former, he is a knave; if the latter, he is a fool—a dilemma from which we cannot extricate him.

At the meeting of the "circle," held shortly afterwards, Dr. Hall inquired of the spirits whether each spirit executed his or her own name as they occurred on the parchment, to which we are told the spirits answered emphatically, "Yes!—each signed himself *by the aid of the battery!*" There is nothing particularly extraordinary in the explanation, as Mr. Fowler himself bore testimony to seeing the spirit of Benjamin Franklin *with a large box of electrical apparatus under his arm!*

A writer in *Blackwood*, in alluding to the foregoing circumstance, humorously remarks:—"We hope this document will be preserved with as much care as the original 'Declaration of Independence;' it ought to be. Edward P. Fowler, it would appear, is a remarkably gifted seer—quite a Joe Smith in his way; and Franklin, or rather the spirit of that illustrious man, requested him to get a book, and note down very particularly his experiences. Charles Partridge, who was present, inspired by a natural jealousy of the preference shown to Fowler, inquired (rather impertinently, as we think) whether, if he had been in the room, he could have seen what Edward saw? The reader must understand that, by this time, the spirits had vouchsafed to appear as carnalities to Fowler. Franklin's reply conveys a dignified and proper rebuke:—'*Your sphere would not have permitted us to present ourselves even to Edward.*' The Partridge was caught in his own snare—a victim to the Fowler. It so happened, however, that the latter had mentioned the apparition of a queer little man in

his room on a previous evening, and another of the party requested to know what name he bore in the flesh. Franklin courteously replied, 'The small man was Hahnemann.' We wonder whether any deceased allopathist is permitted to walk."

To return, however, to the matter of spiritual subscriptions:—"Putting aside the appearances, which are simply harmless, especially as they are confined to Fowler, let us seriously consider the inconveniences of *post mortem* signature. We never heard of such a thing before, except in the case of Sir Robert Redgauntlet, and his receipt went hissing like a squib up the chimney. A judge, of the name of Gray, is stated to have signed a document expressive of his belief in the genuineness of the spiritual subscriptions. In that case, we congratulate the forgers of New York. One thing is quite evident, that they may now counterfeit with impunity the handwriting of any deceased party. For some years to come, it is improbable that spirits will be admitted to the witness-box, or required to take an oath; and, supposing it to be established that spirits can write, it is difficult to imagine how a defence, resting on the authenticity of the signature, could be repelled. Suppose a man dies in the act of executing a will, and five minutes afterwards his spirit 'raps' for two witnesses, and signs the deed in their presence, will it be good in law? Why not? There is the signature, and nobody else made it; and it would be hard to maintain that the spirit could not remedy the infirmity of the dying hand. There is a splendid prospect open for collectors of autographs. Letters from the dead will soon become as plentiful as strawberries; nay, we greatly fear that they will tread upon the heels of the living. Washington is at it again, this time with improved orthography. Would you like to hear him?

“O, ye men of intelligence! Be ye warned that this doctrine of spiritual intercourse will spread and overleap all opposition. Be patient, examine, investigate—try all things by the unfailing laws of nature and reason. Be not easily turned from your course; let *onward* and *upward* be your watchword. All will be well if you persevere. Have charity; love your opposers; forbear; seek to enlighten them. O, be forgiving! you are progressing.’ ”

“It is very well for Washington to ask us to be patient; but what patience can stand such frightful drivels? Why, the man—we beg pardon, ghost—has forgotten the significance of language; for it is rank nonsense in a spirit, holding spiritual intercourse, to call that communication a doctrine. Can it be that spirits, like men, are liable to intellectual decay? It is an awful idea; but, from the foregoing specimen, it is evident that Washington is entitled to the privileges of the ‘Fogio Club.’ Would you like a touch of Jefferson, by way of relief? Here goes:—

“The anniversary of America’s birth is now being observed by millions of happy people, who enjoy the greatest blessings of any earthly nation. These blessings were won by a thorough and impartial investigation of the various theories of government, one of which was carried out in practice by a class of men who were not afraid of truth. In all its affairs (the government) it is as near the intended of God as its founders could at that time adopt, and at the same time consolidate the states. But, with all its blessings, it was not perfect; nor is it yet, and probably never will be. The union, as it is, is worth preserving, and I pray my countrymen will not destroy it; for, as sure as they do, civil war and carnage will assuredly follow. *Better permit one evil than to destroy all that is good.*”

“Perhaps the reader will be better able to appreciate the truly Roman stoicism of the last sentence when we

remind him that the children of Jefferson were, after his death, publicly sold for slaves in the market of New Orleans. In the midst of ineffable glory, the spirit of Jefferson yet approves of the human traffic!

“ We hope these specimens will suffice; for we really have not space to notice the posthumous writings of Calvin and Fenelon, who, along with others of less celebrity, have deigned to communicate their spiritual musings to the American ear. In truth, this is a very serious revelation for authors. What would become of the living novelists were a new series of the ‘Waverley’ tales to be spiritually communicated? Are they safe against Cervantes and Boccaccio? Not at all. Spirits are proficient in all languages, and the new style both of Calvin and Fenelon is sonorous, with the Yankee twang. It is really too bad that the bread is to be taken out of our mouths by deceased authors, who can have no claim to copyright. Protection, they tell us, is dead. Alas! the grave itself is now no protection.”

As in mere telluric publications, so in the periodicals devoted to the “literature of the interior,” we have occasionally *poetical* contributions—not, indeed, such as ordinary mortals write, but the avowed productions of the great masters of the lyre, written in “the interior,” and sent up, through mediums, to the editors. He was a bold villain who first conceived the idea of palming off his school-boy imitations as the veritable inspiration of the departed. But his success was equal to his audacity, although not a verse has yet appeared that could be imposed upon any one, who does not wish to be imposed upon, as the genuine production of the poet to whom it is attributed. “*Populus vult decipi, et decipiatur.*”

According to the said mediums, Edgar A. Poe, the author of *The Raven*, is still “spirituously” addicted; and his shade composes under the influence of intoxica-

tion. Mrs. Lydia Tenney, of Georgetown, Massachusetts, a noted "medium," lately communicated to a magnetic circle a message and poem from the deceased bard. It is not easy to decide whether they savour most of peach brandy or of ether.

"Listen to me, and I will tell you of beautiful things—of thoughts both wild and tender—both soothing and tumultuous, which dwell in a human heart! A question which has moved the minds of millions is, 'What is the end and aim of imagination—for what was it implanted in the human organisation? What was my own but a vortex rushing within itself, upon whose brink I could seem to stand and see what was being swallowed and re-produced—thorns, jagged rocks, beautiful flowers—all in the whirl of this ceaseless current merged?"

"O, the dark, the awful chasm!

O, the fearful spirit spasm!

Wrought by unresisted passion

In my heart.

"Fancies joyous but alluring,

Love pure but unenduring,

From time to time securing

Each a part.

"Then embraced by seraph bands,

Drawn by tender loving hands

From those treacherous, hateful sands

Of despair.

"How my soul was waked to gladness,

And cast off the deadening sadness

And the soul-devouring madness

Writhing there.

"Then came dreams so soft and holy,

Over roses wandering slowly,

With sweet music stealing lowly

To my ear.

“Through the long, idle days, I sang to her lays ;

From my own wild and wandering brain,

While lingering near, with a smile or a tear,

Listened my Mary O'Shane—

Dear Mary, my Mary—Mary O'Shane.

“Drawn away one sweet night by the moon's gentle light,

My steps wandered down to the main,

Where the first wave that beat cast up at my feet

The form of my Mary O'Shane—

My Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

“Poor reason undone, forsook her frail throne,

And madness careered through my brain ;

My beacon-light gone, I wandered alone,

Wildly mourning my Mary O'Shane—

My Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

“The sun beaming now from the hill's smiling brow

Rests down on the flower-hedged lane ;

But no more can it rise on the soul-beaming eyes,

The eyes of sweet Mary O'Shane—

Dear Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

“While the wild booming sea brought over to me

Thoughts sharp with their torturing pain,

In each wave of the sea came wailing to me

The voice of my Mary O'Shane—

Loved Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

“Weary heart, wandering head, gladly sought their last bed,

Madly prayed for again and again ;

'Mong the Angels above I have found my lost love,

I have clasped sainted Mary O'Shane—

Angel Mary, my Mary—Mary O'Shane !”

Some prose communications from B. Franklin and George Washington, received through Mr. Harshman, and published in one of the spirit papers, are accompanied by portraits of their respective authors, with a specimen of spirit poetry under each portrait. The following is under the likeness of Franklin :—

“ The likeness of this portrait is to represent
 The likeness of man when he dwelt here below,
 But the likeness of the spirit you would like to know,
 And this would be no more than I would like to show,
 But the mind is not prepared the likeness for to see,
 Of spirits from the angels' home as bright as we.

B. FRANKLIN.”

Under the portrait of Washington we read as follows :—

“ When the likeness of this portrait you see,
 Remember that it is to represent the likeness of me ;
 But the spirit in its brightness you cannot see,
 For it now far above the brightness of thee.

“ G. WASHINGTON.”

It is somewhat remarkable that two spirits so different as those of Washington and Franklin should both speak, in the first lines, of “ the likeness of this portrait ; ” and some may be at a loss to know what the likeness of a portrait is. Still we must not doubt, as Mr. Harshman says he wrote by spiritual impression.

To show the miserable shifts the mediums are put to to keep up a supply of spirit communications equal to the demand, we may mention that, not long since, Mr. A. J. Davis, one of the leading professors of the new philosophy, sent four articles to the *Hartford Times*, on the “ Philosophy of producing and controlling the fall of rain.” He professed to write them, not by his own thoughts or study, but by spirit impression. At the close of his first letter he

says : " In the mean time, Mr. Editor, until something more comes to me concerning this subject, which, when it comes, I will hasten to write and send you, I have the pleasure of remaining," etc. At the close of his third article, he says : " You may expect the ' plan for producing and controlling rain ' in my next. What that plan will be; is no more known to my brains than it is to yours. And so I confess that my curiosity to know ' what's coming next ' is not in the least allayed by the fact that my hand has traced the foregoing." At the opening of his fourth letter, he says : " With this communication, I am impressed to terminate my correspondence."

These extracts are sufficient to show that Mr. Davis professes to write by inspiration or impression from some higher intelligence than himself. But what are the facts of the case? Why, some months since, a Mr. Daniel Vaughan, of Covington, published a circular containing a new theory for producing rain by artificial means. In December last, a copy of the circular was given to Mr. Davis, then lecturing in Cincinnati, who promised to give it special consideration when next in a clairvoyant state. This it seems he has done; and now comes out with Mr. Vaughan's theory as an original theory *revealed* to *himself* by the spirits!

Mr. Vaughan, in the course of his observations, remarks : " Two volumes of air, saturated with moisture at different temperatures, will be overcharged with it when mixed together, and deposit part of it in a liquid form." In place of this, Mr. Davis is *impressed* to say : " Two masses or volumes of air, thoroughly saturated with moisture or aqueous vapour, and of different temperatures, will, when they approach and mix together, become overcharged with the moisture, and part of it would of necessity be precipitated in the form of rain to the earth."

Again : Mr. Vaughan says,— " The amount of watery

vapour which the atmosphere can contain, depends not only on its temperature, but likewise on its *electricity*." This thought Mr. Davis expresses thus: "It is my impression—indeed I may say I 'see' it to be unqualifiedly the case—that all atmospheric phenomena are wholly referable to the alternate action of *electricity*." And so on through the whole of Mr. Vaughan's theory.

In regard to this spiritual plagiarism, Mr. Vaughan wrote to the *New York Tribune*: "A few days ago I received two numbers of the *Hartford Times*, containing four letters from A. J. Davis, in which he claims my theory as his own, and pretends to have arrived at a knowledge of it during one of his clairvoyant spells. Besides amalgamating my doctrine with his spiritualisms, embellishing them with his sublime jargon, and committing some notorious blunders in his attempts to alter my expressions, he pretends to quote from the writings of Humboldt a sentence which he copied with scarcely any alteration from my circular," etc.

We should do injustice to our subject not to notice what, after all, is the *chef-d'œuvre* in this species of literature, the very cap-sheaf in this mass of absurdities and blasphemies. It is a quarto publication, entitled *Disclosures from the Interior, and Superior Care for Mortals*. It is issued semi-monthly at Auburn, N. Y., in a style of really beautiful typography, and on elegant paper. We copy the prospectus entire:—

♦

"This publication is dictated by spirits out of the flesh, and by them edited, superintended, and controlled.

"Its object is the disclosure of truth from heaven, guiding mankind into open vision of paradise, open communication with spirits redeemed, and proper and progressive understanding of the Holy Scriptures, and of the merits of JESUS CHRIST, from whom they originated in inspiration absolute, and of whom they teach, as the only Saviour of a dissevered and bewildered race.

“The circle of apostles and prophets are its conductors from the interior; holding control over its columns, and permitting no article to find place therein unless originated, dictated, or admitted by them—they acting under direction of the Lord Supreme.

“James Congdon, Charles Coventry, Andrew L. Wilson, and Lonson Bush, are its publishers and proprietors; they having become, in full confidence of mind, disciples of the Lord; and being present external agents of the Circle Apostolic and Prophetic; acting under their direction, while faithful, as instruments for the distribution of truth.”

In the first number of this publication we have an “Introduction dictated by Paul the Apostolic Messenger;” “A Salutation to Disciples of Jesus, by the circle of Apostles and Prophets;” and a Poem dictated by—who would the reader suppose would have been selected by apostles and prophets as an associate in heralding their first number into the world? He would never guess. Even Percy Bysshe Shelley,—the boldly-avowed champion of atheism. He, however, ranked among the foremost of what Southey calls the *Satanic* school of poets, and never wrote such trash as is here fathered upon him. We copy two stanzas:—

“The earth reels fast within the strong maelstrom,
 Circling around the vortex of its doom :
 Death grasps, with fleshless hand, the helm ; his lips
 In mockery shout ‘ progression,’ as she dips
 Upon the marge of the abyss deep,
 Where the coiled serpents of the ocean sleep.

“Wake, wake, O mortal!—ope thy slumbrous ears,
 Charm’d by Circean melody of spheres.
 The Vices, bred in Passion’s burning cave,
 Scream through the storm, the vultures of the wave ;
 And ghouls tartarean, wehr-wolves of the sea,
 With eager jaws distended follow thee.”

We are further favoured with some blank verse of a similar inane character, as the reader will see from the following specimen. Shelley, we are sorry to observe, has lost much of his power of rhythm since he became a shade. Indeed, his lines will not scan; and his words have no meaning. It is evident that the spirit who dictated these lines is inadequate to the composition of such a poem as the "Sensitive Plant:"—

"Man hath no power
To bind the spirit here. Immutable and pure
Are laws that move us in our *Spirit-home*.
We have no Word of God save holiest page
Of Nature's book, spread out in panoramic view.
Here I am blest—my mind can sweep o'er all
Of Beauty, and drink in a freedom
That on earth I was denied. Earth's sons,
With souls of clay, would have despoiled me;
They made me what I was—they made me doubt;
But here, they have no power to mar my soul,
For to my 'lumined spirit is revealed
What once was dim and shadowy on earth.
Ah! immortality, thy *bliss*—and still
'Twas I who doubted thee!

Friend, listen why:

I saw the wrongs in *Church and State*, and I, too,
Saw a power to right them, and to make
An Eden's garden smiling here—
But others scorned, and wished not to right
Those wrongs I saw, for they were false,

Yet feigning to be true.

And when I thought of life, I said, 'tis dreams;
And *Death*, I said, is but a dreamless sleep;
And man, so false to man, I ne'er can wish
Affinity to thee—far better not to be;
And so I wished there was no *after life*."

H

In successive numbers we have "Visions by the Prophet Daniel;" "Outlines of the Interior, by John the Divine;" "A Poem, dictated by the spirit Samuel Taylor Coleridge;" another, "Dictated by the spirit Robert Southey."

That attributed to Coleridge is short and absurd enough for us to quote:—

"There is no doubt that there exist such voices;
 Yet I would not call them
 Voices of warning, that announce to us
 Only the inevitable. As the sun,
 E'er it be risen, sometimes paints its image
 In the atmosphere; so often do the spirits
 Of great events stride on before the events;
 And in to-day already walks to-morrow."

The far greater portion of the absurdities of this publication is attributed, with the most unblushing impudence, to St. Paul, and are solemnly declared to have been veritably dictated by the great apostle. Such masses of meaningless verbiage, of unintelligible jargon, were certainly never before printed. At the risk of disgusting the reader, we must verify our remark by a quotation at random. Take this from No. 12, under the date of July 24, 1851:—

The internal of all intellectuality hath its origin in God. The most glorified of all created existences capacitated to approach the throne of the Divine Effulgence, receive the breath of His Being as animating fire, and move in the divinity of its loveliness.

"Hence, by adapted laws, the spirit descendeth to proximity with the ascending focality of physical nature, when the elements affinitise, thence inchoating, cause that innovation which blendeth the majestic procedures, and by inversion in-foldeth and thence ascendeth through spiritual unfoldings to the attractive source of all the intellectual and morally pure.

Thus proceedeth the Self-Existent to unfold, purify, and quicken anew, and ultimate in a heaven his works as purposed in his divine procedure. In this is epitomised the philosophic statement of that law, by which shall be unfolded to their consummation the immensities of the terrestrial universes inhabited by spiritual intelligences, and also the infolding and ascension of these into immensities of the spiritual, and thence immensities of the celestial, and thence the immensity of the most glorious and divinely pure universe, the embodiment of all universes."

One of the most blasphemous of these publications is styled "The Bible as a Book," and is professed to be written by the Spirit of St. Paul through the medium of Alfred W. Hoar. On the title-page is the following:—

"Being a humble spirit of God now in heaven, I send forth this epistle unto the world in the year of Christ 1852, in the fifth month of the same. PAUL."

We refrain from quoting from it, for obvious reasons.

Are the men who palm hundreds of pages in the same strain as the above extract upon their gaping, gullible fellow-men as emanating from the spirit of Paul—are they crazy? Certainly we have seen more rational productions, more sensible and more logical, from the inmates of a lunatic asylum. But these men are not mad: cunning are they, on the contrary, and wide awake. They make money by their publications: for their books you must pay a good price, and all their periodicals must be settled for in advance. "The work will be sent to no one," says the Rev. Mr. Brittan, "*until the subscription is paid.*" In this they are perfectly right. Any one desirous of such fodder as they furnish certainly ought to pay for it. There is, moreover, a remarkable uniformity on one point pervading all these pretended revelations—a uniformity which precludes the supposition of disordered brains. No mat-

ter who is the rapper or rappee—deist, infidel, or apostle—Mr. Brittan, Mr. Hammond, or Mr. Ballou; no matter whether the knockings be made upon a table, a looking-glass, or a pulpit—whether the communications be made through a medium, or with a material pen and ink in the hands of a spirit—they all aim to teach, by implication and by direct assertion, that there is no punishment for sin in a future world. Thus Shelley is in the company of Paul and John; Napoleon associates with Calvin and John Wesley; and that loathsome sinner, Tom Paine, has already journeyed, according to his own statement to the Rev. Mr. Hammond, away up to the *sixth* circle, where, ineffably happy, he looks down upon martyrs and apostles in spheres under his feet.

Nor only by inference is this their teaching. In a letter dated September 24, 1851, published in the *New York Tribune*, in which the writer dwells upon “the peculiarly comforting nature” of the messages from the spirits, he says:—“They all agree in saying that all in the spirit-world are happy, though there are different degrees of happiness.” The spirits who used Mr. Hammond’s fingers, wrote:—“Spirits see spirits forgiven. Those who have been in the lowest circle of wisdom, in the lowest hell of which we have any knowledge, repent, reform, become better; and God removes the judgment which their condition required to discipline them into the path of true wisdom. The divine law of God, by which forgiveness is extended, is the same in both spheres.”—In the *Spiritual Telegraph* of May 29, 1852, a paper which the editor of the *Tribune* indorses as “the most rational and sensible of spiritual journals,” it is stated that a revelation from Lawrence Corbett had been made, “in a circle,” in the city of Brooklyn. This Corbett, in his lifetime, was an avowed infidel, several degrees lower in the scale of profligacy than Tom

Paine, whose disciple he professed to be. When the "circle" were well satisfied that Larry, as he was called, was really present, he was asked among other questions, "Is there any hell such as is mentioned in the Bible?" To which Larry responded, of course, "No!" Larry's reputation as a man of truth was bad while he was in the exterior; whether it has improved since, is at best doubtful. So possibly Mr. Brittan, the editor, feared his readers might think, as he makes no flourish of trumpets in introducing his testimony. Not so with another of Mr. Brittan's witnesses, and this is the last with whom we shall trouble the reader. The following statement is preceded by an assurance from Horace Greeley, "that it is from a reliable source." It comes to Mr. Brittan from Cleveland, Ohio, and is deemed by that clever manager of vast importance. The writer, who gives us his name in full, says: "I asked a deceased relative, who on earth was a Methodist clergyman, what kind of religion was right? Answer. 'The religion of Christ.' I asked if there was any devil. Answer. 'No!' Are all spirits happy after death? 'Yes; measurably.' What Church is nearest right? Answer, 'Universalist doctrine is nearest right.'"

The reader will have little difficulty, with these facts and declarations before him, to account for the ready sale of Mr. Hammond's books; for the large list of subscribers to the *Spiritual Telegraph* and periodicals of a similar kind; and for the fact that multitudes try to persuade themselves that they really believe in the truth of these pretended disclosures. By these publications, the love for the marvellous, so strong among the ignorant and half-educated, is abundantly gratified; and satisfactory demonstration that there is no devil, no hell, no suffering beyond the grave, is by many a consummation devoutly to be wished. What matters it how a

man lives—what he believes, or does, or leaves undone—if Poe, whose moral character was anything but pure; and Larry Corbett, the reviler of his Maker and of all goodness; and Tom Paine, whose name is a synonym for whatever is vile and filthy; if they are all, all rejoicing in the beatitudes of the Redeemer, and in close companionship with apostles and prophets,—with Daniel, the man greatly beloved of his God, and with John, who reclined upon the Saviour's bosom? All this is taught, and vouched for, and scattered among those "who have pleasure in unrighteousness;" and it is but in accordance with the prophetic Scripture, that, under "the strong delusion sent upon them," many should believe the monstrous lie.

With specimens innumerable before his eyes, of spirit literature and spirit theology, of similar character to the examples we have quoted, the Rev. Charles Beecher, the brother of the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, coolly remarks:—

"All who bow to the authority of the Bible, who know in their own hearts the work of the Holy Ghost, and who love Christ's appearing, must feel instinctively that here moves a mighty antagonistic influence.

"Whoever, ignorant of the publications of the movement, imagines that these claims are not forcibly wielded, with ingenuity, candour, popular adaptation, and success, is egregiously mistaken. The movement is rapidly advancing, and becoming one of the signs of the times."

When we find a clergyman of standing endorsing such publications as emanate from the spheres, in such a style as the foregoing, we are forced to think that American intelligence must be at a very low ebb indeed.

We must restrain ourselves from saying what we think of men who get up these exhibitions, and who put money in their pockets by these publications; we are

free to admit that the statements of credible witnesses, relative to what they have seen and heard, are wonderful—rivaling, in some instances, the feats of the far-famed Signor Blitz, who swallows tow, sets it on fire in his stomach, and draws forth beautiful ribbons ; and of Professor Anderson, who pours half-a-dozen different kinds of liquor from an empty bottle, and with a word restores to perfect soundness a score of gold watches that you have just seen him smash all to pieces.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FURTHER HISTORY OF THE RAPPINGS, WITH SOME PARTICULARS OF THEIR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

NOW that we have developed our analysis of the spirit theory, have surveyed the spheres, sang, danced, and played at cards with the spirits, become introduced to mediums of every class, criticised their performances, their literature, and their logic, we propose to take up our narrative at the point we left off at—namely, the deposition of Mrs. Norman Culver. Any one, not of very easy credulity, would, perhaps, think that our account, so far as it has proceeded, furnishes abundant materials within itself for the refutation of one of the most glaring impostures of modern times. The reader will, therefore, feel surprised to learn that the check which the “mystery” encountered when Mrs. Culver’s exposure was made public, was trivial in the extreme. With the view, we suppose, of giving a more respectable origin to the phenomenon, the spirit of Doctor Franklin was evoked by Medium Andrew Jackson Davis, clairvoyant and high priest of the new philosophy, and deposed as follows:—

“We now passed over Western New York. And particularly at Auburn and Rochester—perceiving there the required pre-requisites—we opened the first communications which have, to any extent, engaged the world’s attention and interested the sceptical intellect.

“We rejoiced in the success of our experiments, especially when we found that the *sounds* we occasioned were drawing numbers to inquire into their origin, and to seek out from whence they came; but we could not prevent frequent misunderstandings. The people, in consequence of their excitement and ignorance of the spiritual causes of the intercourse, would, unconsciously to themselves, glide into many erroneous decisions and conclusions; which remain in the world even now uncorrected. Neither could we prevent the almost exact human imitations of our vibrations; whereby occasional sentences were incorrectly spelled out—contradicting *our* directions to the ‘mediums,’ and in opposition to several conditions which we specified as being essential to a proper intercourse through sounds. In the midst of our directions and communications, ‘confusion’ has been ‘rapped’ out, and our characters for *good* and *evil* were, so to speak, in a measure often at the mercy of our mediums and terrestrial audiences. I have not myself (that is, Dr. Benjamin Franklin) produced many vibrations.

“Since this method of sensuous communication has become satisfactorily established, whereby spirits can address the *material* senses of their earthly friends, great numbers in this sphere are constantly, and with enthusiastic joy, imparting thoughts and affectionate sentiments to mankind. Yea, the joys and gratifications which flow from this new application of the *anthea principle*, into the different societies of our divine world, and coincidentally and simultaneously into the hearts and understandings of many pure and constant minds on the earth, cannot be uttered—only experienced! When the earth’s inhabitants concentrate their intelligence and mechanical skill, and construct vessels, and place them under the guidance of

enterprising and energetic minds, which gladly attempt the exploration of new countries and continents—discovering thereby more convenient paths or means of commerce and national intercommunication — when men accomplish all this, and much more, and a whole nation is moved to gratitude and internal congratulations in consequence thereof, then is manifested, *incipiently*, on earth something of that *joyous sensation* which thrilled the souls of innumerable minds in this Divine Land, occasioned by the announcement of the development of this new method of imparting beatifying thoughts and affectionate sentiments to the dwellers of the earth! If mankind would obtain truth and righteousness through this new method, I admonish all to study the great sustaining principles which organise and control both matter and mind—to recognise and OBEY the unchangeable laws that govern the whole SYSTEM of material and celestial existence. By these principles—by their unvarying teachings and lofty tendencies—the comprehensive and healthy mind may decide upon the truth or falsity of all assertions which refer to things beyond the possibility of sensuous demonstration. Let all external manifestations be referred to interior principles, which should be by all men considered as the *methods* of the Divine Existence. Progress in goodness, wisdom, and truth; and FEAR NOT!

“Through thee, I now desire to remind the world of a remark that I (Dr. Benjamin Franklin) once made to a very dear friend while we were both residing on the earth. A scepticism of the intellect concerning the doctrine of the immortality of the human *mind*—in a real and palpable state of existence and identification—long occupied my thoughts. I once knew what it is to be a disbeliever in the soul’s future life. This doubt I seldom expressed

to any one, not even to my most private friends. Because I *felt* the necessity of a living faith among men; I desired it more for others than for myself; my understanding seemed enough for my happiness; and to apply it well and without cessation, was the effort of my terrestrial existence. But one day—I remember it well—when my mind was filled with prophetic contemplations and anticipations concerning the scientific advancements, commercial improvements, governmental progressions, and the march of education, freedom, and intelligence in the country I most loved—America, I felt a strong desire to behold my country's prosperity about a *century* from the time I conceived the thoughts of which I am now speaking. I, therefore, expressed a wish that some means could be discovered by which my physical body might be kept in a state of preservation—and I, a thinking being, be placed in a species of sleep for the period of fifty years, when I desired to be awakened to a full realisation of the advancements of time, and of its wondrous unfoldings. Let me now say to those who remember this remark, that I have more than realised my every conception of future joy; and this signifies much; for even while on earth, my conception of joy never included the externals and superficialities of existence.”

Medium A. J. Davis then informs us that the above is a truthful record of Dr. Franklin's statement concerning the origin and early progress of electrical communications, as accomplished by the inhabitants of the spirit land. “And I think,” he goes on to say, “from his explanation of the unavoidable derangements in the vibrations, that my readers already begin to understand *why* mistakes and contradictions are evolved from this new method of intercourse between the natural and the spiritual worlds.”

Will the reader, however, think the above a satisfactory explanation of the grand "mistake" which other spirits tell us has been made, in ascribing to Franklin the merit of being the discoverer of the mode of opening up spiritual communication? True, Franklin claims the merit himself, but he is an interested party. Hear, therefore, what an anonymous spirit has to say on the subject:—

"This mode of communicating with you by raps was not discovered by Benj. Franklin, as has been alleged, though it is possible that he has interested himself in the matter from the early stages of the discovery. It was discovered by a spirit who, when he was on earth, was very much interested in electricity, magnetism, and things of a kindred nature. His name was James G. Schenck. I have had some trouble in finding it out for you; but I was aware that you were anxious to know, and so have been diligent in my inquiries."

Now this spirit ought to be right, for he had "taken about a month to make inquiries." If he is correct in his statement, the least we can say is, that the spirit of Benjamin Franklin must have made a "mistake."

Mistakes being so easily made and so easily accounted for, the faith of the true believer is not at all shaken by reason of them; besides, other spirits suggest a more novel excuse for their blunders, which their dupes, we have no doubt, readily swallow. A Mr. A. Munson published at Auburn what he entitled, with admirable propriety, a "Simple Narration." He visited a Mrs. Cooper, and after witnessing several strange sights, such as the poisoning of a table on two castors at an elevation of fifteen or twenty degrees, the moving of that table toward him, the said Munson, and its moving back again, of course by spiritual agency, for he says—"Mrs. Cooper and myself were the only persons in the room that tabernacled in the

flesh," a call for the alphabet was made. It was accordingly produced, and Mr. Munson informs us, "Among other questions asked and responded to were the following:—Be you my guardian spirit? Answered affirmatively. How long have you been my guardian angel? Answer—*Five years*. Are you the spirit of my mother? Answered in the affirmative by a single rap, which was the sign agreed upon for an affirmative response to my questions." Now, Mr. Munson's mother had not been dead *one year*. Of course there was a mistake somewhere. It might have been accounted for by supposing they measure time differently in the "interior;" but Mr. Munson says that although "it was beyond controversy that a falsehood had been communicated," *and he told Mrs. Cooper that it was a falsehood*, "I returned to my home under a strong impression that the dark side of this investigation would be made luminous, and that the apparent jargon would be made plain." And so it was. Some months afterward, Mr. Munson, as a reward for his desperate docility, was favoured with another interview with a medium. After a few preliminary questions, "I said," continues this simple narrator, "I understood you to say you had been my guardian spirit five years. She replied: I did not answer that question. It was answered by a spirit in the second sphere. He did it to deceive you, and prevent you from believing in spirit manifestations." Mr. Munson was of course abundantly satisfied.

Rapping had by this time become a flourishing trade, and mediums sprung up, as plentiful as mushrooms, and as worthless as toadstools. Wonderful indeed are the accounts that have been transmitted to us of the manifestations produced through their agency. One of them; a Mr. Daniel Hume, was, according to the version of an eye-witness, held in suspension with his head bumping

against the drawing-room ceiling for the space of two or three minutes, by no other power than spiritual force. This remarkable incident occurred at the house of Mr. Ward Cheney, Manchester, United States. It seems that a circle was formed, when the rappings on the table forthwith commenced. Shortly afterwards the medium was thrown into a "spiritually magnetic state," displaying "great rigidity of muscle, and the ordinary phenomena of the physico-magnetic condition, including a magnetic locking of the jaws." This rigidity, however, did not extend to the muscles of the arm, for by its aid we are told the medium "spelt out, with his eyes closely bandaged," some highly interesting communications to the company. He managed this by rapidly pointing to the different letters of the alphabet on a card, thus forming words and sentences. His finger travelled with such speed over the card, that a very fast writer could hardly note down the words so quickly as the medium indicated them. Occasionally when a sentence was half way completed, one of the company would suggest the remainder, and if the suggestion happened to be correct, the spirits intimated their approval by vehement rappings on the table. But listen to what follows. We have spoken in a previous chapter of various "spiritual" accomplishments, such as singing, dancing, and card-playing, and have now to chronicle the fact of these denizens of the spheres possessing an admirable talent for mimicry. Thus: when the spirits of a couple of unhappy tars, lost at sea, were called up, although they did not announce themselves in the approved T. P. Cookean style, by shivering their timbers and top-sails, yet they commenced by canting over a ponderous table, heaving and rolling it to and fro, to represent a ship in a violent tempest. As the storm increased a loud creaking sound was heard, for all the world like the

straining of the cables of a vessel sore distressed. This was followed by a "prolonged wailing!" then came a "shrieking blast of wind," with further "creakings of the timbers and masts," followed by the "regular sullen shocks of the waves, as they struck the bows of the doomed"—table! which all this while lay rocking on the floor, like an elephant in agony. At length the "mahogany" was fairly capsized, and the interesting *tableau* brought to a conclusion. The explanation of the scene furnished by the eye-witness is to the effect that the two sailors, whose spirits had entertained the audience with their performances, had been drowned at sea by the capsizing of a ship, "a fact which was not previously known either to the medium or the company!"

A change in the entertainment now took place. After a few minutes of repose, the table actually raised itself up from the floor. "A table weighing, I (eye-witness) should judge, 100 lbs., was lifted up a foot from the floor, the legs touching nothing!" Eye-witness jumped upon it, whereupon it commenced rocking, without, however, tipping him over, "although it canted to an angle of at least 45°." An "almost perpendicular inclination" proved at last more than a match for him, and over he went. During all this time the table was touched by no one except eye-witness.

Act the second now commences. The company retire into a darkened room in the hopes of seeing those "spiritual flashes of light"—the diamonds, crystals, and scintillating corruscations—a sight of which had been formerly vouchsafed to medium Partridge, and the Hon. Justice Edmonds (see page 34). Instead of these, the spirits received their audience with quite a shock of "tremendous rappings all about them." Eye-witness chronicles that "some of the blows on the walls, floor, and tables, within three inches of myself, were *astound-*

ing." He "could hardly produce such violent demonstrations with his fist, though he were to strike with all his might." "The very walls shook." Questions, we are told, were answered by "concussion." The spirit of a little girl announced her presence by "a thick pattering *rain* of eager and joyful little raps," and, in reply to a wish inwardly expressed, "laid its baby-hand on the forehead of its father," who "could not mistake the thrilling feeling of that spirit touch." Eye-witness himself had "a manifestation, in the character of which he was not deceived." He prefers, however, to allow the nature of it to remain shrouded in mystery, as he does not vouchsafe us any further particulars beyond the above.

Act third, scene the first, thus opens:—"Suddenly and without any expectation on the part of the company, the medium, Mr. Hume, was taken up in the air!"

Eye-witness could not be mistaken (although we presume the room still continued darkened), for he had hold of the medium's hand at the time. Luckily, Medium Hume did not drag him up after him; at least, we imagine such an occurrence as not taking place, for no mention is made of it, and yet we have some little doubt on the subject, for eye-witness tells us that Medium Hume "palpitated from head to foot with contending emotions of joy and fear, which choked his utterance"—a circumstance he could hardly have been aware of, unless he accompanied the medium in his spiritual flight. A second and a third ascent followed shortly afterwards, and then the grand *finale* ensued. Medium Hume was carried right up to the "lofty ceiling of the apartment, with which his head and hands came in gentle contact." Eye-witness felt the distance from the soles of his boots to the floor, and found it to be nearly three feet—proving, what we daresay he never intended

to prove, that, if Medium Hume was even a six foot specimen, the ceiling of this "lofty" apartment was under nine feet in height.

We question whether the entire records of spiritual phenomena can produce more than one other case worthy to be placed beside the experiences of Medium Hume. The case we allude to is known as the Stratford mystery, and the story, as commonly told, is as follows:—

In a modest, yet elegant house, partially shadowed by spreading elms, and situated in a broad and beautiful street of the quiet country town of Stratford, United States, on a certain 10th of March, 1850, some spiritual visitants made their appearance. The day was Sunday, and persons of vivid imagination can fancy the surprise of the Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., upon his return from church, at finding such remarkable evidences of spiritual existences spread before him in his quiet home. Sympathetic natures can comprehend faintly the start which must have been communicated to all Stratford's open-minded inhabitants, as the news of this spiritual visitation went swiftly from tongue to tongue;—how some may have scoffed, though many believed; how one's nerves would have thrilled at any peculiar noise, not knowing what *it* might prelude; how susceptible persons took care not to be out alone at night; how children drew the blankets over their heads, and "waked themselves to sleep."

"A strip of black crape on the knob;" locked doors "unlocked and opened;" "furniture strewn about the rooms," and heaped up; while in the upper chamber there appear to have been "figures or images to the number of eight, found in a kneeling posture, and before each a Bible opened, and passages marked with bits of paper—passages referring to spirits." These were manifestations enough, we should think, for a quiet, re-

ligious family ; sufficient to remove all their doubts as to the truth of the new philosophy. Dr. Phelps's own account of the matter, which first appeared in the *New York Observer*, a religious newspaper, was as follows :—

“ Messrs. Editors,—Public attention has been called of late to certain strange manifestations, which have been denominated ‘Mysterious Knockings.’ They first began to attract attention in the city of Rochester, between two and three years ago. Since that time, similar manifestations have been in the cities of Auburn, Syracuse, and in other places in Western New York, and recently in several places in Ohio, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. For several weeks past, something of the same character has been witnessed at my house. It commenced on the 10th of March last, and continued, with slight interruptions, from two to three months. For the first five or six weeks, no communications were made that we could understand ; but the phenomena consisted in the moving of articles of furniture in a manner that could not be accounted for. Knives, forks, spoons, nails, blocks of wood, etc., were thrown in different directions about the house. They were seen to move from places and in directions which made it certain that no visible power existed by which the motion could be produced. For days and weeks together, I watched these movements with all the care and caution and close attention which I could bestow. I witnessed them hundreds and hundreds of times, and I know that in hundreds of instances they took place when there was no visible power by which the motion could have been produced. Scores of persons of the first standing in the community, whose education, general intelligence, candour, veracity, and sound judgment, none will question, were requested to witness the phenomena, and, if possible, help us to a solution of the

mystery. But as yet no solution has been obtained. The idea that the whole was a 'trick of the children'—an idea which some of the papers have endeavoured with great zeal to promulgate, is to every one who is acquainted with the facts, as stupid as it is false and injurious. The statement, too, which some of the papers have reiterated so often, that 'the mystery was found out,' is, I regret to say, untrue. With the most thorough investigation which I have been able to bestow upon it, aided by gentlemen of the best talents, intelligence, and sound judgment, in this and in many neighbouring towns, the cause of this strange phenomena remains yet undiscovered.

“About the middle of April, a gentleman who was spending the night at my house, proposed to try the method of interrogation which had been adopted in Western New York, and to our utter amazement, a series of responses were returned, from which the inference was irresistible, that they must have been produced by a being which possessed intelligence. For several weeks communications were made in this way relating almost wholly to a matter in which certain members of the family are supposed to have an interest; at the same time the other manifestations continued, and very great annoyance was experienced. The mode of communication was made by some persons repeating the alphabet, and the letters of the word to be uttered were indicated by a rap from some invisible agent. I tried by all the means I could devise, to find what the power was by which the rapping was produced. I have heard it hundreds of times, and have done my best to ascertain the cause; but as yet I have not succeeded. I have been often asked if I believed it was the work of spirits. I have as often replied that I did not know what it is. I have never seen a spirit, and I do not know what a

spirit could do if it would, or what it would do if it could. The facts, however, are of such a nature, and have transpired under such circumstances, as to render the idea of trick or designed deception wholly inadmissible. Still, however, I have become fully satisfied that no reliance whatever is to be placed on these communications, either as a source of valuable information, or as a means of acquiring truth. I speak of what has transpired at my house, and I have the fullest confidence that if it is the work of spirits, it is the work of *wicked spirits*. Indeed they *profess* to be wicked spirits in a state of torment, seeking a mitigation of their torment, by redressing the wrongs of which they were guilty in life. I have watched the progress of this matter with great care, and have done the best in my power to learn what these strange things mean; and although I have not been able to ascertain the cause, I am satisfied that their communications are wholly worthless. They are often contradictory—often prove false—frequently trifling and nonsensical, and more in character with what might be expected of a company of loafers on a spree, than with what might be expected from spirits returned from the world of retribution, to ‘tell the secrets of their prison-house.’

“Similar manifestations are now being made in many other parts of the country. According to information which I suppose to be authentic, they are witnessed in from one hundred and fifty to two hundred different places at the present time. In many of these places, they are said to advance ideas on the doctrines of religion, wholly at variance with the teachings of the Bible, and subversive of many essential truths which the Bible reveals. Under an impression that whatever is communicated by a spirit must of course be true, many persons are receiving these communications

as the truth of God—as a new revelation from the spirit world. But it should be remembered that there is no proof that what purports to be a revelation from spirits, is the work of *spirits* at all. The most that can be said is, that we do not yet *know* how or by whom these communications are made. If they are made by spirits, we have no proof that they are *good* spirits. The presumption is, that they are *bad* spirits—lying spirits. At my house they often accused each other of lying—contradicted at one time what they affirmed at another—inflicted injury on property in the most wanton manner, and have given throughout conclusive evidence that the discipline of hell, which they profess to have experienced for several years, has as yet been wholly ineffectual in improving their characters, and qualifying them for the ‘higher sphere,’ for which many suppose that the discipline after death is a preparation.

“ I cannot now say to what conclusions future developments may lead me ; but my present impression is, that the whole thing, so far as the transactions in this place are concerned, is to be set down among those devices of Satan, by which he is promoting his work of destroying souls ; and my chief object in this communication to the public at this time is, to caution all who would avoid error, against trusting to these pretended revelations. I have had a better opportunity than most men to witness them and to judge of their claims, and I have full confidence that the opinions I have expressed will be found to be correct. I will merely add, that for some weeks past these annoyances at my house have been subsiding, and now, as I hope, have ceased altogether.

“ Yours respectfully,

“ ELIAKIM PHELPS.

“ *Stratford, June 20, 1850.*”

An individual who writes under the signature of "Veritas," (in the *New Haven Journal*, Sept. 1850,) says he saw "pepper-box," "iron-stand," "clothes'-pin," "peach-stone," (which he did not save) "apple-core," (which he did save) "queen's cake-cup," and "two apples," thrown; and these, he tells us, are the principal facts which occurred during his visit to Stratford.

H. B. Taylor, who does not say what he saw, reports what he believed was done. Among the rest, Dr. P.'s son, about eleven years of age, was lifted up as if by a man, carried across the room, and set down again, luckily for him. "His pantaloons, cut into strips, were tied to his chair!" "His boots and his cap were missing at church time." "The doctor's hat was whirled up," etc. "Characters and hieroglyphics were written; the word 'Selah' upon the front stoop."

Mr. C. W. Elliott informs us, that in a conversation he had with Dr. Phelps at Stratford, on August 21, 1851, he gained the following information:—

"I learned that the first demonstrations were made on a Sunday, 10th March, 1850; and in various ways were continued, with an occasional cessation of a few days, till the 1st of October; that the manifestations were more frequent in connection with a lad of about eleven; that the noises, etc., were most violent when the whole family were present, as in sitting round the table: that the rappings and other manifestations were less frequent and feebler when but one of the children was in the house; that the manifestations did not follow them to Pennsylvania, to which place they, with their mother, removed 1st October; that he, the Doctor, remained in the house in Stratford five weeks after they left, and experienced no disturbance; that none ensued upon the return of the family in the spring of 1851, and that none had since been felt. The Doctor explained that he now

kept the two children separated, that the boy was now away, as a precautionary measure, fearing that his presence would occasion a recurrence. I also learned that the health of the children had not suffered, though at first subject to fright, and that the 'rappings' made at his house did, in many respects, resemble those made by the Rochester spirits, of the reality and singularity of which he had no question, and that they were not made by *human* agency.

"I learned that the injury (pecuniary) was perhaps from 100 dollars to 200 dollars, consisting mostly of breakage of glass, furniture, etc.; that the spiritual revelations were valueless; that the spiritual characters *written* were incomprehensible to him, though plain enough to A. J. Davis, as he said, when in his 'superior condition,' and to others in that magnetic state; that they did not resemble the heavenly writing given by Professor Bush in his book 'Swedenborg and Mesmer,' which book, with some others relating to these singular matters, he had in his house; that upon a comparison of the two writings, the likeness was not greater than between Hebrew and Arabic; that after a little, the writings were made in our character, upon coarse paper from his closet, and were scrawling and incoherent like to one shown me.

"I learned that in Doctor Phelps's opinion, Mr. A. J. Davis's explanation, by means of the Mesmeric state, of the two children, does not meet or provide for a large number of facts, perhaps the larger; and that no explanation that has yet been attempted, and no facts that have yet transpired, contribute in the least to remove the impenetrable mystery in which the whole subject is involved; and also that in the truthfulness of the revelation he places no reliance at all."

Stratford was in a perfect *furor* of excitement while

these spiritual performances were going on, and among the persons who interested themselves in them was a very respectable simpleton, of the name of Webster, who published the following statement in the newspapers :—

“ I promised an account of one more of the extraordinary occurrences connected with the Stratford mysteries, and now give you an outline of it. As I was not an eye-witness, and must give it upon the authority of one well known in this community, and whose testimony is most reliable, my account of it will lose much of the vividly impressive manner of the relater, and be curtailed of many of the interesting circumstances attending it. It is called the ‘Chapel Scene,’ because it seemed to represent a Roman Catholic religious service.

“ While the house of Dr. Phelps was undergoing a rigid examination from cellar to attic, one of the chambers was mysteriously fitted up with eleven figures of angelic beauty, gracefully and imposingly arranged, so as to have the appearance of life. They were all female figures but one, and most of them in attitudes of devotion, with Bibles before them, and pointing to different passages with the apparent design of making the Scriptures sanction and confirm the strange things that were going on. For example, the ninth verse of the second chapter of Joel was pointed out: ‘They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall; they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.’ If this passage had been dictated in express reference to the Stratford *visitations*, it could hardly have been more appropriate. Some of these figures were kneeling beside the beds, and some bending their faces to the floor in attitudes of deep humility. In the centre of the group was a dwarf most grotesquely arrayed; and above, was a figure so suspended as to seem flying through the air. These mani-

festations occurred sometimes when the room was locked, and sometimes when it was known that no persons had been there. Measures were taken to have a special scrutiny in regard to every person who entered the room that day, and it is known with the most perfect certainty that many of these figures were constructed when there were no persons in the room and no visible power by which they could have been produced. The *tout ensemble* was most beautiful and picturesque, and had a grace and ease and speaking effect that seemed the attributes of a higher creation. One figure was composed of a dress of Mrs. Phelps's. It was in a kneeling posture, with so much resemblance of real life that a little boy of three years old, on seeing it, whispered to his little sister and said, 'Ma is saying prayers.' The entire display was most varied in its character, and composed of materials for which the whole house must have been ransacked. A clock was brought from an adjoining room, and placed upon the floor, without disturbing its mechanical action. A portable desk was taken from a secretary and laid upon the floor, an open Bible laid upon it, and a small child-like figure kneeling before it. This scene was witnessed by several persons besides the family—three of them professional gentlemen of public education, whose character for sound judgment and acute penetration forbids, in the most emphatic manner, an idea of trickery or deception in any possible way. It was 'got up,' too, in most myserious stillness and rapidity. No three women could have done it in as many hours—much less without attracting attention and exciting suspicion by their rapid movements and more active tongues—and all this while every eye and ear were open to discover the agencies by which these disturbances were caused, and every ingenuity set to work to detect the trickery of the whole.

“ Similar figures have been constructed at different times since. In all, not less than thirty. In one instance, a lady’s riding habit was fitted up with a hat and plumes and other appropriate articles, and placed on the side of the bed to represent a lady on horseback, and the justness of the imitation was most ludicrous.

“ That the public should be contemptuously sceptical about these things, is not surprising. They are contrary to our experience and our philosophy. But we beg those friends of ours who are in no mood to admit either facts or philosophy in the case, not to say that my clerical friends and myself, whose curiosity led us to the *enchanted house*, are converts to the belief in supernatural visitations. This assumption is gratuitous. All that we know of the matter, or believe, and all that we feel called upon to state, is, *that such things are*, and that to us they are unaccountable. If the agitation of this subject is mischievous to the public mind, unsettling and confounding the weak, and encouraging the idea of new revelations of the spiritual world, we feel that the responsibility is not ours—we have no such faith.

“ But there are two classes of witnesses to the truth or falsity of these things. The first are those who have seen and heard, and who, by their intelligence and worth, are competent to testify to what they see and know. The second are the outsiders, whose dignity might be compromised by participating in investigation, and whose incredulity would stamp the seal of falsehood on the testimony of the most truthful and sagacious men, and who, indeed, would not *believe* even if they *saw*. Such have a right to their own theory and belief, and if they think they can explain these phenomena as the results of *trickery* and *collusion*, they may perhaps satisfy themselves; but to us who have seen and heard, what was a mystery at first is still

a mystery, and to the hourly-repeated question, 'What is it?' we have the only answer that echo gives, 'What is it?'"

Greenhorn Webster followed up the foregoing communication by some further particulars after the following fashion:—

"So many wishes have been expressed that I should give a fuller statement than was made in a joint communication from my clerical friends and myself in your paper of the 25th, of the mysterious phenomena that came under our observation during a recent visit to Stratford, that in spite of the cry of '*humbug and collusion*,' words that come more gracefully from the mouth of a fool than from the lips of the philosopher, I am induced to present the following *facts*. To some of these we ourselves were witnesses. For others, we have the testimony of gentlemen on whose authority the fullest reliance may be placed, and whose veracity we should no sooner question than we should doubt the evidences of our own senses.

"The first circumstance I state on the evidence of Dr. Phelps himself, a gentleman whose age, and independence, and relation to society and the church, place him far above suspicion. Just before our arrival at his beautiful residence, the Doctor had been writing at a table, and had turned from it a moment for some purpose. On resuming his position to write again, he found upon the table a half-sheet of paper which he had just left untouched and unsoiled, covered with a strange-looking specimen of chirography, and the ink still wet. He was the only occupant of that room, and how the writing could have been placed there in the brief space of time his back was turned, is unaccountable. This is but one instance in a dozen of similar character. Articles of every kind were thrown

about the room in admirable confusion, and from positions which forbid the supposition that they were thrown by any member of his family; and the supposition that they could have been thrown by any one concealed in some unseen corner involves more difficulty than to believe all this the result of superhuman agency. Fifty-six articles were at one time picked up which had been hurled at some devoted head, and one of them a brickbat, which was seen to start from the surface of a large mirror and come violently to the floor. Letters were seen to drop from the ceiling, and vegetable substances, covered with hieroglyphics, to emerge from the very figures upon the carpet to which the eye was at the moment directed. Valuable manuscripts, which were entire on the morning of our arrival, and which contained the records of all the strange occurrences of the last six months, were found destroyed, and our first intimation of the unwelcome fact came from the 'spirit' himself. Since our return, I learn from one of the family that other papers relating to these 'spiritual communications' were found in a drawer on fire, and little besides their ashes left to prove their previous existence.

"While we were there, the contents of the pantry were emptied into the kitchen, and bags of salt, tinware, and heavier culinary articles, were thrown in a promiscuous heap upon the floor with a loud and startling noise. Loaves of delicious cake were scattered about the house, and articles of clothing removed from closets and drawers in spite of bolts and locks, and found lying in unwonted places, and sometimes divested of their choicest ornaments. The large knocker of the outside-door would thunder its fearful tones through the loud resounding hall, unmindful of the vain but rigid scrutiny to which it was subjected by incredulous

and curious men, and continue its unearthly 'rappings' in spite of the most abusive scepticism. Chairs would deliberately move across the room, unimpelled by any visible agency. Heavy marble-top tables would poise themselves upon two legs and then fall with their contents to the floor, no human being within six feet of them. Missiles of various kinds would seem to start from space, and dash through costly panes of glass. Silver spoons and forks would be doubled up in a moment like so much straw, and sometimes hurled at the head of the unconscious guest.

"Such are a few of the thousand and one fantastic tricks of the 'spirit' rogues of this ill-fated house; tricks that outrival the far-famed feats of East Indian jugglery. But I have one more to relate at another time, and more marvellous still. I shall give them on the authority of one of the witnesses, a person most favourably known in this community, as combining all the excellences of the Christian, with the refinement and intelligence of the gentleman and scholar.

"Now, that these things are so, is proved by multitudes of witnesses. But what do they mean, and how can they be accounted for? No one who visits the house and remains long enough to witness one half the strange occurrences of a single day, will believe that this amiable family connive at, or for a moment sanction, them. Besides the absence of any apparent motive for desiring so unenviable a notoriety, they are suffering, and most unjustly suffering, in reputation, feeling, person, and property—subject to annoying visits from the idle and curious, losing the services of their domestics, and seriously diminishing life's sweetest charm, their social and domestic happiness. Having enjoyed their elegant hospitality nearly forty-eight hours, we feel that we could do no less than to give our *unsolicited*

testimony to their cheerful courtesy and Christian truthfulness, and express our sincere conviction that the imputations under which they have suffered are as illiberal and unjust on the part of those who urge them, as they are mortifying and painful to the unfortunate family who are made their victims."

Another gentleman, who, we suppose, likewise shared the "elegant hospitalities" of this "amiable family," and the credulity of greenhorn Webster, furnishes us with the following particulars:—

"While our conversation was quietly proceeding, there seemed to be a general start of all present, the boy instantaneously sitting up in bed. I was then looking at the carpet on a line parallel to the front side of the bed and of the mantelpiece, when I caught sight of a match-box, about four inches long by three wide, within an inch of the floor, if not upon it. I heard a noise corresponding to what would be expected from a heavy iron box of that size, falling from about the height of the mantelpiece; and at the same time saw the box slide toward the bed, and directly away from the mantelpiece, about four inches, while the lid flew open, and some matches bounded out upon the floor. The boy denied any agency in the matter, with an expression of innocence that defied the closest scrutiny. The next morning I was surprised to find the box was made of tin, and I made several unsuccessful experiments to see if I could produce such a sound from it as I had heard the previous evening.

"A few moments after that event, and while all present occupied their former positions, the boy sat up in his bed as suddenly as before, exclaiming 'They have set the bed on fire!' I sprang instantly to the spot, and saw a piece of printed paper, etc., on fire, and secured a piece of it about the size of a dollar. After the

occurrence, the boy got up, and passed the night in the same bed with me; and, when there, in reply to my questions as to how he knew of the fire so soon, and why he jumped so suddenly, he said it burned him, that his hand was in the blaze, and yet he was equally sure that his hand was under the coverlet.

“Again, the ladies stood facing the window and me, and about six feet from me; they were side by side, about two feet apart; no one else was in the room. Suddenly the daughter’s right arm straightened, inflicting an apparently severe blow on her companion’s right arm just below the shoulder, and at the same she cried out, ‘I am pinched!’ The sleeve of her dress being turned up a little, there was plainly visible a mark, closely resembling a severe pinch freshly made.

“Sometimes occurrences have assumed a farcical appearance, leading directly to the conclusion that they were got up; and sometimes it has been as evident to the senses that they *were* actually done by members of the family, as at others that they had not, and could not have had, any control over what transpired. When so done by the family, it has (to the witnesses) been perfectly evident that they were merely unconscious agents, and that the actions of their bodies were done without the knowledge of their minds. In this way they have charged each other, as have also their friends who were with them, upon the evidence of sight, with throwing things about the house.

“To the writer there is nothing superhuman in what has transpired; he believes in nothing like ghosts. His theory is, that there exists in nature an element as yet unknown to the scientific world,” etc., etc.

The editor of *The Derby Journal* comes forward with his personal experiences, which he narrates with a very moderate display of editorial shrewdness.

“Here, then, were four individuals, with sound minds (?), listening to the most horrible rappings ever heard—racking their brains to ascertain from whence they emanated. We had not been in this position but a moment when something came against the door with great violence, and making a loud noise. Instantly every man sprang into the room, and fastened his eyes upon the persons in bed, the writer grasping the hands of the young lady that he might not be deceived that she was not the cause. We found her in a very nervous state, and she told us that her cheek had been struck, which, upon examination, we perceived was very red. The cause of the noise was a large white pitcher that stood some four feet from the bed, near the foot, and nearly in one corner of the room, and which had been flung with a force, which no delicate female could possibly possess, against the door, breaking off the handle, and leaving an indentation in the clap-boards of not quite a quarter of an inch deep. This last act staggered our sense; we could not believe it, and entered into a discussion on the spot. To show how unreasonable it is to suppose that the ladies threw it, we would state that, to have done it, they must have got out of bed. Now, the moment it *was* done, we were beside the bed, and the ladies' hands were under the clothes. No stirring of the hands was visible—nothing whereby we could arrive at the conclusion that the females were the actors.

“Let us also state that if the pitcher came in a straight line from where it stood, it would, according to a natural law of gravity, have struck in the corner of the room, and if it had went directly across the room, it would have struck the bureau; but it did neither, and must have taken a semi-circle course to have reached the place it did. This appears foolish, absurd, and ridiculous; but we are stating *facts*, as they took place in

the presence of four individuals. Our readers can form their own opinions."

We arrive now at the detail of a conversation had by Mr. C. W. Elliott with the Rev. Mr. Mitchell, who, early in the progress of these strange doings at Stratford, gave his attention to them. Part of the manifestations he saw himself, others he received evidence of principally through Dr. Phelps.

The "manifestations," as they were called, occurred somewhat as follows:—

1. Furniture was displaced, thrown about, and piled at times when the family were absent, and the house locked.

2. Mesmeric writings were made on the walls in pencil, and afterwards on various articles of dress, etc., which could be interpreted, so it is said, by persons in a Mesmeric state.

3. Figures were arranged in various parts of the house.

4. Things of many sorts, such as would be accessible in the house, were thrown in mysterious ways, so that it was difficult, if not impossible, for any person to have thrown them, and particularly so for any member of the family (so it was stated).

5. Loud noises were heard in many parts of the house, of many kinds, often screamings, which were not traced to any one, and which seemed too great and various to have been made by any member of the household.

6. Answers to various questions were rapped out—which appeared to some startling—which often were profane, if not scurrilous.

2, 3, 4, and 5 were the kinds of manifestation which Mr. Mitchell was cognizant of. He states, however, that he did not see the writings in the act of being made by the invisible agent, or the figures arranged, or

the things when rising from the table. The writings were found written, the figures already arranged—the things were seen when flying after having been thrown.

In reply to questions, Mr. Mitchell stated that he could not recollect that the whole family, consisting of Dr. Phelps and wife, daughter about 17, son 12 or 13, two smaller children, and servant-girl, were ever collected at the same time into one room;—stated, also, that Dr. Phelps objected to sending away both the elder children at the same time; that when one was absent the manifestations continued; that the Doctor was in the habit of putting the boy into what is called the magnetic state, when he appeared violently affected—strangely so; that he witnessed the daughter in this state for a portion of the 24 hours (in which she was said to have lain), much affected, to appearance, by some undefined fear.

Stated, also, that he understood from others, that the children, in sport, or to deceive incredulous persons, played some tricks; that he himself witnessed many things which were explicable, but many more which confounded his sagacity.

In reply to a question as to the character of the boy, stated that he should not consider his moral sense very acute.

In reply to questions respecting Dr. Phelps, stated that he had been deeply interested in Mesmerism and kindred studies for years; had investigated, and also written much upon, the subject; that he had collected great numbers of books upon these subjects, including ghosts and witchcraft stories, and so on; that he feared his senses were somewhat bewildered by these things—that his Christian character in the community had suffered—that he would possibly be flattered with attention—cannot altogether approve of his course, yet,

from what he saw, feels bound to believe that the doings were not the work of the family.

The Rev. Mr. Weed, of Stratford, does not seem to have been so much impressed with these surprising occurrences. He even speaks slightly of the figures which Greenhorn Webster describes as being of "angelic beauty." In reply to a note of inquiry, he wrote as follows:—

"For the whole period of the so-called 'manifestations,' I never went to the house except two or three times the first week. On these occasions, I saw nothing done which any body would have thought at all extraordinary. I saw, indeed, what *had been done*—the furniture of a room oddly disarranged—a child of three years old could have done it—images or dolls dressed up the size of life—I could have done that myself. And I was *told* by the family of various strange appearances, which, with no disposition to question their veracity, I was yet obliged, in the nature of the case, and in view of their state of feeling, to take with many grains of allowance.

"In short, having become thoroughly satisfied that there was nothing there to be alarmed at, no spiritual or supernatural agency of any kind, I would not, by continuing my visits, help to give *éclat* to what I saw was unnecessarily and unhappily exciting the public mind, and therefore kept out of the way."

We will now give our attention to the account furnished by Mr. Horace Day, a gentleman who evidently visited the house with his eyes open, although he was not gratified with a sight of any of these marvellous performances. What a person does *not* see may in a case like the present be as important as any other evidence.

"In my visit to the haunted house," says Mr. Horace

Day, "I was accompanied by Rev. Mr. Garfield, Mr. Babcock, of the *Palladium*, and Lucius G. Peck. Nothing whatever occurred to gratify our curiosity or excite our wonder while in the house. But while conversing with the family on the subject of their trials and perplexities, the lady of the house ran into the room, and said her son, a boy of twelve or fourteen, was missing. Except on the face of the father, I saw no expression of alarm or apprehension. He seemed greatly excited; but the rest of the family, consisting of Mrs. Phelps, a daughter, a lady visitor, and her son, certainly manifested no extraordinary emotion. After a few hurried remarks, I noticed that Mrs. Phelps led the way to the back yard. What reason there was for not first examining the house did not appear. This was the first thing that looked suspicious to me, coupled with the general air of imperturbability over the family. The boy was found in the hay-mow, in an apparently comatose state, from which he recovered in the course of an hour. When the lad was brought down from the hay, Dr. Phelps was much agitated, but I saw no corresponding feeling on the part of others of the family. How a mother or a sister could take it so coolly, was, and is, a mystery to me, supposing them to believe the absence of the boy was supernatural. I think this fact had as much influence on the opinion I formed as to the humbug of the whole concern, as anything else; though the similarity of the writing which Dr. Phelps showed me, as being 'spiritual,' to that of the boy when I got him into a room alone, together with the singular fact that every broken window could be reached only from the door-way of the young ladies' bed-room, conspired to increase my contempt for the whole concern. Besides this, the strongest indifference seemed to prevail as to the possibility of the strange doings being the result of roguery. For instance, Dr. Phelps

seems never to have recognised his son's handwriting, though his room was flooded with his lucubrations, in a regular school-boy's hand. The disposition was strongly manifested to set down everything at all out of the way, as the devil's doings. The most wonderful of the doings at Stratford, as represented to me, did not come within a thousand miles of what Signor Blitz daily does. The impression on my mind was, that some object was to be secured by humbugging the old gentleman, and that the interested parties had been entirely successful in their object."

We must now appeal to a witness of quite another kidney. Descending from his lofty pedestal, Clairvoyant Andrew Jackson Davis, high-priest of spiritualism, goes in the flesh to Stratford by rail and steam to investigate the truth of these peculiar mysteries; he has not only seen in the spirit, but he has also paid his travelling expenses and seen in the body. The seer's words are good—but who guarantees the seer?

"I was impressed," says he, "to visit the village of Stratford, Connecticut, for the express purpose of observing with both my natural and spiritual perceptions, a variety of *mysterious noises* and *exciting phenomena* occurring there at a private residence. And now I desire the reader to follow me," etc.

Gladly do we do so to get a little spiritual light upon such a dim subject. He mentions a few only of such facts as have already been noted, and says, of course, no one will pretend to affirm the *impossibility* of there being any human agency in the performance of some of these mysterious feats: nay, on the contrary, it is consistent with reason to believe that almost everything developed in that house, could have been caused under favourable circumstances, by the concerted plans and inventions of some members of the family. He says

further, that "when the family were *all* assembled in one room, and it being ascertained that the domestics were *honest*, and for the most part *ignorant of what was going on*, then should a book be thrown, or should the boy's pantaloons be suddenly torn into strips, while, *as it is alleged*, his hands were grasped by his mother; then the only inference is that those things were caused by an invisible intelligence, and potency"—Inference! *only*? Whether the seer is right in calling the author of such doings an "intelligence" some may doubt; but to call a spirit a "potency" requires more bravery than most possess. These, however, are trifles, unworthy of our subject.

We can only allude to a few of the important revelations Mr. Davis favours us with. We learn from him, that "the young girl and her brother were exceedingly surcharged with vital magnetism, and vital electricity," and the seer tells us, that when he heard a quick loud tap under the boy's left foot, "he instantly perceived that his system, like the torpedo-eel, had discharged a small volume or current of vital electricity from the sole of the foot," etc. May heaven defend us from the spread of this torpedo inspiration; might not a Leyden-jar be safer than such a boy?

"And let me remark," he says, "that I have heard instances of mischief cited, as occurring in this house, in evidence of satanic agency, which I now discover to have been sometimes accomplished by the youth in his sport (!), sometimes by electrical discharges and magnetic attractions, and sometimes by the almost unpardonable mischievousness of persons unknown to the family." The seer further tells us, "that the parents of Henry, I believe, have received his testimony as being literally true, but *I* have discovered that he frequently failed to discriminate; on one occasion he was found with a rope

passed under his arms and suspended to the limb of a tree. When removed from that position he related that he 'screamed at the top of his voice,' but it was ascertained that had he in reality done so, the domestics who were near the spot must have heard him. Now it was not with the intention to deceive that he made this declaration; he really supposed that he had called aloud, as I discovered when reviewing the circumstances from my superior condition; at which time I also learned that to control the boy from effecting some premeditated imprudence, a spirit near him, taking advantage of the electrical state of his system, actually made him unconsciously instrumental in *tying himself* to the tree; and in order that he might not escape and accomplish his previously conceived design, the guardian spirit impressed him to feel fright, and to *think* that he called for help till such time as was deemed prudent to release him." We have not one word to say to this very complete elucidation of the mystery; but we do feel regret that the Rev. Dr. Phelps should have used the hard expressions he did respecting such spirits who saved such a boy.

Had we ourselves been a seer (we say it modestly) we think we should have admitted the scream, but have urged that it was a spiritual one, not capable of being heard by gross, material ears, which are too short!

There is no doubt, the seer tells us, that these manifestations are produced by spiritual beings, and in reply to perhaps the unnecessary question, "Why do spirits visit mankind in this apparently insignificant manner?" Clairvoyant A. J. Davis brings forward a turnip inscribed with truly mystical characters, which contain the answer. Fortunately, Davis is able to translate the new hieroglyphics; and the very pertinent answer to such an idle question is, "You may expect a

variety of things from our society!" Various other questions are answered in this peculiar and lucid manner. With two or three statements of our seer, we will conclude. He says, "During the youth's absence, no very interesting manifestations occurred;" and further, "that the tableauxed groupings of figures made from articles of wearing apparel belonging to the family, were discovered in the young lady's sleeping apartment!" These are surprising, as admissions, if not as facts. We give one more spiritual explanation of the mystery, which certainly, we think, covers the whole ground.

"The precise manner," he says, "in which some of the written communications, as also the representative figures, which have been found in and about that house, originated, I am now impressed to state. I will here remark that spirits can influence some peculiar organisation, so as to induce a *somnambulic* state of mind, and then cause the individual to do what he could not do in his natural condition; and, upon releasing him from that state, they can, in the twinkling of an eye, efface from his external memory all impressions of the transactions in which he was instrumental; and thus render him totally forgetful of what he has been doing."

We are afraid that we have now used up all the more exciting of the spiritual phenomena, and shall therefore have to content ourselves with recording only the more ordinary rappings and table tippings emanating from the denizens of the spheres. Among the mediums entitled to be mentioned in all accounts of the new philosophy, is a Mrs. Bushnell, a medical lady of Cincinnati, who, however, has not yet received the privilege of prefixing to her name the all-important Dr., which is so coveted by her sister professionals. At the first public summoning of spirits which Mrs. Bushnell

took part in, the only communication vouchsafed from the spheres was the particularly interesting information that "her battery was not strong enough," an intimation equally obscure and disappointing to the gaping audience. Further meetings were held, at which questions were asked and satisfactorily answered, if the narrators are to be believed; and on one occasion, according to Mr. Spicer, "a new description of manifestation startled the whole company: the left arm of a lady present was drawn back with great force, as if it had been grasped between the elbow and shoulder. Attempts were made to release the arm by magnetic passes, but without effect."

We should have stated that this occurred just as the spirit of a Mr. Cornell was called up, so that inquiry was naturally made of him if he were the cause of this ungallant proceeding, to which Mr. Cornell's spirit, by no means ashamed of its conduct, very readily replied "Yes." To the further inquiry as to whether he would release the lady, he deigned no rapping reply; but suddenly jerked the lady's arm forward, when she found herself relieved. The explanation given of this apparently perverse conduct on the part of the spirit of a very respectable solicitor, was as follows:—"It seems that this same lady had, during the day, remarked, in reference to the manifestations, that she would not believe in the spiritual origin of the rappings except through the medium of touch. This fact being communicated aloud to the assembled party, several raps were heard near the lady, as though intended in corroboration."

Mr. Spicer mentions another incident as being worth recording:—"A young lady having inquired if any spirit would communicate with her, distinct raps were given, and the following communication made,—*'I have done as I agreed.'*

“ Upon this the young lady, greatly agitated, informed those present that she had been in Rochester with her sister when rapping manifestations were being made in the family of Mrs. Fish. They did not believe them to be spiritual manifestations; and when they parted, they mutually agreed that whichever died first should visit the other in spirit and make raps, if it were possible. The sister went to Wisconsin and died. She had come to her sister in Ohio in spirit, and fulfilled the promise made in the flesh.”

Mr. Spicer also describes the results of two interviews had by himself with celebrated mediums in the United States. In one instance he is sufficiently fortunate to obtain, by means of rapping replies, a correct guess of the name of one out of two correspondents whose letters he produced; while on the other occasion a spirit, of the very common name of Brown, is called up for his edification; but, after various attempts on the part of Mr. Spicer to identify the spirit in question, he was compelled to give it up as a bad job, whereupon spirit Brown abruptly took his leave. Out of such ridiculously unsatisfactory experiences as these, Mr. Spicer has nevertheless constructed a confused theory of belief in spiritual manifestations, so that we have really very earnest hopes of meeting with him, ere long, in the capacity of a medium. When such a desirable event does come to pass, we only hope the spirits he will have to do with will display a greater regard for truth than those which Mr. Le Roy Sunderland, “ one of the most distinguished mediums ” of Boston, used to summon from the spheres.

To ascertain definitely whether the spirits really did communicate through this “ leading medium,” an unbeliever residing at New York sent him the following letter, which we give *verbatim, et literatim, et punctuatum*.

“respected sir I send one dollar if you please to have some questions respecting of my daughter which departed this lif january the 19, 1851 i brot her up from a child she was a daughter too me her name is mary ellen Perkins and was 19 when she dide my mind is exercirsed very much in respect of her state of mind in a religious point of view which if you Communion with spirits in the other world she was flitey and out of her head as the poet sais afflictions soar long time she bore physician was in vain send me a letter i want two here if her state of mind is happy no more at present

PHEBE NEWELL.

“new Yore sity feb, the 31st 1851.

“mr laroy Sunderland.”

This letter, inclosing one dollar, addressed in characteristic chirography to Mr. Le Roy Sunderland, Boston, was read to a friend, and by him deposited in the post-office, Feb. 13, 1851. The following is Mr. Sunderland's reply :—

“ELIOT-ST., BOSTON, MASS., *half-past 10 a.m.*,
Feb. 15, 1851.

“My Sister Dear :—I have this moment laid your letter before the Spirits, and received the following answer :—‘Tell her Mary is happy, and with dear Mother Newell all the time. I watch over her for good ; and I love her now more than ever. I will be near her and stand at her right hand when she reads your answer. She must not grieve. I will soon make sounds in her presence when she is alone, which she can hear, when she will know it is me.’

“And I understood the spirits to say that you was not her own mother, but she loved you as her own, and she said she came here to tell what to say to you when I answered your letter. In the sphere where Mary has gone none are miserable, but all are as happy as they possibly can be.—Yours truly,

“LE ROY SUNDERLAND.

“It is not often that I attempt an answer to letters like yours, but I suppose I was attracted to Mary's sweet spirit to gratify you. She has stood by me while writing, as I believe.”

Now the facts in this case were, that there were no such persons as "Phebe Newell" and "mary ellen Perkins;" and yet Mr. Sunderland found no difficulty in getting a message from the said "mary ellen" to her "dear Mother Newell." The words "I brot her up from a child she was a daughter to me," enabled the spirits, we suppose, to inform Mr. S. that "Mother Newell" was not "ellen's" own mother.

According to the accounts published in the different newspapers, there are other spirits, besides those who communicated through Mr. Le Roy Sunderland, who are by no means remarkable for their veracity. One editor narrates the following:—

"A gentleman was a few weeks ago interrogating the invisible author of certain raps, as to the disease of which he (the rapper) died. With considerable natural difficulty and delay, the reply was spelled out, 'Consumption.' The questioner looked a little dissatisfied; and a physician in the company, who was zealous in the faith, hastened immediately to explain that there are a variety of forms of disease, either of which may well enough come under the general name of consumption. 'That's all very well,' said the questioner, 'but it hardly applies in this case, for the man he professes to be *was blown up in a steam-boat!*' The rapper was too indignant to make any further revelations to that medium."

The editor of another newspaper was treated by the spirits in a very shabby way—in fact, in a manner quite unbecoming a spirit and a gentleman. The aggrieved individual complains that, not long since, "a friend called for our spirit, and held a rapping conversation with it, whereas we can testify to having been in the body the entire time the said conversation took place, and to not having taken the smallest part in it." This is an instance of unwarrantable personation, which we

believe our readers will agree with us in thinking, cannot be too severely reprehended.

Some spirits, however, are endowed with a refinement of moral sense that redounds very much to their credit. What, for example, does the reader think of a spirit who was so sorely troubled in his conscience while a denizen of the spheres, in respect to a paltry sum of money he happened to owe for his newspaper subscription at the time of his death, that he could get no relief until he found a friend willing to discharge the debt, and, moreover, what does the reader think of the individual who was simpleton enough to comply with the spiritual request? Here we have the story told by the cunning printer himself.

“ We accepted an invitation to attend a sitting of a circle of spiritualists, the other evening, and were not a little surprised when the following message was spelled out to one of our company : ‘ *Pay the Printer !* ’ It was subsequently explained through a ‘ medium,’ that the message was from the spirit of a delinquent subscriber who owed us 1 dol. 50 cents. A friend of the departed paid us the money without hesitation, and the joy of the relieved ‘ spirit ’ was manifested by loud raps, tipping the table, etc.”—*Palmer Journal*.

While private mediums are hard at work, doing a tolerable stroke of business on their own account, let us see how the “ New York Conference for the investigation of Spiritual Phenomena ” gets on. The members of this society, it will be recollected, had a hand in the famous document signed by the spirits, which that silly dupe, or arch-rogue, E. P. Fowler, was the medium of making public. Several of the names mentioned in the following report, among others that of Charles Partridge, medium and match-maker, and Medium D. D. Hume, will be familiar to the reader’s ear.

“Friday Evening, June 18, 1852.

“Present: Chas. Partridge and wife, Wm. Wood and wife, L. R. Case and wife, S. K. De La Vergne and wife, Jno. A. Buffum and wife, Wm. Fishborough, Dr. R. T. Hallock and wife, Mr. T. Cromwell and wife, T. Kipp Tompkins, J. N. Stebbins, D. H. Jacques, Melancton B. Ackerman, J. Rehn, Dr. Jas. Darrah, Martin Langdon, E. D. E. Greene, W. H. Dannat, Wm. B. Tilton, Chas. H. Jackson, J. T. S. Smith, Joseph T. White, Dr. H. E. Schoonmaker, Dr. C. Barnes, H. C. Billings, Dr. C. Knatt, J. B. King, and twenty-five others.

“Mr. Rehn, of Philadelphia, gave an account of the condition of spiritualism in that city. They have no physical manifestations, no sounds even, at the present time. Their intercourse is through writing and other mediums. No physical demonstrations or tests are sought for, though tests of a very remarkable character often occur in communications.

“The subject, there, is in a transition state between scepticism and faith. At first it was looked upon as chimerical, but the public mind is beginning to look at the matter in a more serious light. The request of the spirits is, that we should proceed to practise the principles taught. They tell us it is not only our duty to utter the truth, but to live it. That those great principles—justice, mercy, forgiveness, and truth—may become incarnate, so that, like the meal under the influence of the leaven, the whole mass of humanity may be elevated.

“Dr. Darrah, of Philadelphia, said the manifestations commenced at his house in December last. At that time he resided in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. His wife, much to her surprise, had a long and interesting communication. He had not enough of faith at the time to excite inquiry. Subsequent facts have wrought a great change in his mind. He removed to Philadelphia some

two months afterwards, where a medical medium came under his notice. She is intelligent and sensitive; is literally under spiritual medical tuition, and has given the most undoubted proofs of the fact. As a test, he presented to her a boy whom he knew to have an organic disease of the heart. After being impressed, she called for a piece of paper, on which she sketched a diagram of the heart, etc., with great accuracy and precision, and then pointed out the existing difficulty in one of the ventricles, with all the care and composure of a professor of anatomy. Several neuralgic patients, who had been introduced to her by himself and another physician, had been relieved at once. They would come hobbling into her presence, and go away walking like other persons. Several other instances of medical cure and relief were detailed.

“ Mr. Buffum, of Lynn, Massachusetts, also related cases of the spiritual treatment of disease through mediums, occurring in Lynn and Boston, and adjacent places. They have talking and writing mediums. One of them talks in an unknown language, and another translates, and writes it in good phonographic characters, though she has no knowledge of the art.

“ Dr. Hallock related a case of physical manifestations which took place on the Friday evening previous, at the house of Mr. Partridge, after the conference had adjourned. Mr. D. D. Hume was the medium, and the circle consisted of Mr. Partridge, wife and daughter, Wm. Taylor and wife, S. B. Brittan, and himself. On the table around which we were seated, were loose papers, a lead pencil, two candles, and a glass of water. The table was used by the spirits in responding to our questions, and the first peculiarity we observed was, that, however violently the table was moved, everything on it retained its position. When we had duly observed

this, the table, which was of mahogany, and perfectly smooth, was elevated to an angle of about 30° , and held there, with everything remaining on it as before. It was truly interesting to see a lead pencil retaining a position of perfect rest, on a polished surface inclined at such an angle. It remained as if glued to the table, and so of everything else on it. The table was repeatedly made to resume its ordinary position, and then its inclination as before, as if to fasten upon us the conviction that what we saw was no deception of the senses, but a veritable manifestation of spirit presence and of spirit power. They were then requested to elevate the table to the same angle as before, and to detach the pencil, retaining everything else in their stationary positions. This was complied with. The table was elevated; the pencil rolled off, and everything else remained. They were then asked to repeat the experiment, retaining the pencil and everything else upon the table stationary, except the glass tumbler, and to let that slide off. This was also assented to, with the like result. All the articles retained their positions but the tumbler, which slid off, and was caught in the hands of one of the party, as it fell from the lower edge of the table. Then the table, after being restored to the natural position, was moved strongly to and from the medium, and to and from different individuals in the circle, as they would request. After this had been repeated several times, and while a corner of the table was inclined into his lap, Mr. Taylor asked if the spirits would lift it clear of the floor while in that position. Assent was signified, and the table, after much apparent effort, though probably only apparent, was lifted clear off the floor as requested. Dr. H. said he was led to the conclusion that the effort was only apparent, because, while we were watching it closely, with a light upon the floor, so as to see the

slightest motion, the table, in the meantime, resting upon one castor on the floor and one corner of the leaf in Mr. Taylor's lap, was raised perhaps about one inch, after having been literally tumbled about the circle, sometimes upon one castor and sometimes upon two, the leaf resting first in one person's lap and then in another. But when the foot of the table was finally raised as described, he, to make sure that they were not mistaken in the fact, got down upon the floor to observe more closely. While looking, the foot of the table, instead of being raised a doubtful inch or so, was thrown up, clear of the floor, six or eight inches, as if all former attempts had been mere playful efforts. We then asked if they could move the table with a man on it. They replied, 'Yes, with two men on it.' Mr. Partridge and myself then seated ourselves, back to back, upon the table. Our combined weight is a little over 350 lb.; but, notwithstanding, the table was moved as easily as when nothing but the candlesticks, etc., were upon it. We were rocked backwards and forwards, to and from the medium—the table was tipped from the medium, and held stationary in that position, with us upon it; and, finally, we remarked playfully, 'When you get tired of rocking us, throw us off.' It was done—the table was tipped strongly and rapidly *from* the medium, and we were thrown on the floor.

"Dr. H. said he had detailed these facts minutely, because they were a perfect refutation of Dr. Richmond's admired theory of an electrical vacuum, which causes, according to the learned doctor, all bodies to fall, or be attracted, towards the medium. Mr. Partridge and himself were certainly bodies, and we were thrown directly through the doctor's theory, and in an opposite direction. We fell lightly, however, and that tissue of profundity was the only thing damaged during the entire sitting.

The whole array of opposing theorists is powerless before these facts, occurring as they did in a well-lighted room, and a lighted candle on the floor under the table. Some solemn sceptic may call them trifling. But are they trifling—those palpable manifestations of invisible intelligence and power? If so, what would be serious? What intelligence below man could thus answer to the intelligence within man, comply with our wishes, and grant our requests?

“The simple movements of that table were to us the reception of a telegraphic despatch, compared with which all earthly messages, however valuable, sink into insignificance.

“Mr. Ellis said he was under the impression that clairvoyants had not revealed any spiritual facts, prior to Mr. Davis’s revelations, nor had they, to his knowledge, spoken of seeing spirits.

“Dr. Wellington related a case which occurred, under his observation, in New Hampshire, in 1842, going to show that Mr. Ellis was mistaken in his impression on that point. He also read a letter, in answer to one from Professor Gregory, of Edinburgh, inquiring into the facts alleged to be transpiring in America, which answer contained many things showing that clairvoyants had given ample proof of their consciousness of the presence of spirits.

“R. T. HALLOCK, Secretary.”

At a subsequent meeting of the Conference, Secretary Dr. Hallock, brought forward the case of a clairvoyant (or religious lunatic, some of our readers may perhaps think) in the following terms:—

“He had heard clairvoyants speak in raptures of seeing the beautiful angels who hovered about the couch of the dying, waiting to conduct the departing spirit to heaven. In one case a pious woman, a member of the

Baptist church, became clairvoyant, in the course of medical treatment, and when in that state, if not watched with the greatest care, would pass into a rigid, trance-like condition, wholly beyond his control for a time. The first time this occurred, he asked what it meant, and where she had been? (feeling rather impatient and much exhausted from a half-hour's active exercise of his will to get her back to the ordinary place of clairvoyance). She answered, 'I have been talking with my mother.' 'Where is your mother?' 'She is in heaven.' 'Have you been there?' 'Yes; to be sure, and I did not want to come away either.' Being at that time wholly sceptical as to the possibility of such a fact, and doubtful of the existence of spirits, either in or out of the body, he ascribed the whole thing to her religious prejudices reflecting their shadows upon her mental state; and endeavoured to repress all such flights of the imagination, as he supposed them to be. Still they recurred several times, always with the same rigidity of muscle, the same difficulty of restoring her, and the same averment as to where she had been and what she had been doing. It gave him great annoyance at the time, as well as much physical exertion. Subsequent experience has convinced him that what she said was literally true."

By this time, manifestations were rife all over the States, and so earnestly did the spiritual papers endeavour to propagate the new faith, that advertisements like the subjoined were by no means of uncommon occurrence. We are surprised, though, that the necessity should have existed to advertise for mediums, as the trade was sufficiently profitable, we should have thought, to have called up a supply more than adequate to the demand. However, here is the advertisement we speak of—

“**MEDIUMS WANTED IMMEDIATELY.**—One good medium for the rappings, and for illustrations of spiritual power, as seen in the movement of ponderable objects and other physical effects—also one writing medium, who is in the constant habit of receiving reliable communications—and one spiritual clairvoyant or seer, who can diagnose disease correctly, and prescribe remedies with precision—are wanted in this city. Each must be equal to the best of his or her class—such as fall short of the prescribed standard need not apply. Any who may answer the description, and would be willing to remove to this city, may advance the cause of spiritualism, and promote their interests, by making immediate application. Address this office.”—*Spiritual Telegraph*.

Advertisements, too, of the following class were very prevalent:—

“**SPIRITUAL MISSION.**—Three mediums on a spiritual mission to this city for a few days, now stopping at Hungerford’s Hotel, in Duane-street, near Hudson-street. They will examine diseases, and prescribe for the same. Price 2 dols.; for spiritual investigations, 1 dol.”—*Tribune*.

“**SPIRITUAL NOTICE.**—I (H. Burkhart) feel it my duty, as a medium, to state to the public that I have investigated the spirit rappings, and do say that it is spirits, and can prove it to any reasonable mind at No. 168, Duane-street.”—*Tribune*.

“**SPIRITUAL RAPPINGS** at Stuyvesant Institute, from half-past two to five o’clock every afternoon this week, as there will be a circle formed on the stage. Admission twenty-five cents. People wishing to consult with the mediums can see them at No. 168, Duane-street.”—*Tribune*.

“**SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.**—Mrs. A. L. Coan, declared to be the best medium for rapping and writing by the influence of departed spirits in Boston, will receive company for sittings every day in the week, from nine o’clock A.M. till ten P.M. Rooms, No. 8, Howard-street, opposite the Athenæum. Sittings, fifty cents. each. Mrs. Coan will give sittings in the house of any person who may apply.”—*Boston Herald*.

The foregoing are of themselves sufficient to prove the commercial development of the "spirit" business now in progress. Still, if anything further were required indicating this tendency in a more marked manner, we think the following extract from the *Chicago Journal* will meet the case:—

"The operations of the bank of Chicago, which its proprietors have conducted in this city for some time past, *affecting to have communications in regard to it from spirits of the departed*, were summarily brought to a close yesterday by the interposition of the law."

We defy any one to match this out of the United States of America. Talk about the gullibility of the English chaw-bacons! Why, there is not a country bumpkin from Land's-end to John-o'-Groats who would swallow this, and trust his golden gains into such keeping! Only fancy these bank directors, on their board days, calling up spirit after spirit and asking their advice as to investments and discounts!—this is by far the richest spiritual phase of all. To resume, however:—

"A commission of lunacy having been issued, and conservator appointed, in the case of its president, Mr. Eddy, the mediums took the matter in charge, and avowed that the 'spirits' counselled resistance even unto the death; and for that purpose arms were provided.

"During the forenoon several persons having business at the bank were somewhat roughly handled, and put out by force. Mr. D. C. Eddy, the conservator, learning of these facts, entered a complaint before Judge Rucker; and John Drysdell, Charles Herrick, Ambrose Smith, Joseph M. Arnold, Henry Pilgrim, Mrs. Herrick, and Mrs. Ryerson, were arrested on charge of conspiracy, threatening to take life, and for assault and battery.

"Grant Goodrich, Esq., conducted the prosecution.

The prisoners being asked if they had counsel, Drysdell replied 'Yes.' The court inquired 'Who?' to which he replied, 'God!'" .

The following synopsis of the proceedings on the trial is from the *Chicago Press*:—

"John W. Holmes was the first witness called. He testified that he had been directed by the 'Conservator of the effects of Ira B. Eddy' not to deliver up the keys of the vault to any person; but Ira B. Eddy demanded them on Tuesday evening last, and, with a pistol in his hand, threatened to blow him through unless he surrendered the keys. Witness then gave them up. He further said, he heard Drysdell remark in the bank, about the same time, that there would be no harm in Mr. Eddy's shooting a person now, as he had been declared 'insane' by a jury, and he could not be harmed for the acts of an 'insane' man.

"A meeting of the mediums was held at the bank on Tuesday evening, and communications were held with Alexander Hamilton, General Washington, and other deceased personages, who unanimously declared that Holmes was a traitor to the institution, and was working against them. He was accordingly told by Mr. Eddy that he must leave the bank.

"Mr. E. H. Haight was the next witness examined. He testified that Ira B. Eddy, in company with Mr. Pilgrim, went to the store of W. F. Dominick and Co., and inquired for a pistol. They were shown some, and, while examining a lot of revolvers, Pilgrim recommended to Eddy to take one of Allen's patent, as it would work quicker than Colt's, and therefore would be more useful. The pistol was procured, and they left. Shortly after Pilgrim returned for some powder and ball, and was supplied. The pistol was returned to the store yesterday, and six ball cartridges drawn from it.

“ . . . Mrs. Ryerson, one of the mediums, stated she had never visited the bank until Tuesday evening, when she had a communication with the spirits, who directed her to inform Mr. Eddy and the officers that they must go on with their bank, although they would find it up-hill business, but that God was at the head of it.

“ Sheriff Bradley testified that he found yesterday forenoon in Pilgrim’s house, on the west side, a lot of gold and silver coin, and a small amount in bank-bills, in all to the value of about 3,000 dols., which had been carried thither from the bank a few hours previously by Pilgrim himself, and was deposited in a chest, the key of which was immediately delivered on the demand of the witness.”

Such are some of the fruits of spirit rapping as developed in the banking line. In fact “dollars” seem to be at the bottom of the whole affair. All the rappers want money, and have a keen eye to trade. One of them will sometimes get up at a convention and say: “A certain book is *for sale* at such a place.” Another says, “Here are a few copies of the *New Era* for *gratuitous* distribution; I should be glad to take the names of any who wish to *subscribe*.” Another says, “A meeting of the spiritualists will be held at such a place, where they sometimes have manifestations; admittance *one dollar*.” Another tells us of “A lady who, if any one will write a word, seal it, and send it to her, she will place it on her forehead, and tell the character of the person who wrote the word.” She charges *two dollars*. This is a Mrs. Metler, of Hartford, who will look through you, discover your disease, and prescribe, for five dollars; or for ten dollars, if you are absent, and will send her a *lock of your hair—and the MONEY*.

To show the ingenious moves to which spiritualism

is applied, we may mention that the vendors of quack medicines have already turned it to good account, for they have discovered an elixir of life under direction of the spirits which they describe in the following terms:—

“ This remedy will be found only in the hands of spiritualists, to be dealt out under spirit direction. Having made arrangements for a constant supply, those who desire health without the effect of drugs, will be able to obtain it by the proper use of these preparations.”

In the meantime, while the 'cute Yankee nation are making all the money they can out of one of the most despicable frauds of modern times, the originators of the impudent imposture—the Fish and Fox fraternity—have not been idle; they are living in a fine house in Twenty-sixth Street, New-York; having grown rich at the expense of their deluded visitors. They have not, however, retired from business—oh no, rapping is too good a trade to be parted with so readily. While we write, we learn that “they are patronised by the *élite* of the city, including several eminent judges and divines,” and that “the charge for admission is one dollar.” The following is one of their latest advertisements cut from a New York paper. The editorial introduction destroys its common-place advertisement character.

“ MRS. FISH AND THE MISSES FOX.

“ An error crept into our notice of these ladies, as published in our last issue, concerning their locality. Our readers will please observe that they are at No. 78, West Twenty-sixth Street.

“ Strangers can be entertained on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons, from three to five o'clock; also on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings, from eight to ten o'clock.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPIRITS CROSS THE ATLANTIC AND VISIT ENGLAND.

JUST in the same way as Catlin brought over the Objibbeways, Barnum brought over Tom Thumb; and Mr. Morriss has just brought over the Aztec Lilliputians, namely, as a mere pecuniary speculation—did Mr. Stone bring over to England Mrs. Haydon, medium, and an attendant tribe of rapping spirits. The announcement of their arrival was heralded forth in the usual way in the advertising columns of the *Times*; and this chancing to catch the eye of Mr. Charles Dickens, he, as he tells us, commissioned two trustworthy gentlemen attached to *Household Words*, to test the spirit mystery,—with what result, will be seen by the annexed extract from the article which appeared in that admirable periodical.

“We were recently invited into the company of the Ghost of the Cock Lane Ghost, by an advertisement in the *Times* newspaper, in which a demonstrator or showman, Mr. Stone, begged ‘leave to inform the nobility and gentry that he has just returned from the United States, accompanied by Mrs. M. B. Haydon for the purpose of demonstrating the wonderful phenomena known in that country as Spiritual Manifestations, and which have created the most intense excitement in all classes of society—Residence, 26, Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square. Hours at home, from eleven to two and from four to six.’ So the announcement ran. We had read something of the Rochester Rappers, and of the mystery, if it be a mystery, called ‘spirit knocking’ in

the sentimental language of America. We resolved to visit Mrs. Haydon, and knock up an acquaintance with the ghosts who meet in her apartments, No. 26, Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square. We ourselves happened to be out of spirits, therefore perhaps we made a wise resolve.

“ Yet had we gone for mirth into such company, we should have fared as ill as he who for a midnight jest entered his father’s sepulchre to sup alone among the dead. If it be true, as the believers in the ‘spirit knockings’ tell us, that the spirits of beloved friends whom we have lost speak to us by a noise of rapping, then our most solemn feelings and our tenderest emotions are awakened by the act of positive communion with the dead.

“ If it be otherwise—if that which is the holiest ground within the human heart be through such exhibitions dug into for gold by coarse impostors—if the simple questioner, who with trembling nerves believes that she is brought into the presence of an angel mother, with whom it is a foretaste of heaven to converse—if she be played upon by cheats who laugh under their sleeves at her credulity and turn her money in their pockets,—then such cheating is no matter for amusement. That is an impiety and wickedness far exceeding the measure of an ordinary fraud, which trades upon our solemn love towards the dead—

“ In slight of that forbearance and reserve
Which common human-heartedness inspires,
And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else.”

“ There have often been people impelled, out of the ignorance and coarseness of their natures, to the forging of clumsy tales, in which they themselves, together with the Supreme Being, are the chief actors. Not many

weeks ago two cowherd's children in France—in consequence of information received direct from the Virgin Mary—became accredited by Infallibility itself as new apostles. Not many months ago a girl in Suffolk dealt divine information through the neighbourhood, attesting her inspiration by total abstinence from food. We may read in pamphlets printed centuries ago, how in some parts of Switzerland and France a divine epidemic seized upon the children, how they preached powerfully in their sleep, and were attended at their bedsides by large congregations; or we may read of 'the German Lazarus' who delivered a long list of messages from heaven, and attested his mission by professing that he never slept. This Lazarus was constantly caught napping; but he explained the fact to his own honour, by stating that his parents were so much distressed by his incessant wakefulness, that he found it necessary to feign sleep occasionally, for the comfort of their minds.

"We were two—Brown and Thompson. We rapped at the door of the house in which the knocker lived, on a cloudy and warm evening in the beginning of this present November, which month began, as all the country knows, with days unusually dull and close. We do not idly talk about the weather, for it has a definite connection with our story. Having inquired whether Mr. Stone was at home, well knowing that he was—for he had advertised himself to be at home at that hour in the evening to all parties who desired an introduction to the world of spirits—and having replied to the question about our names by stating that our calling was 'in consequence of an advertisement,' we were conducted to a drawing-room, in which we found that the maid who had preceded us had just lighted the fire. Mr. Stone presently appearing, solemn as became a man who knew his lodgings to be haunted, pointed courteously

to the sticks that had begun to crackle in the grate over the lighted paper, and murmured 'We have had no fire here; we did not like to light it, for it is so very warm.' Truly no fire was needed, and we have a reason of our own for citing Mr. Stone's corroboration of the fact.

"To Mr. Stone, who 'had just returned from the United States' with Mrs. Haydon, for the purpose of demonstrating those wonderful phenomena, which 'have created the most intense excitement in all classes of society,' we introduced ourselves by saying that we had called in consequence of an advertisement; and we sat down before the man who was to bring us to the world of ghosts.

" 'You are aware,' he said, 'that I have given a good deal of my attention to electro-biology?' We *were* aware. 'I have recently visited America, where great sensation has been made by manifestations from the world of spirits, made by means of a noise like rapping. You have perhaps heard of the rappers?' Something: we came there to be informed. 'It is very curious,' said Mr. Stone. 'I have examined these manifestations with great industry, and I have arrived at the conviction that they are true, that they cannot be explained by human minds, that they really do emanate from the spirit world. The lady whom I have brought with me is decidedly the best medium I met with, and I therefore thought it well that the phenomena should be investigated in this country.' Mr. Stone here pausing, and looking into the fire, we inquired what might be the theory of mediums? 'It is very singular,' said Mr. Stone. 'There are some persons in whose sphere the spirits have more power. The grossness of matter commonly repels them, but there are some people whose nervous systems appear to act—you know how delicate the nervous system is—whose nervous systems appear to act as—we can only suppose, of course, we do not pro-

fess to account for these things—as conductors, as magnets, so to speak, whose bodies are surrounded by an atmosphere in which the spirits freely move. In the neighbourhood of such a person, spirits manifest themselves. Such a person is a medium.’ ‘Your medium sits at the table, and the ghosts rap on it?’ we asked. ‘She must sit near the table,’ answered Mr. Stone, ‘because—we cannot control or account for it—the spirits will not knock beyond her influence. That is the nature and the necessity of the medium, but sometimes the spirits will perform their promise to follow some person to a distant place and knock. We were demonstrating the other evening at the house of a distinguished gentleman in the country, when a spirit promised to be present to him in his library at a fixed hour. The gentleman listened, and being very deaf, heard nothing; but, on holding his ear more attentively, he said that he distinctly thought he caught a rapping. It is very curious that the spirits accommodate themselves to deaf people. During the whole of the evening at this gentleman’s, the spirits knocked more loudly than usual.’

“When Mr. Stone had further talked about distinguished patronage, and about the wonders that had been performed, one of us suggested to him, delicately, as unwilling to hurt his feelings by implying too roughly that a man who trembled on the confines of the other world could think of money, that, ‘Of course we knew that his time was not wholly given to the public—that there was some honorarium,’ the reply was prompt. ‘One guinea each person, or five guineas for a party of ten.’ This being understood, we felt our way to the inquiry, which we shaped as well as we could, ‘When will the performance begin?’ The reply being in effect ‘We take in each party separately,” we signified our desire to be taken in as soon as possible.

“The door into the back drawing-room being then opened, we were introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Haydon, the medium’s husband and the medium. Introduction having been promptly made, we were left—we, Messrs. Brown and Thompson—in the lady’s hands. She sat opposite to us on one side of the round table, firm as a rock.

“The medium sat not only opposite to us, but opposite to the fire. It had first occurred to us when we went into that back drawing-room, that the kitchen had come up stairs; there was such an enormous fire in the grate. Though it was so warm out of doors, that, as Mr. Stone remarked, ‘We did not like to light the fire’ in the front drawing-room; in the back room the glowing coals were heaped into a red-hot mountain; and the whole atmosphere was feverish. What did Catherine Fox, tell Mrs. Culver? ‘Catherine told me to warm my feet, or put them in warm water, and it would then be easier work to rap: she said that she had sometimes to warm her feet three or four times in the course of an evening.’

“As we sat in the hot room, with the table between us, opposite to the medium who sat opposite to the fire, we had begun to ponder upon by-gone people, and to think how we could seize ‘the vapoury phantoms of futurity’ by questioning the ghosts. ‘Can we call any spirit?’ ‘You can speak only with spirits in the room; the room is full of spirits, and some one spirit that is present will often go out, if you wish it, to fetch you another with whom you desire to communicate. If you question one who is here, he will knock, or if you wait, some spirit that desires to communicate with one of us will knock, and call attention to itself.’—‘How did you become a medium?’ ‘I did not know what it meant when I used to hear the spirits rapping about me in my bed-room, and following me wherever I went. They knocked so distinctly that my husband—who

heard them also, when I was present—once got up and opened the parlour door, thinking there was somebody who wanted to come in. Then I found out that they were spirits who desired to speak, and had no other way at present of communicating with us. If you ask them any question, and they answer yes, they rap; and if they answer no, they are silent. If we use letters of the alphabet, and point to them in succession, they will spell out sentences, and in that way tell what they wish.' This was the substance of the account given by the medium, who added some examples of the care taken of herself by the spirits, and of a communication of importance made to her that morning by a deceased child; a story told to us already in the next room by Mr. Stone, whose version had, however, in one point, differed materially from the medium's.

"A large card lay before us on the table, upon which were printed in capitals, row after row, the letters of the alphabet, and in a last row the numerals, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0. There were also pencils with which we might point, and there was paper upon which we might write down the letters as the spirits indicated them, and spell out the messages delivered from the other world.

"We were quite still. Brown was solemn; Thompson looked into vacancy; the medium looked down into the table: we were waiting for a communication from any kind ghost who would

"Be as a presence or a motion—one
Among the many there."—(Rap-tap.)

'There is a rapping!' said Mrs. Haydon with an indistinct certainty about the expression of her voice, as though she really fancied that she heard a rapping, but might be in error. 'Who knocks?' we desired to

know. 'The spirit' said Mrs. Haydon, 'desires to communicate with one of us.' Then, talking with her mouth near to the table, as though she were about to sip knowledge from spirits in the wood, she asked, 'Who do you speak to? Is it to me?' (No rapping.) 'Is it to this gentleman?' (No rapping.) 'Is it to that gentleman?' (Rap-tap.) That gentleman was Mr. Thompson, who was requested to converse with the spirit: it was probably that of a near relative.

"Says Thompson, 'Are you related to me?'"

"Rap-tap."

"'What is the relationship between us?'"

"Thompson is directed to take up the alphabet, begin at A, and point to all the letters in succession. When Thompson points at M there is a rap-tap. M is put down by his friend Brown upon a piece of paper as the first letter of the word, and Thompson travels through the alphabet again till he is stopped at O, which Brown puts down, while Thompson begins again and gets to T, where, being stopped, to save trouble, he says, 'Is it Mother?' Rap-tap. Mother; very good."

"But Thompson does not laugh, for very dear to his heart is the thought of a mother who has been known to him from early childhood only as an angel. Surely she would speak to her son, if she had power, though she has been parted from him for so many years. What starlight musings of the boy who thought that guardian angels lived in stars, and looked up at the sky for hours, to dream which was the bright particular star in which his angel dwelt! what yearnings of the youth for a mother's sympathy and guidance when all passions and affections were astir: what sacred mysteries belonging to the inmost thoughts of a whole life, so far as it has gone, were touched by the assertions that the spirit of the lost mother was first to speak. Truly then, if there

were truth in rapping, and if that spirit had addressed her son, she would have spoken not in vain.

“‘Have you anything to say to me?’ asked Thompson. Rap-tap. ‘Will you say it?’ Then, by the most tedious process of getting each letter in succession knocked out of the card, and with a few mistakes in spelling, which were corrected as they were made, but which consumed time, the spirit rapped out this sentence: ‘Dear son, I am well pleased to see you. I watch over you, and God blesses you.’ Satisfactory, no doubt. A kind of sentence that might be regarded by any reasonable person as a sure proof of the ghost’s authenticity. But would she in the next place authenticate her claim to be the mother of Thompson? Would she convince her son by telling him her Christian name? Thompson began the alphabet with an inscrutable face: but the light from the fire and window, although good enough for a ghost, or for a common purpose, was not good for a medium. The spirit rapped at T (wrong), at I (wrong), at M (wrong); finally made out Timok—truly an odd Christian name for an English lady; and having, in this instance, the curious peculiarity that it did not contain a single letter of the name that should have been communicated. But Timok might be some thing mystic. The medium said it was not mystic but mistake, and complained of the bad light. Spirits, perhaps, are forbidden spectacles. No more must be done until a lamp was lighted.

“Then it was again distinctly intimated to the professed spirit of Thompson’s mother, who had sought this conversation, that nothing mystical was wanted, only the Christian name she had before she died—‘Went into the spirit world,’ said the medium, ‘the spirits never talk of death.’—‘Before you went into the spirit world. Do you remember what that name

was?' Rap-tap. 'Will you tell it me?' Rap-tap. 'Do so then, now, if you please.' So again came the answer knocked up from the alphabet, this time, E-U-N-I-C-E—of course, ridiculously wrong—but, as Eunice means 'a happy victory,' and it might be again said that the spirit was mystical, Thompson said, 'We will presume that there may be some hidden meaning.' 'Hidden meaning, you think?' said Mrs. Hayden, listlessly, as though the spirits and their sayings were rather affairs of ours than of hers. 'Shall we try again for the real name?' 'No,' said Thompson, 'it is not worth while; I will be satisfied with the first letter of it.' It was then most elaborately defined to the ghost, with almost legal periphrasis, what was required, and the ghost by rap-taps declared itself perfectly clear in its mind, and ready to oblige. 'So now for the initial of your Christian name in this world?'—T. 'Is that right?' asked the medium. Thompson said no. 'Then we had better try again, there may be some mistake.' The medium explained the matter in her own way to the table, and trying again, speculated again unluckily upon M. That was again quite wrong, and the medium proposed to try again. Thompson had no doubt, that in not more than twenty-six trials, and, perhaps, in one or two less, the right letter could be hit upon: so declared himself content. He would now be glad if the supposed ghost of his mother would condescend to name the year in which she passed into the spirit world. Did she remember it? Rap-tap. Would she tell it? Rap-tap. And what year was it? Figures being now touched on the card instead of letters, there was a tap at one, a tap at eight, a tap at four (wrong, it should have been at two), and a last tap at nine, which the spirit recanted by refusing to ratify the whole number when asked at the end whether it was what she

meant. The medium probably caught a smile on Thompson's face, and reserved to herself the advantage of another guess; she then settled upon the year 1846, which was by more than twenty years a blunder. Thompson then ceased from his inquiries, and we all proposed to wait and try the powers of another spirit.

"After the usual solemnities, there was a rapid rat-tat-tat-tat. 'What does that mean?' asked Brown. The medium explained that no two spirits have the same rap, and that by familiarity you know the rap of any spirit as distinctly as you know a voice. That spirits rapped according to their temperaments: those of nervous people tapping quickly, of quiet people almost inaudibly, and so on. 'Well, who is this?' asked Brown, and it turned out to be a repetition upon Brown of the dull guesses we had just gone through in the case of Thompson. It was the spirit of his mother. (Brown's mother, he is happy to observe here, is alive and well.) Had this spirit of the dead-and-alive anything to say? Yes. A dead-and-alive ghost was the properest for the occasion. The most interminable game at beggar-my-neighbour is not half so dull and stupid as the knocking out of long and foolish sentences from the A, B, C, D, card of a rapper. Brown must have been regarded as a suspicious character by the medium. The ghost of a dead-and-alive, blundering over letters, tapping back, and leaving, after all, her sentences in a broken down condition, said to Brown, 'Be candid; investigate; be careful; for this is God's work, my son.'

"God's work!

"The spirit then informed Brown by the usual slow process that his mother's name was Mary; falling into a trap which Brown had laid, possibly by dwelling with the pencil over M and A, and R and Y; also that she had been dead six years—all wrong.

“I wish,” said Brown, “to ask some questions concerning the future; can the spirits answer them without your knowing what they are?” “If they cannot, they will be silent,” said the medium, “sometimes they do so. Try.”—“As they are questions which I should not like to ask in public, will they see them written on paper?” “O yes.”—Brown wrote down very clearly: “Shall I soon be married?” “Will the spirits answer this question?” Rat-tat-tat. “Is yes the answer?” Rat-tat-tat. “How many children shall I have?” was written next, Brown saying “This is a question that must be answered in numbers. Does the spirit see it?” Rat-tat-tat. “Can it answer me?” Rat-tat-tat. And so the spirit answered by the usual process, “One Hundred and Thirty-Six.” When the 1 was obtained, and then the 3 to go next to it, and then the 6 to go after that, the rapid growth of Brown’s family amused Thompson, and the imminent carrying on of the sum into thousands was prevented by his ill-timed mirth. The production of children by Brown stopped, therefore, prematurely, at the number of one hundred and thirty-six.

“The medium, who always asked whether the answers fitted, and who did not clearly know whether she might not be succeeding vastly, although she evidently felt a little puzzled by the sense that she was not doing so well as might be expected, was now re-assured by the reverent tone in which the too explosive Thompson asked whether the spirits of his sister were in the room. His only sister being in vigorous health, he did not expect her ghost; but it was there, and very prompt to answer him. How long had she been dead? Two years.

“So the dreary labour was continued; but we cannot fatigue our readers with the whole monotony of a sitting that was not enlivened by one happy guess.

“After two hours in the presence of the medium and the great fire, we passed into the front drawing-room again, and paid our money. Mr. Stone trusted that we had found the spirits answering satisfactorily. It appeared to us rather probable that they did answer very satisfactorily at a guinea a head. Nevertheless we grumbled not, and listened to the further wonders that he had to tell of spirits that sometimes not only rapped but moved heavy furniture about. He had seen a large loo table, he said, turned topsy-turvy by the spirits. He told us more, and offered us gratuitously a fresh sitting, if we had not been satisfied with the first. We had seen enough. We asked for printed information and brought home with us a pamphlet upon Spirit Knocking, which he recommended to our notice. It had the motto on the cover, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ Within the pamphlet we have since read of a spirit that flew up a chimney, of a stirrup-iron that followed a man through a wood, and other miserable nonsense.”

The visit described in the foregoing article was paid to Mrs. Hayden, in the dreary month of November, in the year 1852. Several months elapsed and no further public notice was taken of her, but in the spring of 1853, an account was furnished to the *Leader* newspaper of the result of an interview had with Mrs. Medium Hayden, at her new residence, 22, Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square. This was written by a German gentleman, whom the Editor compliments for his integrity and clear-headedness, while differing from him, as well he might, with regard to his belief. The communication was in the form of a letter, and to the following effect:—

“When I proposed to give you a report on these new prophets, who, if as true as they are new, open to us a wide and most interesting field for inquiry, overthrow

ancient and modern systems of science and belief, shake to the very foundation revealed religion and Christianity, but, on the other hand, are telling almost equally strong against Pantheism and Atheism, I had not seen those prophets, expounders, mediums, or whatever you may call them, myself; but what I heard from a friend, a clear-sighted, well-informed, by no means 'gullible,' or over-credulous gentleman, who had paid them a visit, had made me anxious to see and judge for myself; and he having determined, for better satisfaction, to have the medium (and the spirits) at his own house, and having kindly invited me to be present on the occasion, I offered to furnish you with a statement of the result of the evening, which I now, agreeably to your wish, lay before you.

"We were five of us in the library,—my friend, his wife, his sister, his nephew, and myself,—when the footman, handing in a card, announced 'Mrs. Haydon.' Her entrance and deportment were easy, unembarrassed, and yet not 'business-like,' her exterior rather prepossessing; an intelligent countenance, with, perhaps, a slight touch of Yankeeism in the corner of the eye; and the conversation soon being established, showed that she did not lack those powers of speech so peculiar to the citizens of the great Republic; though certain mistakes now and then recurring in the conjugation of verbs, indicated that she could not have had a very first-rate education.

"We took our seats round the table on which the card had been placed. I read—'Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Hayden, 22, Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square.'

"Expectation created silence, now and then broken by questions in a low voice, addressed to the medium, and by the wheels of carriages that brought guests to an evening party at a neighbouring house, and thus

made the otherwise very quiet street rather noisy. The raps which the medium and one or two of us, after we had been seated for about ten minutes, had thought to hear, were drowned by the noise without. It became necessary to move over into the dining-room, looking out upon the quiet and undisturbed regions of the park. I left the library with regret, from the shelves of which such numbers of mighty spirits in folio and in venerable vellum and hog's-skin were looking down upon us.

“We had not to wait many minutes, when the raps commenced, and the spirits having thus manifested their presence, one of the ladies took a card, on which were printed, in three rows, the letters of the alphabet, and in the fourth row the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0. Rap-tap-tap, was the answer when we saw her absorbed in thought of a deceased friend; and this meaning that he or she was ready to converse, the lady's hand passed with a pencil over the said card, pausing, in *equal* intervals, about one second at each letter, and beginning with A again, as soon as the rap-tap-tap had told her, on arriving at any of the letters, that it was the right one, and to be noted down. As the names of the spirits with whom you wish to converse, and the questions you address to them are only *thought, not spoken* (if you prefer, as the lady did), we, of course, had no notion of the purport of the conversation, and I verily believe and am convinced the medium had as little as we. The raps ceased, the paper was handed round, the lady told us she had conversed with a deceased friend, the spelling of whose name she had desired, and there it was, correctly spelt, a German name.

“The other lady took the alphabet; I was sitting by her side, and could follow her movements over the card. The medium was sitting farthest from us, opposite, in an easy, unrestrained position, confining her activity to

listening when the raps began slowly or indistinctly, and addressing now and then an admonition to the spirits, when continued raps created some uncertainty, or when they were not loud enough to be distinctly heard; as, 'Would the spirit say whether the letter is right?' or, 'Is the spirit willing to answer the question?' and, 'Would the spirit rap a little louder?' Rap-tap-tap means, in such cases, 'Yes;' no rapping means 'No.' I observed repeatedly that the medium was not following the movement of the questioner's hand over the card, which latter the lady now in conversation was hiding with her left hand. The raps came distinctly, unhesitatingly, and the full Christian name and surname of her brother were soon on the paper. Then came his age, then the year of his death, then the place where he died in a far distant country. Then to a question, the purport of which I know not, the answer, 'Not now.'

"My turn came, and with it raps distinct in sound from the others, as, in fact, to a quick ear, were nearly all the raps we heard in the course of the evening. My thoughts dwelt on a friend who a few months ago crossed the Atlantic, and died of yellow fever a week after his arrival at one of the West Indian islands. I desired the spelling of his name, leaving out the Christian name. Rap-tap-tap at the W (wrong); I said so; but his Christian name begins with a W. 'Now try the surname.' O (rap-tap), right; H (rap-tap), wrong. I went on without a remark. L (rap-tap), right; the following letter wrong again, which I stated. 'Would the spirit spell his name?' (Rap-tap-tap.) I began again; again wrong. I gave it up, asking the name of the vessel in which he went out. It was given right—not an English, but a German name, and there was no mistake and no wavering in the spelling. I dismissed this friend, summoning (mentally) the spirit of another whom

I had known years ago. A distinct, but rather faint knock. 'Please to spell your name.' It was spelt correctly, always, as I need not mention, through the aid of the alphabet, in the above manner. 'Would you tell me the cause of your death?' (I knew the specific cause most positively.) 'Yes.' 'Give me your answer in German.' 'Yes.' I took the alphabet. C-O-G-N. I grew pale. That *was* the cause of his death; Cognac did kill him, poor fellow! *But the word was not anticipated in my mind.* I expected intemperance, or a similar general expression. I continued, O-C. So the word was Cognoc, not Cognac. Rather excited, I asked aloud, *but in German*—'Is that the true cause of your death?' 'Yes.' 'Is the word spelt correctly?' 'Yes.' Now, Cognoc, is not the correct spelling, and I knew, alas! too well, how correctly and how distinctly he used to spell it Cognac. But the answer was most startling. Every one in England and America calls that spirit brandy, and to most people in these two countries it is hardly known by its original French name under which it goes on the Continent. 'Where did you die?' The name of the place was correctly given, though with some hesitation, and I had to go several times through the alphabet for the fourth and fifth letter. The number of the house in which he died was first given as 38 (wrong), then as 35 (right). Poor ghost! He felt, perhaps, uneasy at the confession he had made, and was nervous in following my pencil. Perhaps I was so myself; but altogether the spelling of names was not so quick and straightforward with me as with the two ladies. Single taps were constantly being heard from other spirits in the course of these conversations, but they mean nothing, except, perhaps, a desire to put themselves into communication.

"My neighbour—my friend's nephew—had now to

begin. There were rap-tap-taps, certainly. He tested the spirit by spelling, but only confused answers came, and he gave it up.

“The master of the house now began a series of questions, most of them answered quickly, and with decided rap-tap-taps. He asked (always mentally) his grandfather the Christian names of *his* grandfather, who was born and lived in a foreign country, where each person generally has three Christian names. Three were given, and one of them seldom or never used in England, but, as my friend afterwards remarked, then and later very frequent in his family. Dates were asked and given, and some proved correct, some not. The year of the death of the above remotest ancestor was asked, but no answer came. The medium remarked that the spirit would perhaps at a later hour be able to give it; questions might be addressed, and answers would be given in any language, the knowledge of the spirits in this respect being as universal as they were independent of space and time. A spirit was asked at what place a living relative of my friend was at that moment, the answer was, ‘Gixdale;’ and on asking again (loud) whether the name and spelling were correct, a very decided rap-tap-tap-tap-tap admitted of no further question. No such place being known, and very unlikely to exist in that part of Europe where the relative is living, the answer (given to a mental question) was suspicious withal; whether true will be known in a few weeks. I make no mention of answers to questions which required a simple ‘Yes’ or ‘No,’ such answers being, besides, only of some doubtful value, when corroborating facts known to us.

“There was once a confusion and some hilarity created by a by-play on my part with my dear old grandfather’s spirit. I saw my friend pausing, and

hearing no raps for a few minutes, I thought he had ceased his conversations, and took the opportunity of conversing rapidly with my grandfather. Rap-tap-tap, there he was. I wished him merely to tell me the year of his death, to convince me of his presence, missing the 18. I went over the numerals, which I had written down on my paper, and 35 was given. My grandfather died in 1835. His raps, however, had been put down by my friend, who had resumed his spellings; but of course the result was nonsense, and only cleared up by my confession of having broken into his proceedings.

“Whilst thus holding intercourse with the spiritual world, conversation between ourselves was not slackening in the intervals, and the medium having mentioned that the spirits were able to move furniture, we expressed our wishes to see it done. ‘Would the spirits move the table?’ asked the medium, in an insinuating tone, bowing down her head over it. A series of raps answered and we were requested to touch the table’s edge with the tops of our fingers, in order to feel the vibration caused by some electric, magnetic, or other ‘fluidum’ with which the spirits would presently act upon the table. We all thought we felt it. I should not like to assert it positively, but what I am prepared at any time to swear to, and what I now do most solemnly assert and tell you, is, that the table first slowly, then quickly, moved in a circular direction, as if it was going to whirl round. One of the ladies jumped up, frightened. I turned sharply round to my right-hand neighbour, the movement being from right to left, asking him, rather angrily, ‘Why did you push the table?’ But he looked as much aghast as every one of us, except the medium, who was sitting in the same easy, reclining position as when the furniture began to move. All this was the work of not much more than a minute. My chair,

which had been quite near to the table, was now at such a distance, that I could just reach it with my outstretched arm. The movement had ceased as soon as the lady had jumped up, and 'the circle was broken.'

"The footman announced the carriage for my friend's sister. I found the man looked extremely curious, and I could not help thinking of the conversations which no doubt had been going on 'below,' between him and the other servants, about our mysterious proceedings upstairs. 'Only one question before I go,' said the lady, and her eyes looked down. Rap-tap-tap. Her finger went over the numerals, 1—1—6. 'One hundred and sixteen years! We always thought she must be of that age.' 'Ah, you were thinking of old Nurse' 'I was, indeed. She died last Tuesday, you know.' And I was told how that old nurse had been long known in the family, and nursed children on whose heads now

'Gray do something mingle with their younger brown,'

and how 'then, some forty years ago, she was an old, shrivelled person,

'Wrinkled deep in time,'

and how she would never tell her age, but how she used to say that she had been present at the coronation of George the Third, when the young man whom she was to have married fell from a scaffold, and died. Being pressed to say how old she was, she would say ninety-three; and she had never advanced beyond that figure since many years. We sat down to tea, five, with the medium. There were no rappings, and the conversation was general, sometimes loud. None of us, apparently, thought of conversation with the dead. Mrs. Hayden (the medium) was telling me a number of anecdotes—some very amusing—of what she had seen, here and in America, in the course of her career. I was demonstrating to her the effects upon the chief doctrines of Chris-

tianity of the simple fact that spirits were so conditioned as those who had conversed with us, and all others must be, and she was telling me what revelations spirits had made her regarding their state, feeling, and degree of happiness. All of a sudden she turned round. 'There was rapping.' 'I did not hear it.' 'But I did,' said my friend, who had been silent for some time; 'and I have summoned my grandfather. Perhaps he can now tell me when his grandfather died. Can you?' Rap-tap-tap. And the year was given, whether correct could not be ascertained at the time.

"After Mrs. Hayden was gone, our first thought was the table. There it stood, firm, solid, on four legs, a good-sized, heavy, dining-table. We found it impossible to move it by pushing or wrenching one of its legs by the foot, least of all to move it in a circular direction. And Mrs. Hayden had been sitting quite still, in an easy, reclining position, which would have been very difficult to preserve, had she made any efforts with her feet. Besides, the table was moving as on a pivot, and the large high lamp standing in the middle, remained as firm as before; there was not the slightest quivering or clattering of the glass tube against the shade, which struck me particularly, and the whole movement, when beginning and ceasing, was without a jerk, but smooth as if the table had been lifted off the ground. I must not omit to state, however, that we requested a further movement after the first had ceased. 'You need not sit down again,' we were told, 'they will do it just the same when we are standing round.' We did stand round, and Mrs. Hayden repeatedly and most politely requested the spirits to move the table again. 'Oh, I have seen them move furniture so quick, that people were obliged to run out of the way, to avoid being hurt; they have moved it often over the whole length of a room.' We

were full of expectation, but no further movement came.

“I have read somewhere that the raps are produced with the toes, and for that purpose the rappers must be in a hot room in order to keep their feet and toes warm. I can only say, that the room in which we were with Mrs. Hayden, for some three hours, was very cold indeed, it being of large dimensions, and the evening one of the coldest we have had in February.”

The appearance of this statement in a paper like the *Leader* was sufficient to awaken a new interest in the subject, and the editor felt himself called upon to make his own investigation. Mrs. Hayden and her band of spirits had, therefore, to run the gauntlet of another and more rigid examination, which, judging from the ludicrous result, ought to have proved a sufficient exposure, but human gullibility is strong, and rapping mediums are not deficient in defenders.

Mr. Lewes's report proceeds as follows:—

“Before I had witnessed these ‘astounding phenomena,’ I had formed an hypothesis of the whole process, which turned out to be accurate. It did *not* seem in the least surprising to me that the questioner should be correctly answered, even when asking questions mentally, of which no living soul but his own knew the answer. I invariably said: ‘The cause of your delusion is that you direct your attention to the *thing said*, and not to the *way in which it is said*. Whatever the trick may be, it will be just as easy to answer a question of one kind as of another—the nature of the question has nothing to do with it. If you ask where your grandfather died, his death being a mystery to the whole world, the answer is as easy as if you ask where Napoleon died; because as it is *you* who really give the answer, not the medium, what you have in your

mind is what will turn out to be the answer. You assure me solemnly that you do not tell the medium anything; I declare unequivocally that you *do*. It is the same in cases of clairvoyance: you tell all, and fancy you are told. You do not tell it in so many words, but unconsciously you are made to communicate the very thing you believe is communicated to you.

“This reasoning, it is needless to say, had very little acceptance; it is stated here as an introduction to, and an explanation of, the experiments I made. I had formed an hypothesis, and according to that hypothesis I framed certain traps into which the medium would infallibly fall if my supposition were correct; the hypothesis and the traps I explained to certain friends *before* the experiment was made, and the result not only fully confirmed expectation, but showed what was certainly not anticipated—viz., that the trick was a miserably poor one—I thought it would be a good trick, such as the ‘Magic wand,’ ‘Mysterious lady,’ or any of the clever conjuring tricks, whereas it really is dependent for its success on nothing but the amazing and active credulity of the audience. This is the conclusion of the writer in the *Household Words*, whose account is accurate, except, perhaps, in the explanation given of the ‘raps,’ which is said to be made by the toes. The writer, however, laid no traps for Mrs. Hayden, he did not select ‘crucial instances.’ I did; and you shall presently learn what they were.

“Our party comprised Mr. and Mrs. Masters, Sir William, Mr. Purcell, and myself (for obvious reasons, the names given are fictitious, except my own). It was after dinner, and we were smoking our cigars, when the footman announced that Mrs. Hayden was in the drawing-room. We soon joined her there, and found her talking to Mrs. Masters about the ‘spirits,’ in the

most easy, familiar way—indeed, she always spoke of them without awe, but with implicit confidence—as if they had been pet monkeys. The conversation soon became general, as we formed a circle round the table. It of course turned upon the ‘Manifestations,’ and Mrs. Hayden was copious in anecdotes (adroitly mingled with aristocratic and well-known names) of the surprising success which had attended her. At last, the rappings having announced that the ghosts were impatient to do something for the money paid, we took our cards, on which the letters of the alphabet, and the numerals from one to ten, were printed, and the *séance* began.

“Sir William was the first. He thought of one dead. On asking whether the person he was then thinking of was present, an alacrity in rapping assured him of the fact. He took his card; the raps were distinct; but the letters were all wrong. He tried another spirit—again the letters indicated were wrong. He tried a third, but a third time nothing came right. I was beginning to get anxious lest repeated failures should alarm the medium, and make her give some evasive excuse; so I suggested that Mr. Masters should try. He tried—but with the same desperate ill success. It was now my turn. Let me pause here to remark that both Sir William and Mr. Masters were determined to give no clue whatever—they remained purely passive, awaiting a result; they passed their pencils along the alphabet with such terrible uniformity that the medium was reduced to vague guessing, and of course in each guess it was thirty-five to one against her. This was what I had anticipated; but it was only negative evidence, and I was to elicit something positive.

“I thought of a relative of mine, and said aloud, ‘I should like to know if she is present.’ Rapping

answered 'Yes.' Observe, the person I thought of was a real person—I was planning no trap this time, because the experiment was to be every way conclusive. I passed my pencil equally along the alphabet without once lingering, until after I had passed the letter J, with which her name began. Finding that I was not to have the *real* name, I thought I would try if I could not make the raps answer where I pleased. I chose N. Raps came; N was written down. What name, thought I, shall it be? Naomi or Nancy? Before I had finally settled, my pencil had passed A, and as I saw E, I determined E should be the letter, and E was indicated. N E, of course, would do for Nelly, and Nelly was spelled! Then came the surname, which ought to have begun with H; but as my pencil did not linger at H, on we passed until we came to S, which was indicated without any intention on my part. I had then to invent some name beginning with S, which was not done at once, from the very *embarras de richesses*; however, I thought O would do, and O was indicated; then R; and after that I resolved the name should be Sorel. It is unnecessary to follow further thus in detail my first trial; enough if I add, that Nelly Sorel informed me she died in 1855, leaving six children, two of whom were boys, the eldest fourteen—every answer being ludicrously wrong, but declared by me to be 'astonishing,' which declaration was accepted in perfect faith by the medium, who thought she had got one good, credulous listener, at all events. That was my object—to make her fall into my trap it was necessary she should believe I was her dupe.

“As far as my hypothesis went, it was confirmed by this conversation. I knew that it was the questioner who supplied the answer, and I made the answer turn out whatever I pleased—not, be it remembered, having

that answer originally in my mind; so as to admit of any pretended 'thought reading'—but framing the answer according to the caprice of the moment, and invariably receiving the answer I had resolved on. Now you have only to replace *acted* credulity by *real* credulity, and the trick is explained. What I did consciously, the credulous do unconsciously. I spelled the words, so do they. The medium knows nothing; she guesses according to the indications you give, and only guesses right when you give right indications; therefore, if you ask what you and you alone can answer, she will answer it only on the supposition that you indicate by your manner what the answer is. But if any doubt lingers in your mind, let this my second trial suffice. I had called up the spirit of one who *did* exist; it was now time to call up one who never did exist. I asked for one of the *Eumenides*; the ready answer assured me of her presence! So, then, I was at last in actual communication with one of the awful troupe—*θανμαστας λοχος*—who 'snore' so fearfully in Æschylus—one in whose nostrils the scent of human blood *laughed*, as we are told—

οσμη βροτειων αιματων με προσγελα.

What 'emendations' might I not get from her! A bisbopric was evidently within my grasp!

"The result of my interview was that she died six years ago, aged twenty-five, leaving seven children; facts for the first time placed at the disposal of some future Bloomfield. I called her back, subsequently, to ask her what *sect* she belonged to when in life (I asked this question audibly, not mentally—as, indeed I had all others); and the answer was, *Jew*. A Greek ghost embracing Judaism!

"To show how completely the answers are made

at random; when no clue is given, but only a 'yes' or 'no' is required, here are four questions I wrote on a piece of paper, and the answers I received:—

“ ‘Had the ghost of Hamlet's father seventeen noses?’
Yes.

“ ‘Had Semiramis?’ Yes.

“ ‘Was Pontius Pilate an American?’ No.

“ ‘Was he a leading tragedian?’ Yes.

“ I thought Mr. Purcell would have had a stroke of apoplexy, when I showed him these questions; how he restrained the convulsion of laughter is a mystery!

“ Let me not forget, that when Mr. Purcell called up a spirit, the answers were tolerably correct, not quite, but still near enough to be curious to one unsuspecting; he confessed afterwards, however, that he had semi-consciously *assisted* the medium; but, in his second conversation, he called up the spirit of an old family servant, who, at an advanced age, married an elderly woman, and who subsequently drowned himself. These were the questions and answers as written down:—

“ ‘Does James miss his children?’ Yes. (Never had any.)

“ ‘How many had he?’ Yes.

“ ‘How many boys?’ Yes,

“ ‘What did he die of?’ *Wafer*.

“ To explain this ‘wafer,’ it may be observed, that Mr. Purcell meant the death to be called water on the chest, which was his fallacious hint by way of an explanation of drowning; and, when he said aloud that the word was incorrectly spelled *wafer*, whereas it ought to have been ‘water on the chest,’ Mrs. Hayden pointed triumphantly to the accuracy, ‘Only one letter wrong, you see; *wafer*, instead of *water*!’ and she referred to this several times in the course of the evening.

“ I have not half exhausted my stock of questions

and answers written down at the time; but the foregoing will surely suffice; and, should they be deemed inconclusive, perhaps *this* one will close the question: As I had been so very successful in getting correct answers, and was evidently regarded by the spirits with singular partiality, they never declining to answer any question I put, it occurred to me to write this question on my paper, which I showed to Mr. Purcell:—

“‘*Is Mrs. Hayden an impostor?*’

“An unequivocating *Yes*, was the answer; and, to make assurance doubly sure, Mr. Purcell affected not to hear that answer; so we repeated the question, and again were assured that she *was* an impostor. This was the most satisfactory answer of the evening, and I felt very sorry that the medium was a woman—not a man, to whom I could have said, ‘I asked the spirits if you were an impostor, and you hear them declare you to be one.’ For I must plainly say, that a more ignoble imposture than this spirit manifestation never came before me—and that was the opinion of the whole party. It is easy for the reader to convince himself of this by a similar process.”

In the following number of the *Leader* the editor observed: “Iconoclasts are generally welcomed with abuse from devotees. Entering the temples of superstition and charlatanism, they smite the hideous idols from their pedestals, amidst the howlings of indignant worshippers. It was to be expected, therefore, that in exposing the imposture of spirit manifestations which America has shipped for our gullible market, we should have to bear hard words and worse insinuations from indignant dupes; and what we expected we have received.

“Dr. Ashburner, for example, has felt himself personally insulted, and has written an insulting letter, complaining of the ‘flippant’ treatment this ‘very sacred

subject' received at our hands; but as he opposes our experimental *proof* by nothing stronger than his own emphatic assertion, he cannot expect those who reason to attach much weight to mere declaration. Dr. Ashburner is not aware of the dilemma in which the medium was placed by one question addressed to the spirits, 'Is Mrs. Hayden an impostor?' For of two things, one: either the rapping spirits *are* the real existences they pretend to be—visitants from the world beyond the grave,—and if so, *they* emphatically declare Mrs. Hayden *is* an impostor; or the rapping spirits are *not* what they pretend to be; and if so, then Mrs. Hayden is an impostor, gaining a livelihood by pretence. Choose your horn!

“Dr. Ashburner seems to think we have transgressed the decencies, because our victim is a woman; but we have yet to learn that an imposition must be countenanced because practised by one who—publicly at least—forfeits the claims of her sex in forfeiting her claims on our respect. Dr. Ashburner thinks otherwise. He sarcastically observes that her

“‘Sex ought to have protected her from injury, if you *gentlemen* of the press have no regard to the hospitable feelings due to one of your own cloth, for Mrs. Hayden is the wife of a former editor and proprietor of a journal in Boston, having a most extensive circulation in New England. I declare to you that Mrs. Haydon is no impostor, and he who has the daring to come to an opposite conclusion, must do so at the peril of his character for truth! I defy Mr. Lewes, or any one else, to prove the acts of imposition or fraud in the phenomena that require the presence of such a medium as Mrs. Haydon for their development. I have calmly, deliberately, and very cautiously studied this subject. It may please superficial thinkers to treat it as they long treated Mesmerism and clairvoyance. The fire from the *Zoist*, the researches of the Baron von Reichenbach, Mr. Rutter's important discovery of the magneto-

scope, have settled, for posterity, the questions scouted by the twaddling physiologists of this generation. A battle is to be fought for the new manifestations. I have no hesitation in saying, that, much as I have seen of Mesmerism and of clairvoyance,—grand as were my anticipations of the vast amount of good to accrue to the human race, in mental and physical improvement, from the expansion given to them by the cultivation of their extensive relations,—all sink into shade and comparative insignificance, in the contemplation of those consequences which must result from the spirit manifestations. I am not now to express an opinion on the magnetic origin or analogies of these phenomena; I have to declare my opinion on their genuine character, which I do unreservedly. However astounding may be the fact, I am clear that we have the power of communicating with intelligences, only magnetically present, unseen by us, who are capable of expressing thoughts full of the tenderest sympathy, redolent of the highest and purest love, and occasionally conveying, through accents of displeasure, the most awful lessons of sublime morality. This is a very serious truth, and must and will force its way. Animal magnetism and its consequences appeared marvellous to petty minds. The spirit manifestations have, in the last three weeks, produced *miracles*, and many more will, ere long, astound the would-be considered philosophers, who may continue to deny and sneer at the most obvious facts.

“I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“JOHN ASHBURNER.

“York-place, March 14th, 1853.”

“We feel comment to be superfluous. But as the subject excites so much attention, we will make one or two remarks with reference to the *séance* in which we tested the rapping spirits. We could not, had we chosen it, have had a more complete circle of proof. In the company, all shades of feeling were represented. Sir William and Mr. Masters were purely *passive*; they

gave the medium no sort of indication,—no word, no look, no agitation, no lingering of the pencil. Every single answer they received was erroneous. During the whole evening they could not *once* obtain right letters. Their passiveness forced the medium to rely on mere guessing; and the guessing was always unfortunate. In direct contrast with these passive sceptics, we acted credulity, and did consciously what others do unconsciously; thus we represented the entirely credulous. The result was that we always had the answers we choose to have! It mattered not how false, how absurd, how fantastic the thought which crossed our minds,—whatever we determined the spirits should declare, they did declare. Our departed friend died in the year 1855 (not yet arrived), told us her name was one ludicrously unlike what her name really was, and told us, in short, what we chose she should tell us. The Greek ghost was equally complaisant. On first asking her what religious sect she belonged to, we thought of making her say Shaker, Quaker, or Mormon, but finally resolved upon the Jewish as being more piquant for one of the Terrible Sisters: accordingly she announced herself a Jewess. The positive and negative evidence thus afforded by Sir William, Mr. Masters, and ourselves, was strengthened by the intermediate condition of Mr. Purcell, who, semi-credulous, received answers that were pretty nearly correct, although he admitted afterwards that he was conscious he *had* assisted the medium in the way we described.

“Now, to any one who understands the nature of evidence, the *séance* we had with Mrs. Hayden will be seen to be positive experimental *proof* of an imposture. All our previsions were realised. We had an hypothesis, we made experiments to prove it; we laid certain traps, and into those traps Mrs. Hayden, unsuspecting,

fell. Had our hypothesis been wrong, had the spirits been real existences, the traps we laid would have caught nothing.

“Another indignant correspondent, ‘Phocion,’ evidently a lawyer, tries to ‘argue the point’ with us. We leave his letter to our readers. The only remark it may call from us, is the charge made against our believing nothing except upon the evidence of our senses; this is a mistake. We believe in many things for which sense cannot furnish the evidence directly—the elliptical path of a planet, for example. And moreover, we find it is precisely those persons who ‘trust to the evidence of their senses,’ as they call it, who believe in the most outrageous propositions. The touch about one not being allowed to contradict our own witness, is a charming bit of legal quibbling.

“Sir,—I have perused with horror and disgust a letter in your last issue, headed ‘The Rappites Exposed.’

“Because the Rappites are marvellous, Mr. Lewes concludes they are impostors! It was this dangerous reasoning that led Thomas Woolston, a member of the University of Cambridge and a clergyman, in 1737, to pour forth his blasphemous doctrines. It was this that caused John Meslier, a priest of Entrepigni, in Champagne, to vie with the infamous Woolston in ridiculing miracles. Woolston, amongst other things, denied that a dead man could ever be brought to life, and Meslier insisted that the devil carrying off our Lord to the top of a mountain, the marriage of Cana, and the loaves and fishes, were all ‘a parcel of absurd tales.’ And why? Because neither Woolston nor Meslier could understand *how* such things could be. Woolston and Meslier were not dull men. On the contrary, their biographers say they were clever, and very pleasing in their manners and style of writing; but they were obstinate and impetuous (like Mr. Lewes).

“Mr. Lewes will not believe in the Rappites because he does not understand them. He must needs be convinced of

every matter (like that obstinate people the Jews) by the evidence of his own senses. He would probably doubt that our Saviour turned water into wine, and walked upon the sea, etc. If we give in to Mr. Lewes, we shall have to admit that every Christian is imbruted with ignoble superstition. Let us inquire *why* Mr. Lewes does not believe in the Rappites. He says—

“ To show how completely the answers are made at random, when no clue is given, but only yes or no is required, here are four questions I wrote on a piece of paper, and the answers I received :—

“ ‘ Had the ghost of Hamlet’s father seventeen noses? Yes.

“ ‘ Had Semiramis? Yes.

“ ‘ Was Pontius Pilate an American? No.

“ ‘ Was he a leading tragedian? Yes.’

“ Mr. Lewes was *determined* not to be satisfied with the answers given to him. For my part, I confess they strengthen my faith in the Rappites, whom Mr. Lewes is pleased to call ‘ impostors.’ First, with reference to Hamlet’s father— ‘ Had he seventeen noses?’ ‘ Seventeen noses’ must not be construed literally, but figuratively. I do not believe that Argus had, *literally*, a hundred eyes, but I suspect he was a person of very wonderful sight. Sydney Smith talks of a clergyman of ‘ forty parson power,’ and ‘ the shipment of ten tons of orthodoxy for Ireland.’ If we take these expressions literally, they are ridiculous. Then, as regards the question, ‘ Was Pontius Pilate an American?’ ‘ No,’ says the Rappite. Well, sir, was the Rappite wrong? Would Mr. Lewes have had her say, ‘ Yes,’ I wonder? How Mr. Lewes would have clapped his hands had she said, in continuation, ‘ and the inventor of the revolving pistol!’

“ Mr. Lewes is the most bitter enemy to mystery that I ever had to deal with. It is to him ‘ a mystery how Mr. Purcell restrained the convulsion of laughter!’ He ‘ thought Mr. Purcell would have a stroke of apoplexy’ when he (Mr. Lewes) showed him the above questions. I conceive, sir, that Purcell was too much ‘ staggered’ by the impiety which dic-

tated such queries to admit of his indulging in, or sharing, Mr. Lewes's profane levity on so solemn an occasion! Mr. Lewes then asked—

“ ‘Does James miss his children?’ ”

“ ‘Yes,’ says the Rappite; and Mr. Lewes then claps his hands and says to the public, ‘*James never had any!*’ Well, sir, and was not the answer correct? I contend that if a man has no children (a married man especially) he *must* miss them. If this be doubted, let Mr. Lewes (since he is fond of Geek) consult Metrodorus—*vide* the Anthology.

“ ‘Then, again, as to the death of James—‘What did he die of?’ says Mr. Lewes.

“ ‘Wafer,’ says the Rappite.

“ Now, the word ‘wafer’ ought not to be taken literally, any more than the reply about the seventeen noses. The Rappite should have had an opportunity of *explaining*. Suppose Mr. Lewes were to approach a waterman at a cab-stand, and say to the man, ‘Go, *quick!* and get me a light for my cheroot.’ The waterman would most probably reply ‘Walker,’ without moving an inch, and without any intention of obeying Mr. Lewes's command. ‘Wafer,’ with the Rappite may have meant a thirst for something dry, and, as James died of drowning, the answer would have been extremely inappropriate.

“ We now come to Mr. Lewes's crowning question—‘*Is Mrs. Hayden an impostor?*’ ‘Yes,’ says the spirit. Mr. Lewes believes the spirit in this, but doubts her in everything else. He wants to contradict his own witness. This is absurd, and cannot be allowed. But did Mr. Lewes ask the spirit if Mrs. Hayden was an impostor *with reference to the rappings?* If not, I contend the spirit's answer has nothing to do with the great question, of which Mr. Lewes appears to have lost sight.

“ ‘If Mrs. Hayden had that evening, when Mr. Lewes made his appearance, politely smiled, and said blandly, ‘I am delighted to see you, Mr. Lewes,’ her conduct would have fully justified the reply of the spirit, inasmuch as Mrs. Hayden must have felt that Mr. Lewes had come there predetermined to ‘smash’ the establishment. To some extent we are all im-

postors; but what has that to do with our faith, or our excellence in any particular branch of art? Napoleon was an impostor, but he was a great general nevertheless. Cranmer was an impostor, but he was a glorious martyr nevertheless.

“I remain, sir, yours obediently,

“PHOCION.

“Temple, 16th March, 1853.”

The foregoing articles and correspondence were followed up by some additional suggestions, from which we select a couple of examples. Both were in the form of letters to the editor.

“Sir,—Having observed in your journal of the 5th instant a statement respecting the alleged spirit manifestations, from a correspondent who appears to have but partially investigated the matter, I take the liberty of transmitting to you a few additional particulars. The writer of the article appears to have had but one interview: he called the spirit of an old servant—whether an intelligent one or not is not stated—he obtained to the several questions put apparently incoherent affirmatives or negatives, which he probably elicited either by dwelling upon certain letters of the alphabet, and by obtaining raps through that means, or by discarding the alphabet and considering a rap to signify yes, and silence, no. My own case, sir, was somewhat similar to that of your correspondent.

“I, upon the first occasion, called the spirit of an old servant—the experiment was unsatisfactory; I then attempted to help him, but got on with difficulty; had I had the inclination, I feel confident answers could have been obtained equally absurd as those your correspondent prides himself with having so ingeniously succeeded in obtaining.

“I, however, did not throw discredit on, or treat with scorn, the experience of others; I, therefore, determined to try again the next evening, believing that the failure rested either in myself or some other unknown cause. I called the spirits of two of my own nearest relations, who might naturally be supposed to be more intimately connected with myself; they both presented themselves, giving proofs of their identity which

could never have occurred to me to seek. I tested them in various ways. I was also anxious to ascertain whether by willing strongly, and dwelling upon wrong letters, I could obtain false answers, but failed to influence them in any way whatever, whether the alphabet was placed upon, or concealed under, the table, and at each of the several successive interviews the *rapport* appears to be more thoroughly established; whether I ask questions audibly or mentally, concise and clear answers are given, excepting in some few instances when no reply can be obtained.

“So far as the moving of the table is concerned, I obtained my request, during the second interview, in so satisfactory a manner, that I consider time may be more profitably employed than in seeking a repetition of it; it moved out of reach of Mrs. Hayden, and soon after suddenly regained its former position; it also moved upon its axis in a peculiarly smooth, gliding manner; not the top only, but the whole table, as I particularly observed, commencing with an almost invisible motion until it gained a rapid pace, and stopped suddenly. I immediately endeavoured myself to produce a similar motion, but was unable.

“I will conclude by stating, that I have reason to consider Mrs. Hayden to be a lady possessed of courage, but, having a delicate and sensitive mind, any insults directed against her, whether personally or through the medium of the press, may be likely to have a tendency to disarrange and interrupt that subtle and mysterious agency so intimately connected with our higher nature, which we may look forward to as promising to become, sooner or later, according to its reception, an additional grand and sublime source of enlightenment to all sober-minded persons of our own and future ages. May I venture to recommend those who determine to investigate for themselves, to refrain from publishing the crude ideas of one hour's experience, especially should they arrive at conclusions opposite to those of the thousands who have been making the subject their earnest and constant study during the past five years.

“I am, sir, your obedient servant,

“March 21, 1853

“C. F. I.

Another letter makes us acquainted with a novel mode of spirit writing by medium intervention:—

“Sir,—Permit me, if you conveniently can, the opportunity of affording Mr. Lewes a peg on which to hang a few shreds of additional comments, in defence of his ‘hypothesis’ relative to the spirit-rapping ‘imposture.’

“Mr. Lewes considers that he has proved his hypothesis; but, if another explanation of the facts recorded by him be possible, what becomes of the ‘proof’ he so confidently relies on?

“Suppose, then, the spirits summoned to the *séance*, saw through Mr. Lewes's scheme, and felt disposed to gratify him with his ‘proof’?

“Here is another hypothesis, which many as cautious critics as Mr. Lewes may be disposed to accept, quite as readily as his own. He does not hesitate to impute, by anticipation, imposture to others, nor, in the realisation of his hypothesis, to ‘act’ an imposture himself; why should ‘the spirits’ be denied their revenge upon him? Are there no wags out of the body as well as in it? Are we to dictate to the wag above how he is to treat the wag below?

“Again, sinking the idea of waggery: concede that there is quackery, ignoble imposture, in the spirit-medium profession,—that the base and unworthy have, in this as in most other relations, however sacred, become mixed up with the pure and true,—may not Mr. Lewes's crucial instance, and its results, have been seen to be needful, as a caution and a guide to inquirers, and, on this ground, ‘acted’ by ‘the spirits’?

“But, further, Mr. Lewes's hypothesis does not cover the whole facts of the phenomena. It does in no way explain the unexceptionably attested cases, recorded in the American literature on the subject, and in the records of private investigation, into which the vulgar notion of imposture, besides being excluded by the very nature of the occurrences described, is, on other grounds, wholly inadmissible. How, for instance, does it apply to the following case?—A pair of scissors is held, by the points, by a ‘medium,’ over a sheet of writing-paper,

One of the persons present drops a pencil into the thumb-hole of the scissors. Presently, the pencil stands apart from the steel, begins to move, and the hand of the medium is carried across the paper, and the signature of a person known to be dead appears! The father, or other near relative of the person is present, and, from some peculiarity in it, disputes the genuineness of the signature. The recent letters of the person are appealed to, and there the very same peculiarity is found, and the exact correspondence of the two signatures demonstrated.

"This case is reported in Horace Greeley's paper, the *Tribune*, and, if I mistake not, he vouches for the honour and capacity of his correspondent, who gives the original letter of the father, or relative of the alleged spirit writer. I mention it from memory, but am certain the main facts of the record are as stated.

"I have myself seen nothing of the 'rapping' experiments. I have, however, seen so much of other equally mysterious things, in cognate relations, that I hesitate to accept an explanation of the 'rappings,' which implies so much credulity on the one side, and so much depravity on the other.

"Having briefly thrown a new text before your accomplished *collaborateur*, I await his ever genial, however trenchant, criticism.

"And am, sir, yours truly,

"A.

"Liverpool, March 21, 1853."

The next test Mrs. Hayden and the spirits had to undergo, was at the hands of the editors of the *Zoist*, a journal dedicated to the advancement of animal magnetism in this country. The result of the interview as made public was sadly unsatisfactory so far as spirits and medium were concerned; and the rappers, who for a long time past had been coquetting with Mesmerists, and had installed the most notorious clairvoyant in the United States as high-priest of the new mystery, were

astounded to find the professors of animal magnetism in this county ranked among their most bitter opponents. The writer in the *Zoist* describes an interview in the following terms :—

“After a certain number of persons have agreed to pay the medium a stipulated sum for spiritual truths, they sit at a table with her : a table is always insisted upon by the spirits ; and this is very odd, as there are no tables or chairs in their own country. Sooner or later they arrive, sometimes not till half an hour has elapsed, and then expectation is the more highly worked up, and so much the less time is left for rigorous examination. There is heard a faint rap at the table : so faint perhaps that the medium says, ‘Hush—stop : I heard a rap.’ All listen ; it is repeated ; one hears it : and then another also hears it ; and so on, till all agree that the rapping has begun and the spirits have certainly arrived. All are now amazed, and all are attentive. The gentlemen become grave ; the ladies pale ; and all are satisfied that there is something in it. The sound is like the pecking of a bird ; like a slight striking of the edge of a finger-nail upon a hard substance ; and sometimes the sound is of a stronger hitting ; all may be well imitated by striking the edge of a finger nail upon a table with various degrees of force. The idea of anything peculiar, awful, unearthly, in the sound, is ridiculous. There are slight raps from little children, strong ones from gentlemen spirits, and soft raps from lady spirits.

“If the spirits do not give the raps, and thus signify their arrival at the party, the medium may begin to rap with her finger-nails on the table, and ask, ‘Are there any spirits here to-night?’ ‘Will the spirits *have the kindness to rap?*’ ‘Will the spirits *oblige me by manifesting themselves immediately?*’ At last they are pretty sure to rap, and thus signify ‘Yes ;’ quite sure if

you have paid for them; for, if they once failed, this would be talked about, and people would not go and pay on a chance. You are informed that the spirits are those of departed persons, and that, if you employ the word *death* or *die* they will not answer; but that you must express your meaning by asking when they *went into the spirit world*; when they *left this world*, etc., etc. Though they stand up for this etiquette as becomes spirited people, they do not take offence at rudeness; for you are told that while waiting for their raps you may chat and laugh as much as you please. You are desired *to think on the name of some departed person*, and take a printed or written alphabet and move your fingers over letter after letter; and on hearing a rap you are to observe what letter your finger is over: and then you begin again, and so on till no rapping is heard. You consider what words the letters so distinguished by rapping make; and this is the answer to the question you may propose either aloud or mentally. You receive a series of numbers also from 1 to 0, and proceed in the same way when your question relates to numbers that you did in the case of letters.

“Let it not be thought, however, that this is always very plain. A rap often comes before your finger is over a letter or number, sometimes after you have left a letter or number; and this makes so much confusion that you are desired to ask the question again; and the medium requests the spirit to be *so good* as to repeat the rap if another trial is made. ‘Will the spirit be so good (or so kind) as to rap once more if it was the letter that was meant;’ and so on. Sometimes it is all nonsense; and frequently, if not nonsense, quite wrong.

“This is always done at a table. The medium says a circle is the favourite arrangement of the spirits, and that the greater part of a dozen persons is better than a

smaller number. The *petticoated* medium has her feet under the table; and is near enough to reach a leg of it, and of course can always on emergency reach a leg of her own chair. The name of the departed person mentioned, or silently thought of, is often spelt out of the rappings either quite correctly, or tolerably so; and the inquirer is thunderstruck; and the rest of the party are aghast at hearing him say that 'indeed the name is quite correct.' The medium keeps a sharp look-out at your eyes, or your hand, or both, and listens anxiously if you speak.

"Questions are then asked regarding the history of the deceased, and perhaps answered with equal and wonderful accuracy. The company becomes excited, and the excitement increases. Inquiries are made without the alphabet; questions are asked aloud, and the spirits blandly requested by the medium to be so good, to be so kind, as to tap if the answer is affirmative; no tap being negative.

"A lady will now ask how many children she has? Seven taps.—'Quite right.' 'How many boys?' 'Four.'—'Quite right.' 'How many children has my mother had?' 'Thirteen.'—'Quite right.' 'When was my mother's birthday?'—'It was Michaelmas-day?' 'When was my own—the first of May?' No rap. 'The first of April.' Rap.—'Quite right.' 'When did my mother leave this world?' (not die, observe, as there would be no rap to such vulgar language.) 'Last Lady-day.' 'Where was my brother buried?'—'Kensal Green.' 'What is inscribed on his tomb?'—'He died in peace.' The lady now throws down her card of letters and numerals, and in great agitation declares that every answer was 'most frightfully' correct. One gentleman asks about a certain person, and the answer is given by spelling out the name of another person with whom he

had been intimate, but not of the individual he thought of; and this may happen again, before the right one is spelt out.

“Then an old gentleman who had said little, but who has observed a great deal, and in his various observations has detected the medium in two or three statements, which, if placed in juxta-position, would lead to considerable embarrassment, now takes the alphabet. Instead of asking for any particular person, he asks the spirit if it wishes to speak to him, whereupon he hears a tap of assent. He then asks for the *name* of the communicant. He receives the answer of ‘*Swithesy*,’ puts it down silently, looks pleased, and asks where he met him?—‘*Irrengn*,’ is the reply. ‘When?’—‘1790.’ ‘When did my sister Ann leave this world?’—‘1835.’ ‘Where did my friend S—— enter the spirit-world?’—‘*Calais*.’

“All are now impatient to hear the result. Whereupon the old gentleman informs the company that all the answers were wrong. He had never known any one of the name of *Swithesy*; he never was at a place called *Irrengn* (if there be such a place); he was born in 1792, consequently could not have met *Swithesy* in 1790. His sister is now alive; his friend S—— died at Dover, though at the time he was questioning he resolved it should be *Calais*, allowed his mind to dwell on this as he moved his fingers upon the letters, and got that place for the answer.

“A gentleman took the alphabet, and thought of a departed relative; the medium asks if the spirit is present that the gentleman thinks of; a rapping declares, ‘Yes.’ Then she asks if the spirit will ‘be so kind’ as to answer the gentleman’s questions, and again a ready rap promises it will. The first letter of the surname is rapped out correctly, and the second; the third letter was a repetition of the second, and not essential to the pronun-

ciation of the word, and was omitted, but the next was rapped out; the fourth, fifth, and sixth rapped out; in passing along the alphabet for the rest of the letters, the rapping made all confusion. The Christian name came out perfectly right. The place where the body now lies is doubted by some—is one of two places, but which of the two is a matter of doubt. England began to be rapped out; but was not rapped out satisfactorily; and, on a doubt being expressed by the inquirer whether England was the place, ——— was rapped out, which to the inquirer's mind is probably the place. He then mentioned the surname; that it had been spelt incorrectly as to the third letter—a single letter being rapped out instead of a double one; and as to the last letters, that those indicated were confused; and he mentioned a year as that in which his relative died; but through inadvertence did not mention the right year, making it two years earlier—not fifty, but forty-eight.

“After a week this gentleman had a second interview with the medium. Thought of the same relative; whose spirit promptly rapped to signify its presence and perfect willingness to answer questions. The surname and Christian name were spelt most accurately; and the double letter given instead of the erroneous single one given at the former interview. The spirit was certainly not a lying spirit, but spake the truth and fulfilled its promises. Besides, it and all the other spirits are now in bliss and therefore in a state of grace. Great things were therefore to be expected from it. The spirit was now asked the year in which it went to the spirit world? It answered 1848, the year told by the gentleman to the company on the former evening, whereas it ‘went to the spirit world’ in 1850,—a sad want of memory in a spirit ‘made perfect.’

“It was then asked what was its age when it went to

the spirit world? It replied twenty-seven, whereas his age was forty. It was asked by what cause it left this world? Now it had left this world through a short attack of delirium tremens in a foreign land, but it replied, 'Dropsy.' 'Dropsy is not so often an original disease as the effect of some disease: You must have had some other disease: what disease, therefore, caused the dropsy?'—'Defness.' 'But deafness would not cause dropsy: what caused it?'—'Dispepsy.' 'Why dyspepsia could not cause dropsy—what did cause it?'—'Disentary.' 'Well, but there must have been some other cause: dysentery does not produce dropsy?'—'*Dissipation.*'

"The gentlemen had graduated at a University, and was a Fellow of a Medical College. He had therefore forgot his spelling as well as his age and the date of his death. This medium, however, was very illiterate, and pronounced many words in common conversation as though she had never learnt to spell, and so the poor ghost caught her ignorance and spelt badly like her.

"He now took a letter from his pocket, and the spirit present was asked if it would be so kind as to tell the name of the writer. It at once knocked assent, but made a most terrible miss: neither surname nor Christian name was rapped right; and words as different from the right were rapped out as Jeremy Diddler are from Isaac Newton. And why? Because he held the alphabet under the table, so that the medium could not see it in his hand, and he kept his eyes fixed on one spot.

"A gentleman thought of his brother, whose Christian name was Colmer. His brother rapped and declared himself present, but persisted that his own Christian name was Charles. The C. having been guessed right, the most probable name was Charles. He maintained that his surname was Symonds, though it had but one

syllable, which one syllable the medium had imperfectly heard when the gentleman was introduced to her before the sitting, and which, being unusual, she mistook for Symonds.

“A lady wished to have some spirit rap his presence to her. The spirits were asked by the medium to be so kind: and were so kind as to begin some very brisk raps. For the raps may be gentle or strong, slow or rapid; just as you may at your own pleasure rap in common life. ‘Oh,’ said the medium, ‘that is a man-spirit by the loudness of the rap.’ It was prevailed upon to give its name, and its name came out by the rap and alphabet, ‘Thomas a.’ The company thought it must be Thomas à Becket: but no, it was Thomas à Paine. Doubts were entertained whether it was the real Thomas Paine—there were other Thomas Paines in the world besides the Tom Paine, whose name, moreover, was not Thomas à Paine, though Mrs. Medium knew no better. It was therefore asked by the lady whether it was ‘the T. P. who wrote against the Bible?’—‘Yes.’ ‘Was it not very wrong?’—‘Yes.’ ‘Are you not very sorry now?’—‘Yes.’ ‘Would you do so again?’—No rap—meaning ‘No.’ ‘Are you happy now?’—‘Yes.’ ‘Were you unhappy for a time only?’—‘Yes.’ It seems that all spirits are happy after a short period of unhappiness: so that the day of judgment is not so awful a matter, and is not still to come to the majority in the spirit community.

“A gentleman wished to know if any one was present who in life had known him?—‘Yes.’ The Christian and surnames were spelt of a lady of whom he had never heard, and who had resided in a place where he had never been.

“Another gentleman now takes the alphabet. The rapping is loud and continuous in answer to the inquiry

whether a spirit will speak to him. But in the midst of the rapping the inquirer *places his head under the table, and that moment the rapping ceases.* He raises it, and the *rapping commences.* He looks under again, and there is the like cessation.

“Not only will spirits rap, but sometimes push about the table. Therefore another gentleman asks for a sign, in the fact of the movement of the table. Suddenly the medium exclaims, ‘Bless me! the table has moved.’ All eyes are turned to where the medium is looking: and certainly there has been an alteration of position. Suddenly, another lurch! But one person now keeps his eyes fixed so as to command the whole space underneath the table. *All further movement ceased* while he thus commanded a view.

“The above instances are merely samples of what occurs daily at various spiritual *séances.*

“The successful answers by the spirits are the result of great natural keenness, increased by much practice; for people do not become mediums in a minute—but gradually. The medium by keen practice is enabled to discover in the features certain shades of indication that prompt her to make the sounds at particular moments. Then, if there be a doubt upon which letter the rap took place, the inquirer repeats the letters aloud, and thus the medium gets a further clue from the intonation as to the exact letters the inquirer wants to form his words. If any one who has been taken in by this cunning trick will put his questions mentally, place an opaque substance, as a screen, between himself and the medium, and observe rigid silence, he will quickly find the spirits not sharp enough to penetrate the obstruction: and this trial will satisfy the most credulous as to the real nature of a spirit’s sagacity. Even without a screen, if he preserves a wooden, inexpressive countenance, holds his

tongue, and keeps his fingers an equal time on every letter, he will not be answered right : and he may produce all kinds of blunders at pleasure if he dwells on wrong letters, and acts a treacherous part with his features.

“If the raps give a name different from that which the inquirer was thinking of, but still one of a person he has been acquainted with, we are persuaded that the thing begins with some chance letter or letters, and his imagination is excited to the recollection of the person, and so by his features and voice, etc., he gives the medium all the information she requires in order to be right ; just as in common cases.

“It is thought by some persons that the medium must be ‘naturally clairvoyant’ in order to be able to read off the thoughts in the mind of the inquirer so accurately. This supposition, however, can easily be disposed of. Take for instance the case of the interrogator wilfully, but covertly, leading the medium on a wrong scent by lingering or by looking at particular letters, and getting the manifestations according to his outward indications, not in accordance with his innermost thoughts. The old gentleman who knew his friend died at Dover, but purposely ‘looked’ and ‘acted’ Calais, got the latter place for his answer. Again. Request a person sitting opposite to you at a *séance* who *does not know* what word you have written on a piece of paper, to ask the spirit for that word : and you will *not* get it. If the medium were clairvoyant she could have rapped the answer as easily as if the inquirer knew. If spirits rapped, *they* could. Consequently this simple experiment ‘kills two birds with one stone ;’ completely upsets two hypotheses—the clairvoyant, and the spiritual.’

Mr. Spicer, whose volume, *Sights and Sounds*, has been before referred to, and who, while disclaiming all idea of espousing the cause of the spirit rapping fra-

ternity, comes forward as their champion wherever the opportunity presents itself, felt himself called upon to do battle in their behalf against the writers in *Household Words*, the *Leader*, and the *Zoist*. The columns of the *Critic* were opened to him, and a lengthy epistle was the result, but as it is a mere argumentative display with reference to a subject on which, by this time, the reader has doubtless foregone conclusions of his own, it will be unnecessary for us to quote from it. We will, however, give place to a communication it elicited, as this contains the results of the writer's personal experience, and yields us new materials to smile or wonder at according to our humour :—

“At my first interview with Mrs. Hayden,” observes the writer, who adopts the signature of “M. A.,” and dates his letter from Cambridge, “the following particulars (of which no one in the room but myself could possibly know anything, as they were all perfect strangers to me) were communicated in the usual way through the alphabet :— ‘The Christian name of a cousin of mine, who, whilst an undergraduate at Jesus College, Cambridge, was drowned in a small yacht, with a man and a boy who formed the crew; the age at which he died; the number of persons drowned with him. The surname was not satisfactorily answered; and with regard to the manner of death, I inadvertently put the question in such a way as to make it a leading question, which might of itself have suggested the correct reply. But all the other particulars were given in a satisfactory and prompt manner.

“I next took a letter out of my pocket-book, placed it (in its envelope, which was neither a very thick one nor thin one) on the table, and asked for the writer's name to be given. This was done most promptly and correctly.

“It occurred to me, even whilst these answers were being given, that the solution was to be found in the

simple circumstance of my pausing or dwelling on the right letters, which a quick-sighted and practised medium might easily notice, and rap accordingly. But, to the utter discomfiture of this simple solution, the following facts quickly presented themselves.

“The gentleman whose turn came next to question the invisibles, held the card on which the alphabet was printed, in such a way that it was (I believe) impossible for Mrs. Hayden to have seen the letters; and even if she could, her face was turned in quite a different direction during a good part of the time. This, however, did not prevent the gentleman alluded to from receiving correct answers to the following questions: viz., the name of the person he was thinking of (a very long one, which took so much time in spelling out by the slow method used, as to have tried to the utmost the powers of the medium—if an impostor—to avoid becoming confused); her age at death, and some other particulars I have forgotten; concluding with giving him the name of the last action (Toulouse) in which he (formerly a colonel in the Guards) was wounded. I should add with regard to this last question, that this time it was another gentleman, and not the questioner, who held the card and pointed to the letters, and thus received the answer. And this gentleman assured me that he did not know the name of the battle in question as that in which the colonel was last wounded.

“Another gentleman present preferred asking his questions mentally; so did a lady; and each assured me that they received perfectly correct replies. This, of course, may be explained in the same way as the other, viz., by supposing the questioner to dwell on the right letters; but in some of the questions thus put mentally, the answers, being a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ or

else a 'number,' were capable of being answered without any use of the alphabet at all.

"So much for my first interview.

"My second was a complete and total failure in almost every point. A spirit presented itself as the spirit of a relation, who is still alive and well. On being informed of the mistake, it then purported to be that of another relation, who indeed was dead; but it told such a heap of lies respecting him, as to convince me that my respected progenitor had nothing to do with the manifestation. Finally, the unfortunate ghost rapped out, through Mrs. H., the following infantile request:—"I want to learn to use the alphabet." The idea of teaching the ghost of your grandfather his A B C !!!

"At a third interview my time for questioning was very limited. But the following curious circumstance occurred:—I resolved to have some communication with which my own mind could have nothing to do in the way of influence. I received the following, which I give exactly as it was rapped out, that is, without any distinction of words or sentences [a necessary feature in all these communications, as the reader will at once perceive]. 'What say estth ouaproof b roth ergodwill give you?' The sense was not clear (indeed I thought it was all nonsense that I was getting)—until the end of the communication, when it appeared that the communication was: 'What sayest thou?—a proof, brother, God will give you.' The word 'brother' struck me as merely a common *formula*; and, not having the most distant idea to whom I was indebted for this communication, I asked if the 'invisible' would favour me with his name. The answer was 'James.' Now as I did not, at the moment, recollect any friend of mine in the spirit world of that Christian name, I immediately

thought of an old college friend of mine, who, however, is still living. So I next asked if it was any relation? 'Yes.' What relation? 'Brother.' And it was not till this moment that it occurred to me that I had a brother of that name who died when I was only a few months old, of whom, therefore, as the reader may suppose, I am not much in the habit of thinking.

"All this is certainly very queer. But my disposition is naturally so sceptical that even these curious coincidences, guesses, or whatever you like to call them, would have had little weight with me, were they not reinforced by the enormous mass of evidence which I have received from several persons, well known to myself as sensible and cautious people, who have witnessed these phenomena, and who have had far clearer and better manifestations than those vouchsafed to me. As Sir Charles Isham has already given his public testimony to the facts witnessed by himself, I need not hesitate to say that I received from himself, and other members of his family (including the rector of a parish in Nottinghamshire), the most explicit and positive assurance that they all, together with several others, heard these mysterious sounds at Lamport Hall, in a perfectly private family circle. [Neither Mrs. Hayden nor any other *professional* medium being present.] They all assured me that there could be no mistake or delusion about it. The rector alluded to also mentioned several satisfactory tests to which he had subjected Mrs. Hayden's spirits — receiving correct answers, through another gentleman present (who held the alphabet), to questions which nobody present could have known by any ordinary mode. I have also received letters from a gentleman of the very highest reputation and authority in the scientific world, and with whose writings and character my Cambridge studies have long ago made

me familiar, as those of the most cautious reasoner whom I know. He is professor of mathematics in a well-known college; is universally recognised in the mathematical world as one of the first mathematicians in England; and is pre-eminent, even amongst mathematicians, for the profound and cautious scrutiny of principles and reasonings which characterises his writings. A man who can detect the errors of such writers as La Grange, La Place, etc., is surely one whose opinion is deserving of respectful consideration. Well, thus he writes to me: 'From what I have heard from — and others, joint witnesses, I think the hypothesis of imposture insuperably difficult. An impostor who is ready, at any notice, to spell the names, correctly, of children who died twenty years ago (including second Christian names), being relations of any half-dozen who will make up a party, is such a marvellous impostor, that any other hypothesis is, to my mind, easier. If the phenomena be what the Mesmerists call *thought-reading*, then I am satisfied that not only actual, but dormant, recollections are read. Those who are already clear about the occasional intercourse of beings from the spiritual world with men, will, of course, find the hypothesis of spirits as easy as, to them, it will be natural. Those who can set it down as easily explicable by imposture, are among the easiest believers I know—if they know anything of such facts as I know from a plurality of witnesses to each. I have not heard of any information being given, except what *might have been* in the thoughts of the querist; but circumstances have been revived which *were* not. In a second letter he says, in reply to some questions I put respecting what tests have been employed: 'A thick screen has been placed before the alphabet in such manner that it was impossible Mrs. H. could see even the person pointing.'

“I have now a few remarks to add, which will, I hope, be considered of some interest in themselves, whatever may be thought of the real nature of these phenomena, 1st. The founder of Socialism—the celebrated Robert Owen—has been converted in his old age, by these rappings, to a belief in a spiritual world, and a future state. He has published a manifesto to that effect. I met him one day last week at Mr. Hayden’s, and heard from his own lips the statement of this fact, and several of the facts which had produced this conviction in him. This, of itself, is a curious fact, which I presume even the sapient writer of the *Zoist* will not deny. 2nd. The excitement on the subject in the United States, having already existed nearly *five years*, is so far from subsiding or dying away, that it is increasing and spreading wider and faster every day. Only a month or two ago, a Dr. Tyng, one of the episcopal clergy in New York, preached a sermon, at the usual time and place, warning his congregation to have nothing to do with these spirits. The preacher did not for a moment pretend to deny or doubt the facts; but, like the Rev. Hugh M’Neile in this country, with regard to Mesmerism, he considered them of Satanic origin.

“I will conclude with a few words to the numerous clerical readers of the *Critic*. Being myself a clergyman of the Church of England, I consider that the subject is one in which my brother clergy *must*, sooner or later, take some interest, however reluctant they may be to have anything to do with it. And my reasons are briefly as follow: If such excitement become general in this country as (already exists in America—and what reason have we to suppose that it will not?)—then the clergy throughout the kingdom will be appealed to on all sides, will have to give an opinion, and may probably be obliged, by their very duties, to interfere and endeavour to prevent the delusions to which, in many cases, this ‘mystery’ has

already led. One of the most sensible and able writers on the subject of these spirit manifestations in America, viz., Adin Ballou, in his work, has expressly cautioned his readers not to believe all these spirits communicate, nor allow themselves to give up their former opinions and religious creeds (as so many thousands have done) at the bidding of these rappers. The thing has scarcely begun in England as yet; but already, within the few months since Mr. and Mrs. Hayden arrived in London, it has spread like wild-fire, and I have good reason for saying that the excitement is only commencing. Persons who at first treated the whole affair as a contemptible imposture and humbug, on witnessing these strange things for themselves, become first startled and astonished, then rush blindly into all sorts of mad conclusions—as, for instance, that it is all the work of the devil, or (in the opposite degree) that it is a new revelation from Heaven. I see scores of the most able and intelligent people whom I know utterly and completely mystified by it; and no one knows what to make of it. I am ready to confess, for my own part, that I am equally mystified. That it is not imposture, I feel perfectly and fully convinced. In addition to the tests, etc., above named, I had a long conversation in private with both Mr. and Mrs. Hayden, separately, and everything they said bore the marks of sincerity and good faith. Of course this is no evidence to other people, but it is to me. If there is any deception, they are as much deceived as any of their dupes.

“A word or two as to its being a money-exhibition. In the first place, there are, to my certain knowledge, several persons who are mediums in private life, who, so far from making it public and getting money by it, are only too anxious and solicitous to keep it quiet; but, of course, such things cannot be altogether hushed up. Of these, one at least is a lady of rank (whose name I could

give, if necessary), and others are in a position which renders all such charges as imposture and money-exhibitions perfectly out of the question.

“In the present state of the public opinion, however, nobody cares to avow their belief in these sort of things, unless they have a particular wish to be set down by their friends as lunatics, or are desirous of profiting by it in a pecuniary way. But even these are not *fairly* dealt with, I think. Mr. Hayden held a respectable position in America as editor of a newspaper of good repute and circulation; and if he and Mrs. H. believed (as they state) that it was advisable to come over and make these things known here, why should they not be paid for their time and trouble? But this, of course, has nothing to do with the main and grand point—‘Are these rappings what they profess to be—the work of spirits?’ For my own part, nothing will convince me that they are, short of some such proof as the following:—If the ghost of Sir Isaac Newton, or Euler, or La Grange, or some other first-rate mathematician, will come forward and integrate certain differential equations which have hitherto baffled all our best men, then will I believe in the ghost-theory, most implicitly. But hitherto I have seen only enough to mystify me.”

The “manifesto” of Robert Owen, referred to in the foregoing communication, would be laughable, were it not lamentable to see a man on the verge of the grave exhibiting so ready an acquiescence in such transparent delusions. The egregious vanity of the arch Socialist is as apparent in this manifesto as it is in every other article that proceeds from his pen—He says:—

“I have patiently, with first impressions against the truthfulness of these manifestations, investigated their history, and the proceedings connected with them in the United States—have read the most authenticated works for and against them, with much desire to disbelieve

those in their favour; and although, against strong evidence, I long continued to doubt, and thought the whole a delusion (but in many cases I was obliged to admit it must be an honest delusion), *I have been compelled to come to a very different conclusion.* “While conversing with Mrs. Hayden, and while we were both standing before the fire, and talking of our mutual friends, suddenly raps were heard on a table at some distance from us, no one being near it. I was surprised; and as the raps continued, and appeared to indicate a strong desire to attract attention, I asked what was the meaning of the sounds. Mrs. Hayden said they were spirits, anxious to communicate with some one, and she would inquire who they were. They replied to her by the alphabet that they were friends of mine, who were desirous to communicate with me. Mrs. Hayden then gave me the alphabet and pencil, and I found, according to *their own statements*, that the spirits were those of my mother and father. I tested their truth by various questions, and their answers, all correct, surprised me exceedingly.” “In *mixed societies with conflicting minds*, I have seen very *confused answers* given; but I believe, in all these cases, the errors have arisen from the state of mind of the inquirer.”

“The following are some of the answers which I have had from the invisible agents, said by themselves to be the spirits of departed friends, and from others whom I never saw, but whom I wished to consult:—

“AT ONE SITTING.

“Q. Are there many spirits present? A. No.

“Q. How many? A. Two.

“Q. Who are they, and will you name them by the alphabet? A. Wife, and Mary Owen (my youngest daughter).

“Q. What object have the spirits at this period, in

thus manifesting themselves to us? *A.* To reform the world.

“ *Q.* Can I materially promote this object? *A.* You can assist in promoting it.

“ *Q.* Shall I be aided by the spirits to enable me to succeed? *A.* Yes.

“ *Q.* Shall I devote the remainder of my life to this mission? *A.* Yes.

“ *Q.* Shall I hold a public meeting to announce to the world these proceedings, or shall they be made known through the British Parliament? *A.* Through the British Parliament.

“ *Q.* Shall I also apply for an investigation of this subject to the Congress of the United States? *A.* Yes.

“ *Q.* Through the present American ambassador? *A.* Yes.

“ *Q.* When shall I next hear from my family in America? *A.* Next week. This answer has proved to be correct.

“ At another sitting, soon after its commencement, Mr. Smith, editor of the *Family Herald*, and a gentleman unknown to me, came in, and I was about to desist in my inquiries, and to leave them; but Mr. Smith, whom I had long known, was very urgent that I should proceed in asking the questions I intended, and I therefore proceeded.

“ Previous to their entrance, on its being announced that a spirit was present, I had asked—

“ *Q.* What spirit is present? *A.*, by the alphabet, Benjamin Franklin.

“ *Q.* How shall I know you from other spirits, or that you are truly the spirit of Benjamin Franklin? *A.* I will give three distinct raps. And three very distinct raps were given.

“ *Q.* Is it true that conditions can be created, through

man's agency, by which all may be made to become good, wise, and happy? *A.* Yes.

„ *Q.* Are the conditions which I have had so long in my mind for this purpose, those which are the best calculated to make all good, wise, and happy? *A.* Yes.

“ *Q.* What spirit, or spirits, can and will assist and advise me in accomplishing this change? *A.* All will.

“ At this period of the sitting, as I found Mr. Smith could hear the raps more easily than I could, I gave him the pencil, and requested he would take down the answers; and the following are copied from his notes.

“ *Q.* Have I, as has been said, some particular guardian angels? *A.* Yes.

“ *Q.* Will you name them by the alphabet? *A.* Mary Owen, Ann Caroline Owen (my daughters, deceased), Robert Owen (my father's name), Anne Williams (my mother's maiden name).

“ *Q.* Have I been assisted in my writings for the public by any particular spirit? *A.* GOD! (This reply was made in such a manner as to create a peculiarly awful impression on those present).

“ *Q.* Shall I continue to be assisted by the same spirit? *A.* Yes.

“ Space will not admit of more in this number; but I have had twelve or thirteen other sittings, and some of them of deep interest; *especially with the declared SPIRIT OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE LATE DUKE OF KENT.* But *he has requested me* not to publish his communications until a time which he shall state to me.

London, 5th April, 1853.

“ROBERT OWEN.”

A lady, who signs herself “Anna Blackwell,” has recently addressed a long letter on the subject of the “rapping spirits” to the *Journal of Magnetism* in Paris. At the conclusion of it she gives us the following exam-

ples of spirits' performances that have come under her own observation:—

“I have myself been present on one occasion only with a lady, a friend of mine, a distinguished writer whom you well know yourself, at a private meeting at Mr. Stone's house: we waited upwards of two hours before the rapping could or would be heard, except in slight and distant taps. A second medium, a young girl belonging to London, in whom the faculty has recently declared itself spontaneously, and who was present, told us that we must be patient, for they would soon have prepared ‘the battery,’ and that already a crowd of our friends were there, and ready to communicate with us as soon as the telegraph should be in a state to act. During this long suspense, the table frequently became as if charged with electricity, and we felt, instead of shocks, a series of continual vibrations, as well as in the floor, the chairs, etc. Another table, standing between ours and the windows, was likewise made to vibrate, and, distant taps becoming audible from it, we seated ourselves round it to try whether it might not succeed better than our own. Shortly after the taps ordered the young girl to go, with the rest of the operators, into another room, saying that her fluid thwarted that of Mrs. Hayden, the medium of Mr. Stone, and that they would talk with us as soon as we should be left alone with them. This was done, and strange noises, which we heard for the first time, filled the apartment, sounding all at the same time, so that it was not easy to distinguish one of them from another. But having contrived to learn the taps from some friends who declared themselves to be there—an easy matter, since each tap has its own note as distinguishable as his voice—I held with several of these strange communicators entire conversations, some of them absolutely in-

tellectual, which fully convinced me that I was occupied with a being perfectly acquainted with my former career, and thoroughly sure of what he was saying. In reply to my mental questions, they quoted proper names, dates, etc., spelled by means of the alphabet with perfect accuracy. As my friend herself was ignorant of the greater part of the facts alluded to by the taps, and as Mrs. Hayden, whom we both saw for the first time, knew no more than herself, it is evident that the medium, unless endowed with the faculty of clairvoyance to an almost miraculous degree—and it appears she did not possess it at all—could take no part in these answers.

“ Besides, the taps are of a nature so extraordinary, so unique, that in most cases it is enough to hear them to be convinced that they are not imitations. But you must hear them and judge them yourself; for who could believe in the reality of such a phenomenon on another’s testimony? Therefore, whilst I give your readers the benefit of my experience, I by no means flatter myself that I shall induce them to share my opinion. Frankly speaking, Mr. Editor, you yourself, who have long known me as a rational person, can you believe that on that evening I felt, or thought I felt, a hand upon my left heel? The pressure of the thumb on one side, and of the fingers on the other, was so well copied that I at first imagined that somebody had stolen beneath my chair, and yet there was no one there; and it would have been impossible for either of these two ladies to touch me in that manner without stooping, even had not their hands been at the time on the table.

“ Since then another lady of my acquaintance, whilst she was trying to hold a table which would not be still, and on which she had laid her hand, had that hand severely pinched, and a ring which she wore was pulled with so much violence as to be broken in two—these

pieces were drawn out in length, and their shape so much altered, that it was impossible to re-join them. A gentleman, too, of my acquaintance, the editor of a London newspaper—a man of grave demeanour—has likewise seen pieces of furniture dancing round the room, not at the house of Mr. Stone, but at private houses where there was a medium.

“I shall only say further, before I conclude this too long letter, that the spirits appear highly satisfied with their success, affirming that whatever relates to the ‘spiritual battery’ is progressing, and that they are now convinced that they shall be able to speak to us (of course, in whispers) before the end of the year.”

The most recent published account of interviews with mediums in this country which we have met with is that given in *Chambers' Journal* for May 21 of the present year. The writer commences by stating “that he had deemed it proper to go first to Mrs. Hayden’s, as she has had the honour of being the first to introduce ‘spirit rappings’ into this country;” and then proceeds to say; “I found her at No. 22, Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, attended by her husband, who was till lately the editor of a Boston newspaper. She is a good-looking woman, of about thirty; self-possessed, but not of unpleasing manners. Three or four other persons having assembled, we sat down at a round table along with the medium, Mr. Hayden sometimes lounging at the fire-place, but oftener engaged in his own affairs in another room. When the company was settled into perfect quietness, the lady, stooping down towards the table, asked, ‘Are there any spirits present? If so, will they be pleased to manifest themselves?’ In a minute or two, a faint ticking noise, hardly distinguishable at first from a creaking of furniture, was heard, as if in the body of the timber constituting the surface of the

table. By the medium's instructions, one of the company, a lady, asked if the spirit wished to communicate with her. No tapping being heard in reply, a negative is inferred. Then another, and another, asked the question in succession, till at length a slight tapping implied an affirmative. I need not describe how various individuals in the company obtained communications through the alphabet, as you have already explained the process. I may mention, however, a few of the results.

“ One lady entered into communication with the spirit of a deceased infant daughter, who, after stating the place of her death and the disease of which she died, both truly, said, ‘ I hover around you like an angel, trying to make you happy.’ An old gentleman, having evoked the spirit of a person he thought of, had her name spelled out—‘ Harrison!’ or some such name, which he explained to be that of a lady deceased thirty years ago, and the dearest friend he had ever had in life. A medical gentleman obtained a communication from the spirit of a nephew of Dr. Channing, with whom he had once carried on a correspondence on metaphysico-religious questions, and who stated that he had died at Boston about three weeks ago—an event of which the experimenter had not yet heard. This spirit was asked various questions on religious matters, to which sensible answers were given. I can only remember that the views of Swedenborg were spoken of with peculiar approbation.

“ A spirit was good enough to communicate with myself. ‘ Was it a relation?—Yes. My father, who is long deceased?—No. A brother?—Yes. In what year did he leave this earthly sphere (words directly expressive of mortality being unpleasant to the spirits)?—1833. The initial of the month?—F. The day of the month? 15.’ All this was right. Then an address from the

spirit to me was spelled out, expressive, however, merely of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the grace of God towards his creatures. Afterwards this spirit gave himself a wrong Christian name, gave his father's correctly, and then his mother's erroneously. I was not conscious at the time of acting in such a way, in my pointings at the letters, as to give any hint of which were the true ones; but I became fully convinced next day, on reflection, that a clever person in the capacity of medium might, in most cases, detect a significant pause at the letter which the experimenter knew to be the right one, and would thus be able easily to spell out the expected words and sentences.

“I revisited Mrs. Hayden several times, and witnessed many similar ‘manifestations.’ One one occasion a young man was present who obtained intelligence of the death of a brother long lost in distant lands; also the secret of a murder which he suspected to have taken place in his family. The spirit was asked if he should take measures to bring the guilty party to justice, but this was discommended: the spirits, we were informed, are generally tender towards the reputations and interests of living persons. An unmarried literary lady was present on one occasion, and had her somewhat extraordinary name correctly spelled. Then the spirit gave her own name as Sarah Traft, appearing to have been a servant in the family; for she was familiar with various circumstances in its history, particularly the death of two young boys, which took place before the experimenter was born. On being asked by the lady to give the maiden name of her mother, it was clearly and readily given as ‘Hannah Hilditch.’ A little after this lady had concluded her experiments, one of her rings burst upon her fingers, to the great increase of the wonder already excited in the company.

“It would be tedious to describe more of the proceedings at these *séances*. I may mention, however, that many persons obtained what they considered curious revelations, and that the number of mistakes was comparatively small, although sometimes of a nature to give great support to those who held the whole to be an imposture. Sometimes the spirit which came proved to be a different person from the one invoked or expected; generally a stranger to the inquirer. Sometimes when the desired spirit came, it gave its name with a difference, inserting perhaps a second Christian name where there ought not to be any. A studious person known to me, of highly nervous temperament and delicate health, was readily attended by several spirits, which readily answered for some time, and then became obstinately silent. At a subsequent visit they came to him again, and entered into conversation. They were then asked why they had stopped short in their communications on the former occasion, to which an answer was given, ‘Because we feared to excite him.’

“Many particulars of this kind could be told, curious on an assumption of the verity of the pretended phenomena; but, on the opposite assumption, only interpretable as tricks or caprices of the medium. The table has moved in Mrs. Hayden’s presence, both in her own lodging and in the houses which she has visited; but it has not been my fortune to see any phenomena of that kind in her case, excepting a very slight movement of a circular kind, such as could easily be produced by a person sitting beside the table, and using either foot or knee for the purpose.

“I next visited, at a respectable lodging in Devonshire Street, Mrs. Roberts, a second American medium, who has come very recently to this country, in order to ‘gratify serious and enlightened minds’ with ‘spiritual

communications from departed friends.' She is an older lady than Mrs. Hayden, tall, and of solemn aspect. Her husband, a native of the north of Ireland, is likewise a tall and serious-looking person. They profess to belong to the Episcopal Church, and have all the appearance of being under deep religious convictions. I visited this couple, in company with two ladies—one of them a person of rank; the other, a clever literary woman, who is fully convinced of the verity of the spiritual manifestations. We found a school Bible and Prayer-book, with a slate and pencil, lying on the table, round which we proceeded to form a circle. Here, differently from Mrs. Hayden's practice, the husband bears an essential part in the operations. I may mention, that the table was an ordinary round one of rosewood, having a pillar resting on a triangular foot, and Mr. and Mrs. Roberts sat together at a point in the circumference, between two of the resting points. Laying their palms flat down on the table, the little finger of the gentleman's right hand overlapping that of the lady's left, they engaged in silent prayer for a few minutes.

"After some invocations and inquiries, a spirit came and manifested itself, not by rapping on the table, as in so many other cases, but by canting it slightly down on the side where the medium and her husband sat. One tilt, we were informed, indicated a decided negative; a tilt followed by one slighter movement, implied doubt, or inability to answer the question; and a tilt followed by two slighter movements, was an affirmative. There being no alphabet used here, one can get only 'yes' or 'no' to questions put, unless the spirit shall move some one to write upon the slate. Mr. Roberts inquired of the spirit: 'If it wished that a part of Scripture should be read;' to which an affirmative answer was given. 'In the Old Testament or New?'—The New. 'In Matthew—Mark—Luke,' etc.?—In Revelations. 'In which chapter—the first—second,'

etc. ?—The tenth: ‘Shall it be read by the lady on the right ?’—No. ‘By her on the left ?’—No. ‘By the gentleman ?’—Yes. I then read this chapter slowly, to allow of the spirit making signs at particular passages. At the passage: ‘Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not,’ there was a tilting of the table; as, likewise, at three or four other passages in the chapter.

“This was not felt as very satisfactory in any way; so one of the ladies proceeded, of her own accord, to ask questions on religious matters. She inquired if the Bible contained nothing but what was true; if the creed of the Church of England was a near approximation to the truth; if the Romish Church was true; in what sense we were to understand that Christ was the Son of God; if those who had an imperfect belief would suffer on that account hereafter; and so forth. It may be enough to say, that the answers indicated a reliance on what is called orthodox doctrine, yet with a liberal allowance to dissenters, and very mild views as to future punishments. One might have conceived a universalist to be speaking. The answer given to the inquiry regarding the Romish Church was an unusually deep cant of the table, causing it to fall back with a most emphatic negative. The spirit was then asked: ‘If thanksgiving was the most valuable part of prayer?’ Yes. ‘Are petitions for special benefits to ourselves of any avail?’—No.

“It was remarked by one of the ladies present, that the views on religious subjects drawn forth at the *séances* of another medium were of a different tendency, and there was therefore reason to suspect that the intelligence procured was, in a great measure, subjective—that is, tinged with the convictions of the medium, or, perhaps, of the inquirer. Mrs. Roberts did not appear to have considered this point, and when it was explained to her, both she and

her husband expressed a strong belief to the contrary. The question being put to the spirit, a negative was given ; but when a further interrogative was put : ' Is the response affected by particular opinions on the part of the spirit ? ' the answer was a hearty affirmative.

" Mr. Roberts made several attempts to procure an impulse for written revelations on the slate through his own hand ; but to no good result. He showed us, however, a copy-book which a late visitor had written out, at the dictation or direction of a spirit professing to be Percy Bysshe Shelley, and containing many sentences of a pious sentimental character.

" Within the last fortnight (I am writing on the 23rd of April) a third professor of spiritual communications had commenced advertising in the *Times* ; and in this case the medium was announced as a native of our own country. On a rainy, foggy, dreary evening, at seven o'clock, I was at the door of No. 37, Somerset Street, Portman Square, bent on supping full of whatever wonders might be in store for me. Let me here state, that I attended all these *séances* in a state of mind, as I believed, neither sceptical nor credulous. Having chiefly in view to describe the externals of the scene, I deemed it best to let things go on in their own way, sufficiently complaisant towards the phenomena to put them in no risk of being marred or interrupted, and yet cool enough to detect any trick of a gross nature.

" The scene of which I quickly found myself a part, was of a homelier character than those at the residences of either of the two other mediums. The leading person in the group is apparently a medical man. The medium is a young woman of sickly but intelligent appearance. The doctor, as I may call him, had much to tell me regarding his studies in clairvoyance, and latterly, in spiritual communications, in all of which proceedings, he assured me, his leading aim is to do good

to his fellow-creatures, not merely in regard to their health, but in promoting their soul-welfare. He has a particular regard to the cure of that class of mental disorders which were in ancient times ascribed to demoniac possession, himself reverting to this doctrine, and fully believing in it. He has at present residing with him a young man named Julius, whom he is endeavouring to cure of such a disorder, and who, he thinks, is making fair progress towards recovery.

“ We four sat down at a small but solid round three-footed table, and were speedily joined by a fifth individual, a gentleman who seemed to be familiar with the family. Proceedings were commenced by the singing of a hymn on the power of God. We five persons then placed our hands on the table, and the doctor entreated that his kind spirit friends would please to manifest themselves. In a few minutes the table began to stir and tilt up in one direction—namely, towards Julius. It afterwards tilted in the other two directions, in obedience to requests to that effect. The young woman then took paper and a pencil, and prepared to write as the spirit might dictate.

“ At the request of the doctor, I put a question mentally; and in a brief space, the medium began to write in an abstracted manner, and without looking on the paper, as if yielding to some power external to herself. In a very scrawling hand she wrote as follows:—‘ I told you before, I do not like a mental question. Ask it aloud. W. W.’ This signature was held to imply that the spirit was that of the doctor’s grandfather. I then, at his suggestion, put the question aloud, in something like the following terms:—‘ The spirits at Mrs. Hayden’s give a different view of religious matters from those at Mrs. Roberts’s. Which are we to understand to be true?’ The answer was: ‘ I am a spirit sent by

the God of love to impart the knowledge given me for men, for their good. I say, Wo be to those in the latter day, who believe in those people named Haydens! They are not words and responses from God, but from the devil. They are false and wicked spirits who respond at Mrs. Hayden's. At Mrs. Roberts's they are very good spirits. Their idea of religion is true, for it is the religion of Christ; but although their religion is right, yet they are not as they ought to be. They are hourly offending their God, and, as we have before said, they will be punished, and all power taken from them, unless they alter, and are more careful of the way they treat this blessing sent from God for the good and instruction of mankind.' The medium professed to know nothing of the sense of what she had written, till it was read over to her. It may also be mentioned, that the writing was stated to be different from her ordinary hand, each spirit causing her to write differently from another; in this instance, it was so sprawling a hand, that the above response occupied nine pages of the size of a child's copy-book.

"Led by the style of conversation which prevailed in the company, I afterwards asked, 'If the views and feelings which I entertained regarding God were such as the spirits could approve?' to which an affirmative answer was given. I further inquired: 'If any spirits attended me in my ordinary course of life?'—Yes. The doctor explaining that everybody was attended by two, a good and a bad, and acted well or ill as the good or bad spirit was allowed to gain the ascendancy. To my inquiry, 'If my good spirit had in general the greatest influence over me?' an affirmative answer was returned by three loud thumps of the table on the floor. I inquired if the evil spirit had also some influence; when three gentler thumps were given. I then expressed a wish to see the

table moved along the room, in the manner in which a lady of my acquaintance had lately seen it moved in America. The doctor having put the request, the table presently moved along in the direction of Julius, who had to rise in order to allow it way. As he moved back, with only the tips of his fingers laid upon it, it followed till it had gone about four feet from its former position, and of course was completely clear of the rest of the company.

“All this was well calculated to surprise for the moment; but although the dynamics of the case were at first a mystery to me, I became convinced afterwards, that, whether drawn along by the youth’s fingers or not, it was possible to cause such a table to move under a very much slighter contact of the fingers than any one could have been prepared for; wherefore, I came to attach no consequence to this section of the alleged phenomena. Most undoubtedly I saw the table sliding along, clear of every contact but that of the young man’s finger-ends. He then came round to the other side, and, merely touching it, caused it to follow him back to its original place. Finally, the doctor requested us all to resume our seats, and place our hands upon the table; after which, in a formal and reverential tone, he returned his thanks to the spirits for the communications they had vouchsafed to the company that evening.

“In my conversations with the doctor, I learned that he entertains a more exalted view of the spirit manifestations than either of the other mediums. Professing to see them entirely in a religious light, he refuses to be concerned in degrading them to the gratification of vulgar curiosity, as they are in his opinion when people ask how many children they have, what is their mother’s name, and so forth. ‘I won’t have this wonderful thing used as a toy,’ says he. ‘It seems to be the appointed

means of bringing great spiritual blessings to mankind, and to that purpose I would confine it.' When I asked, however, how he could account for such elevated beings as spirits condescending to such homely proceedings as rappings, table-tippings and table-movements, he frankly confessed that that was beyond his power. On the whole, the doctor appeared to me an innocent enthusiast. He showed sheaves of manuscript containing the results of his spiritual consultations, with a preface in highly poetical prose, which the medium had written a few days ago under the inspiration of one of the spirits.

"Such is, I trust, a candid account of the spirit manifestations, so far as yet introduced into London. It now remains that we should speak of the principal theories which have been formed, on natural grounds intelligible to us, for the explanation of the so-called mystery. In the first place, your own hint that dollars are at the bottom of it all, will scarcely bear handling, since it is perfectly certain that spiritual manifestations form an evening recreation in numberless private families in America, where money is not at all concerned. A lady sitting by my side, who left Boston less than a month ago, assures me she has been present at several *séances* in private circles, where the individuals were known to her as of the highest ranks in society in that city. This idea, therefore, may be set aside. Then, as to the *mécanique* of the sounds, we have had a hypothesis suggesting their depending on some operation with the foot, for which a very strong fire was necessary in the room, But at all the meetings where I was present, the temperature of the room was ordinary, and I must profess a difficulty in believing that sounds which so plainly appear to proceed from the board of the table, and which one will at one moment hear at one part of that surface, and another time at another, can be produced by the

foot at all. Moreover, a trustworthy friend has been present at Mrs. Hayden's, when eight different sets of sounds were going on at one time in different parts, not merely of the table, but of the room. Therefore, if ordinary mechanical means are employed for this part of the alleged imposture, they must be of a much more profound and complicated kind than have yet been surmised.

“With regard to the alphabet-oracle, I have already mentioned the theory which occurred to my own mind after my first visit to Mrs. Hayden. I felt not the slightest doubt that the experimenter, in that case, unconsciously gave significations on arriving at the proper letters. Though I could recollect no such acts on my own part in the communication with my brother's spirit, I could not be assured that I had not in this manner betrayed the date of his death, as well as his father's Christian name, while the mistakes regarding his own and his mother's might be assumed as caused by a misapprehension of certain pauses or other accidental movements on my touching certain wrong letters. It was, I must own, a hard supposition to form regarding a lady whom I had met under sanction of the courtesies of society, and whose husband was by profession my equal; but it required little reflection on the singular nature of the thing held out to observation, to assure me that Mrs. Hayden must have made up her mind to encounter scepticism and all its consequences. I speedily heard of circumstances lending great support to the theory. A clever journalist, for instance, found that he could, by such significant pauses and movements, bring out any response he pleased, even including one to the effect that the ghost of Hamlet's father had seventeen noses, and another, affirming that Mrs. Hayden was an impostor. A friend of my own, a scientific man of high reputation, inquiring who was the first man, did in the same way

lead to the answer, 'Brian Boru,' this person being in reality an Irish hero of the eleventh century. On the other hand, the believers allege that, where such tricks are attempted, tricks are played off by the spirits in return, so that it is hopeless to realise the test which is sought for—a view to which we may, of course, attach what importance we please. I am at least satisfied, that the assumption of proof of imposture through this means is premature, for I have seen the alphabet used successfully behind the medium's back, where only visitors were present; and I am assured that this is often done with precisely the same effect as when the alphabet is displayed on the table.

"In the brief space left, it is difficult to convey the hypothesis I have formed regarding these strange demonstrations. I can give my views only in a very condensed form. The greater number of the persons concerned are, in my opinion, credulous people, visionaries and enthusiasts, who first impose upon themselves, and then upon others. Were they impostors in full consciousness of imposition, as some assert, their tricks would have been exposed long ere now in a hundred quarters. The spirit manifestations are rather to be explained as resembling one of the manias of the middle ages. The thing rests primarily on philanthropic and religious zeal; secondly, on mere love of the wonderful; but what I hold to be above all essential to it, is a view to some good ultimate result beyond the gratification of vulgar curiosity. The practitioners all start with a belief that such manifestations are possible, and do continually take place in the presence of properly-qualified persons. In their own trials, they help the effects—that is, produce them; thinking no evil, since these effects would otherwise come of themselves; or perhaps hardly conscious of their doing that which they only expect to see done;

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but anyhow, fully disposed to stretch a point for the sake of the end in view, whether that be directly to convince others of there being a spiritual world always around us, or merely to obtain countenance for their own convictions.

“ There must also be cases where a deliberate trick is practised ; but I believe these to be rare. Now it must be admitted, that there are some difficulties regarding certain phenomena ; as, for example, the alphabet-reading out of sight of the medium. But when I consider how much help the complaisant experimenter is capable of giving unconsciously to the medium, I think we may regard this problem as not quite irresolvable in consonance with our hypothesis. The direct and downright people, who say the whole is rank imposture, will be unable to appreciate the analytical view I take ; but those who have studied the profound deceitfulness of the human heart, and seen how shadowy are the divisions between self-delusion and active deluding, will find less difficulty in the case. And it surely cannot appear to any as very strange, that a visionary female, who thinks that a spirit writes with her hand, is also convinced that the same spirit is guiding her hand when she uses its force to depress a table on one side or cant it up on another. With such an impression on her mind, the idea of deception will never once occur to her. The *mécanique* of the rapping phenomena is not yet explained in consonance with this hypothesis ; but I wait in full confidence that it soon will be so.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE SPIRIT RAPPINGS AND
CERTAIN MYSTERIES OF BYGONE TIMES.

VARIOUS writers have come forward to prove that the idea of the spirit spheres has been stolen from so ancient a writer as Ptolemy, and that the theological system of the new philosophy is nothing more than hashed-up Swedenborgism, while, as to the rapping sounds, it hardly requires any one to remind us that there is no novelty in these particular manifestations. With the Germans, the Poltergeist or racketing spirit, is as old as the hills, and in England we have heard of him under circumstances quite as well authenticated as is any portion of the American rapping mystery. There are, moreover, some striking points of resemblance between the early history of this affair and the well-known incident in the life of John Wesley, the great dissenting divine, which we will here narrate for the reader's edification.

During the year 1715, we are told, the family of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, while residing at the parsonage-house at Epworth, Lincolnshire, were alarmed by sundry mysterious noises, the knowledge of which was kept secret as long as possible from the head of the family, as these sounds were thought to portend his death. When, however, he at length heard of them, he set them down to some freaks on the part of his daughters' sweethearts, and troubled himself no further on the subject, till one night he was roused from his sleep by certain loud and distinct raps, with a pause between every third stroke, apparently proceeding

from the adjoining room. The old gentleman forthwith arose and made a search for the perpetrators of the disturbance, which, however, proved fruitless.

His son John tells us that shortly afterwards his sister Mary—who was anxious to discover the trick, if trick it was—after taking away the candle from her father's bedroom one evening, was startled by hearing a noise below, she knowing that the remainder of the family had all retired to rest. “She hastened down stairs,” he proceeds to tell us, “to the hall, where the noise was; but it was then in the kitchen. She ran into the kitchen, where it was drumming on the inside of the screen; when she went round, it was drumming on the outside, and so always on the side opposite to her. Then she heard a knocking at the back kitchen door. She ran to it, unlocked it *softly*, and when the knocking was repeated, suddenly opened it; but nothing was to be seen. As soon as she had shut it, the knocking began again. She opened it again, but could see nothing. When she went to shut the door, it was violently thrust against her. She let it fly open, but nothing appeared. She went again to shut it, and it was again thrust against her; but she set her knee and her shoulder to the door, forced it to, and turned the key. Then the knocking began again; but she let it go on, and went up to bed. However, from that time she was thoroughly convinced that there was no imposture in the affair.”

Upon a subsequent occasion, during the usual evening family prayers, just after the old gentleman had commenced “the prayer for the king, a knocking began all round the room; and a thundering knock attended the ‘Amen.’ The same was heard from this time, every morning and evening, while prayer for the king was repeated. . . I was also informed by Mr. Hoole, the vicar of Haxey (an eminently pious and sensible man), that my father sent for him and gave him an account of what had happened, particularly

the knocking during family prayers. But the evening he spent with him, Mr. Hoole says, 'to my great satisfaction we had no knocking at all during the time of prayer; but between nine and ten, a servant came in and said, 'Old Jeffrey is coming (that was the name of one that died in the house) for I hear the signal.' This, they informed me, was heard every night about a quarter before ten. It was toward the top of the house, on the outside, at the north-east corner, resembling the loud creaking of a saw, or rather that of a windmill, when the body of it is turned about in order to shift the sails to the wind. We then heard a knocking over our heads; and Mr. Wesley, catching up a candle, said, Come, sir, now you shall hear for yourself. We went upstairs; he with much hope, and I (to say the truth) with much fear. When we came into the nursery, it was knocking in the next room; when we were there, it was knocking in the nursery. And then it continued to knock, though we came in; particularly at the head of the bed (which was of wood), in which Miss Hetty and two of her younger sisters lay. He then went close to the place, and said sternly, 'Thou deaf and dumb devil, why dost thou fright these children that cannot answer for themselves? Come to me in my study, that am a man.' Instantly it knocked *his* knock (the particular knock which he always used at the gate), as if it would shiver the board in pieces; and we heard nothing more that night.'

"By this time all my sisters were so accustomed to these noises, that they gave them little disturbance. A gentle tapping at their bed-head usually began between nine and ten at night; they then commonly said to each other, 'Jeffrey is coming; it is time to go to sleep.' And if they heard a noise in the day, and said to my youngest sister, 'Hark, Kizzy, Jeffrey is knocking above,' she would run up stairs and pursue it from room to room, saying she desired no better diversion."

After reading the above we strongly suspect that if the Misses Wesley had felt disposed to carry the mystery to the same point the Misses Fox afterwards thought desirable, the phenomenon of spirit rapping would have been "invented" something like a century and a half earlier than it really was.

If the reader has not discovered a strong resemblance between the rapping spirit that disturbed the Wesleys, and his fellow that first communicated with the Fox girls, he will at any rate see a family likeness to both spirits in the "poltergeist" of the annexed narrative:—

"On the 2nd of December, in the year 1761, at Dibbesdorf, in the house of Anthony Kettelhut, there was heard, in a room, at six o'clock in the afternoon, a knocking which seemed to come from underneath the floor.

"Kettelhut doubted not that these blows, as it seemed of a hammer, came from his servant wishing to frighten the maids of the house and of the neighbourhood, they being then all spinning together. He left the room with the intention of throwing a pan of water on the head of the mischievous joker, but found no one. An hour afterwards the knockings were heard again, and this time it was supposed they were occasioned by a rat. On the next day the walls were demolished, and planks and flooring were pulled up, but nothing was found. Thereupon the conviction arose that the house was haunted by a ghost; and the spintresses refused to meet together there any longer. Shortly afterwards, however, the knockings ceased; there was complete silence; for the knocking spirit had retired to a house at a hundred paces distance, inhabited by Louis Kettelhut, the brother of Anthony, also a workman in the salt-pits. There, in the corner of a room, towards evening, knocks of great violence were daily heard. The peasants being now thoroughly frightened, a report on the subject was made by the beadle to the law-officers. Re-

garding, however, the whole story as ridiculous, the judges thought fit to pay no attention to it. Nevertheless, on the repeated demands of the peasantry, they betook themselves on the 6th of January, 1768, to Dibbesdorf, in order to make minute inquiries into the fact. For this purpose the walls, the planks, and flooring of the house were demolished and removed, but nothing was discovered, and the Kettelhut family being put on their oaths, declared that the cause of the noises was totally unknown to them.

“Up to this time no one had spoken to the knocking spirit; a man of Waggum was the first who had the courage to do so. He called out: ‘Knocking spirit, are you still there?’ A blow of the hammer was the reply. His next question was: ‘What is my name?’ Thereupon he pronounced a number of names, and when he came to his own, the hammer was heard. This result encouraged the other peasants. One of them asked ‘How many buttons are there on all my clothes?’ Thirty-six blows were struck, which were the exact number of the buttons.

“After these proofs, nothing was talked of, far and near, but the knocking spirit. Every evening the inhabitants of Brunswick came by hundreds to Dibbesdorf; many rich Englishmen also made the pilgrimage to the place, where there was at the time but a very small detachment of troops, insufficient to maintain order among the crowds that flocked together. A great number of peasants were therefore appointed night-guards; and the concourse of people was so great, that it was found necessary to barricade the room where the mysterious knockings were heard, leaving an opening only for the curious to enter it one by one. These immense crowds seemed to flatter the vanity of the knocking spirit, who determined, it would seem, in consequence, to do much more wonderful things than he had yet performed, and succeeded completely. No question ever

embarrassed him, his answers being always perfectly right. The following are some of the queries that, according to official documents, were proposed to him :—‘ How many horses are there before the house, and of what colour are they ? ’ The reply both as to number and colour was quite correct. One of those present took a hymn-book, and placed his thumb on the number of one of its pages, even before he had remarked what the number was ; the subterraneous knocks exactly answered to it. The spirit did not require any time to reflect, for its replies were always instantaneous. He told by a number of knocks the number of persons present, and also how many there were outside, in the field. Among the audience there was a Stettin man, unknown at Dibbesdorf, who had only lately come to Brunswick. This man asked the spirit to tell him his native place, and attempted at the same time to embarrass him by pronouncing the names of a great number of cities. The silence, however, was complete till Stettin was named, when the sound of the hammer was at once heard. A burgher, also, having asked how many pennies he had in his pocket, six hundred and eighty-four blows were struck, which was the exact number. The spirit further informed the company how many rolls a baker, who was present, had baked that morning ; how many yards of ribbon another trader had sold on the preceding day ; and the exact sum of money a certain merchant had received by the last post.

“ This spirit may be said to have been rather a humorous one, for if he were asked to do so, he would knock so hard, that the auditors were obliged to stop their ears not to be stunned.

“ At the evening prayer, too, after supper, when the *Amen* was said, he never failed to repeat the word after his own fashion. This was on one occasion noticed by a priest, who immediately, moved by a holy zeal, invested himself in his sacerdotal garments, and began an exorcism

to drive the devil out of his favourite corner ; but all in vain. The spirit feared no one and nothing, answering all interrogations indifferently, whether they came from peer or peasant.

“ Being questioned one day by Charles, the reigning Duke of Brunswick, and by his brother Ferdinand, he gave their highnesses replies as curt and uncourtly as he would have done to the vulgarest boor. The duke, offended perhaps at the small courtesy of the spirit, commissioned a doctor and a lawyer to inquire into the mystery ; and these learned personages declared in their wisdom that the noises came from subterranean sources. A digging then was commenced, which when it had been carried on to the depth of eight feet, there appeared—what ? water, which sprung up abundantly, and flooded the room. The spirit, nevertheless, was not yet expelled from his corner, but began knocking with might and main, as if defying and triumphing over those who had sought to disturb him. The scientific men upon this, declared that there must be fraud in the case, and their suspicions fell upon the man-servant of the house. In order, therefore, to fix the fraud upon him or some one else, all the inhabitants of Dibbesdorf were ordered for certain hours on a certain day not to quit their houses, the suspected servant being placed in special custody. What was the astonishment, then, of the sages, when all their questions met, as usual, with prompt replies. They were obliged now to acquit the servant. Yet his most serene highness would not be balked ; a victim there must be ; and the Kettelhuts—husband and wife—were in consequence circumvented in the following manner—viz., by corrupting, with menaces and promises, a nurserymaid in their service, to declare that they themselves, although in easy circumstances and highly respected by the whole neighbourhood, were the persons who made the knocks that had so alarmed and confounded every one.

On this declaration, both the Kettelhuts were thrown into prison, where they remained three months, being released only when the nursery-maid, moved by remorse, confessed that she had given false evidence, and that her master and mistress were perfectly innocent, which was proved also by the fact that the mysterious knocks continued without interruption whilst they were in prison. Up to this day, this mystery has not been explained.

“The knocking spirit took up his abode at the Kettelhuts’ in the month of December, where he remained till the month of March, when the house again became quite free from knocking noises.”

The foregoing is a specimen of a rapping spirit who made his existence manifest, to the satisfaction of all who chose to listen to him, in an-out-of-the-way German town nearly a century ago.

A few months later, and a similar mystery was keeping all London in a state of ferment. This was no other than the renowned Cock Lane Ghost. In a certain house in the neighbourhood of Smithfield, inhabited by one Parsons, a parish clerk, crowds upon crowds of visitors assembled nightly to listen to the rappings and scratchings said to be made by a spirit, who, while in the flesh, met with an untimely end. It seems that in the year 1759, Mr. Kempe, a man of some property, moved to London, having under his protection a sister of his deceased wife. They lodged at the house of Parsons, in Cock Lane; and, in the occasional absence of Kempe, his sister-in-law slept with Parsons’ daughter, a child of eleven years of age. She complained at times of having been disturbed in the night by noises, which Parsons finally concluded must be occasioned by the industry of a shoemaker in the neighbourhood, which shoemaker would work at unseasonable hours.

The intimacy between Kempe and the sister of his

wife was of that peculiar kind, which is not forbidden by law, while the marrying of such a sister is; they made their wills in each other's favour, both of them being possessed of, and being heirs to, some property.

Time passed, and Kempe and his sister-in-law moved into other lodgings in Bartlett Street; but at last, on the 2d February, 1760, the young woman died, and was buried in St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, and Kempe, of course, took possession of her effects

From this event two years elapsed, when a report was propagated that a great knocking and scratching had been heard in the night at the house of Parsons, to the great terror of the family; all methods to discover the cause of it being ineffectual. The noise was always heard under the bed in which lay two children, the eldest of whom had slept with the so called Mrs. Kempe, during her residence in this house.

On the 13th of January, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night, a respectable clergyman was sent for, who, addressing himself to the supposed spirit, desired that if any injury had been done to the person who had lived in that house, he might be answered in the affirmative by a single knock; if the contrary, by two knocks. This was immediately answered by one knock. To guard against deception, it was determined to remove the girl to another house, that any imposition might thus be detected! Here there were collected some two or three divines, two negroes, and about twenty others. The two negroes examined the bed carefully, that there should be no chance of deception, and some of those present then proceeded to ask a variety of questions, which the supposed spirit answered by giving one knock in the affirmative, and two for the negative, expressing displeasure by scratching. The following were the particulars of this extraordinary conversation:—

Were you brought to an untimely end by poison?
Yes.

In what was the poison administered—beer or purl?
Purl.

How long before your death? Three hours.

Is the person called Carrots able to give any information about the poison? Yes.

Are you Kempe's wife's sister? Yes.

Were you married to Kempe? No.

Was any other person beside Kempe engaged in the poisoning? No.

Can you appear visibly to any one? Yes.

Will you do so? Yes.

Can you go out of this house? Yes.

Can you follow this child everywhere? Yes.

Are you pleased at being asked questions? Yes.

Does it ease your mind? Yes.

Here a mysterious noise, compared to the fluttering of wings round the room was heard.

How long before your death did you tell Carrots that you were poisoned? One hour.

Carrots admitted that this was so.

How long did Carrots live with you? Three or four days.

Carrots attested the truth of this.

If the accused shall be taken up, will he confess?
Yes?

Will it ease your mind if the man be hanged?
Yes.

How long will it be before he is executed? Three years.

How many clergymen are there in the room? Three.

How many negroes? Two.

One of the clergymen, holding up a watch, asked whether it was white, yellow, blue, or black: to which

he was answered black. The watch was in a black shagreen case.

At what time in the morning will you depart? At four o'clock,—which turned out to be the case.

At one of the questionings of the poor spirit, a woman, who had seen Mrs. Kempe three days before her death, asked of the spirit "how many days?" having received three knocks, it was conclusive to *her* that it was Mrs. Kempe's spirit who answered. A person, requiring further evidence of the poisoning having been done by Mr. Kempe, requested the spirit, if it really was so, to answer by nine knocks; when nine very slow and distinct knocks were heard.

Things were now drawing to a head. We learn that the next night about twenty persons sat up in the room, but it was not till near six o'clock in the morning that the first alarm was given, which coming spontaneously as well as suddenly, a good deal struck the imagination of those present. The scratching was compared to that of a cat on a cane chair. The child now appeared to be in a sound sleep, and nothing further could be obtained. Discussion then took place, and remarks were made as to what would become of Parsons—ay, and of the girl too, should this at last be proven to be a humbug and imposture? About seven o'clock, the girl seemed to awake in a violent fit of crying and tears. On being asked the occasion, and assured that no harm should happen to her, she declared that her tears were the effect of her imagining what would become of her father, who must be ruined and undone, if the matter should be supposed to be an imposture. "Imposture!" it was remarked, "but who told you anything about imposture? We supposed you to be sound asleep!" With a very peculiar artlessness she said, "Ay, but not so sound but that I could hear all you said!"

Every effort to detect the imposture, as some still obstinately asserted it to be, failed; the girl's hands were carefully laid over the bed-clothes, the bed carefully looked under, &c., but no discovery was made. The traduced spirit had promised to give one other additional proof of its verity, by knocking on the lid of its coffin in presence of a certain gentleman. Before, however, this convincing proof was given, it seems that at the instigation of the Lord Mayor, the child was removed to the house of the Rev. W. Aldrich, rector of St. John's, Clerkenwell, where a party of gentlemen attended with a view of exacting the fulfilment of the spirit's promise. This was the meeting at which Dr. Johnson was present.

About ten at night, the gentlemen met in the chamber in which the girl, supposed to be disturbed by a spirit, had [with proper caution been put to bed by several ladies. They sat rather more than an hour, and hearing nothing, went down stairs, where they interrogated the father of the girl, who denied in the strongest terms any knowledge or belief of fraud.

As the supposed spirit had before publicly promised, by an affirmative knock, that it would attend one of the gentlemen into the vault under the church of St. John's, Clerkenwell, where the body is deposited, and give token of its presence there by a knock on the coffin, it was therefore determined to make this trial of the existence or veracity of the supposed spirit.

While they were inquiring or deliberating, they were summoned into the girl's chamber by some ladies, who were near her bed, and had heard knocks and scratches. When the gentlemen entered, the girl declared that she felt the spirit like a mouse upon her back, and was required to hold her hands out of bed. From *that* time, though the spirit was very earnestly

required to manifest its existence by appearance, by impression on the hand or body of any one present, by scratches, knocks, or any agency, no evidence of any preternatural power was exhibited.

The spirit was then seriously advertised that the person, to whom the promise was made of striking the coffin, was about to visit the vault, and that the performance of the promise was then claimed. The company, at once, went into the church, and the gentleman, to whom the promise was made, went with one more into the vault. The spirit was then solemnly required to perform its promise, but nothing more than silence ensued. The person supposed to be accused by the ghost, then went down with several others, but no effect was perceived. On their return, they examined the girl, but could draw no confession from her. Between two and three she desired and was permitted to go home to her father. The opinion of the whole assembly was, that the child had some art of making or counterfeiting particular noises, and that there was no agency of any higher cause.

Other investigators now tried their hands, and the child was at last removed to the house of a gentleman, where her bed was tied up in the manner of a hammock, about a yard and a half from the ground, and her hands and feet extended as wide as they could be without injury, and fastened for two nights successively, during which no noises were heard.

The next day, being pressed hard to confess, and being told that if the knocking and scratching were not heard any more, she, with her father, would be sent to Newgate; an hour and a half being given her to consider, she desired she might be put to bed, to try if the noises would come. She lay in bed this night much

longer than usual, but there were no noises. This was on a Saturday.

Being told on Sunday, that the ensuing night only would be allowed for a trial, she concealed a board, about four inches broad and six long, under her stays—this board had been used to set the kettle upon. Having got into bed, she told the gentleman that she would bring Fanny (the ghost) at six the next morning.

The master of the house, however, being informed by the maids that the girl had taken a board to bed with her, impatiently waited for the appointed hour, when she began to knock and scratch upon the board; remarking, at the same time, what they themselves were convinced of, that these noises were not like those which used to be made. She was then told that she had taken a board to bed with her, and on denying it, was searched, and caught in the lie.

On Saturday, 10th July, 1762, before Judge Mansfield, in the Court of King's Bench, Guildhall, William Parsons and Elizabeth his wife, Mary Frazer, a clergyman, and a reputable tradesman, were tried for a conspiracy in the Cock Lane Ghost affair, to injure the character of Mr. William Kempe, when they were all found guilty. The Rev. Mr. Moore, curate of St. Sepulchre, and Mr. James, the tradesman referred to, paid Mr. Kempe £300. Parsons was set in the stocks, and, with his wife and Mary Frazer, afterward imprisoned. From this time forward the spirit was effectually laid, and the Ghost of Cock Lane never heard of more.

Some thirty years after the demise of the Cock Lane Ghost, it appears that a rapping phenomena was exciting attention in America even, as will be seen by the following letter which appeared in the *New York Packet*, a colonial newspaper of the day t—

“Fishkill, March 3rd, 1789.

“Sir,—Were I to relate the many extraordinary, though not less true, accounts I have heard concerning that unfortunate girl, at New Hackensack, your belief might perhaps be staggered, and patience tired. I shall therefore only inform you of what I have been eye-witness to. Last Sunday afternoon my wife and myself went to Dr. Thorn’s, and after sitting for some time, we heard a knocking under the feet of a young woman that lives in the family; I asked the doctor what occasioned the noise—he could not tell, but replied that he, together with several others, had examined the house, but were unable to discover the cause. I then took a candle, and went with the girl to the cellar; there the knocking also continued; but as we were ascending the stairs to return, I heard a prodigious rapping on each side, which alarmed me very much. I stood still some time, looking around with amazement, when I beheld some lumber which lay at the head of the stairs shake considerably. About eight or ten days after, we visited the girl again; the knocking still continued, but was much louder.

“Our curiosity induced us to pay the third visit, when the phenomena were still more alarming. I then saw the chairs move; a large dining-table was thrown against me, and a small stand, on which stood a candle, was tossed up and thrown into my wife’s lap; after which we left the house much surprised at what we had seen.”

But to come down more to our own times, what does the reader think of the knocking spirits who favoured the mother of George Canning with their performances, as described with due seriousness in Mrs. Crowe’s work after the following fashion:—

“When the mother of George Canning, then Mrs. Hunn, was an actress in the provinces, she went, amongst other places, to Plymouth, having previously requested her friend, Mr. Bernard, of the theatre, to procure her a

lodging. On her arrival, Mr. B. told her that if she was not afraid of a ghost, she might have a comfortable residence at a very low rate ; 'for there is,' said he, 'a house belonging to our carpenter, that is reported to be haunted, and nobody will live in it. If you like to have it, you may, and for nothing, I believe, for he is so anxious to get a tenant ; only you must not let it be known that you do not pay rent for it.'

"Mrs. Hunn, alluding to the theatrical apparitions, said it would not be the first time she had had to do with a ghost, and that she was very willing to encounter this one ; so she had her luggage taken to the house in question, and the bed prepared. At her usual hour, she sent her maid and her children to bed, and, curious to see if there was any foundation for the rumour she had heard, she seated herself with a couple of candles and a book, to watch the event. Beneath the room she occupied was the carpenter's workshop, which had two doors ; the one which opened into the street was barred and bolted within ; the other, a smaller one, opening into the passage, was only on the latch ; and the house was, of course, closed for the night. She had read somewhat more than half an hour, when she perceived a noise issuing from this lower apartment, which sounded very much like the sawing of wood ; presently, other such noises as usually proceed from a carpenter's workshop were added, till, by and by, there was a regular concert of knocking and hammering, and sawing and planing, etc. ; the whole sounding like half a dozen busy men in full employment.

"Being a woman of considerable courage, Mrs. Hunn resolved, if possible, to penetrate the mystery ; so, taking off her shoes, that her approach might not be heard, with her candle in her hand, she very softly opened her door and descended the stairs, the noise continuing as loud as ever, and evidently proceeding from the workshop, till she

opened the door, when instantly all was silent—all was still—not a mouse was stirring; and the tools and the wood, and everything else, lay as they had been left by the workmen when they went away. Having examined every part of the place, and satisfied herself that there was nobody there, and that nobody could get into it, Mrs. Hunn ascended to her room again, beginning almost to doubt her own senses, and question with herself whether she had really heard the noise or not, when it recommenced, and continued without intermission for about half an hour. She, however, went to bed, and the next day told nobody what had occurred, having determined to watch another night before mentioning the affair to any one. As, however, this strange scene was acted over again, without her being able to discover the cause of it, she now mentioned the circumstance to the owner of the house and to her friend Bernard; and the former, who would not believe it, agreed to watch with her, which he did. The noise began as before, and he was so horror-struck, that instead of entering the workshop, as she wished him to do, he rushed into the street. Mrs. Hunn continued to inhabit the house the whole summer: and when referring afterwards to the adventure, she observed, that use was second nature; and that she was sure if any night these ghostly carpenters had not pursued their visionary labours, she should have been quite frightened, lest they should pay her a visit upstairs.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH A "MORTAL" CAN
PRODUCE "SPIRIT" RAPPINGS.

THE reader will have seen from the previous chapter that the said rapping sounds are no great novelty. Whether he will believe that spirits have roamed the earth from time immemorial, or that certain mortals have assumed their characters with the view of imposing on their fellows, we know not, but we should imagine that the explanations we are about to give will be at any rate sufficient to convince him that there is no need of spiritual agency to produce any number of mere rapping manifestations.

One of the first individuals who investigated the matter in the United States, was a New York journalist, a Mr. Chauncey Burr, who prefaces an *exposé* which he published by the following observations.—He says, "In this little book, will be found the history of the unmistakable detection and exposure of more than fifty of the pretended spiritual mediums. In every instance where close examinations have been allowed, fraud has been detected in producing the noises and moving the tables. The mediums whom I have detected were those to whom the rappers took me, for the purpose of convincing me of the truth of rapping, and were what they regarded as the 'best' and 'strongest.' The detections were made almost invariably in the presence of some of the more intelligent and candid believers, who are referred to as witnesses of the justice of

my reports. For more than two months I have spent all my time examining the 'best mediums' which are to be found in five of the States where rapping prevails most, and in no single instance has any cause but *fraud* and *delusion* appeared behind these effects. . . . I can now produce 'mysterious rapping' seventeen different ways, which tricks I have learned by the detection of so many mediums."

Among the various documentary evidence contained in Mr. Burr's pamphlet, we find the following certificate:—

"I hereby certify that for the space of about three months, I was what is called a medium in the phenomena of spiritual rappings, and I believe that I was considered as good as any of the 'mediums' in Bridgeport at the time. And I further declare that all the time I produced the sounds voluntarily with my toes and shoes, and other tricks of art; and the answer which I made to mental questions—in which department I was considered most successful—were the result of close watching of the person's countenance, guessing, and a careful noting of hints inadvertently given.

"I furthermore declare that I have seen Mrs. Porter produce the sounds with her feet. I also declare that while Mrs. Porter's foot was braced against one side of the table, I was able the better to lift it by acting upon the other side; and I do solemnly declare that several times, both in the *light* and in the dark circles, I lifted and otherwise moved the table in this manner.

"I also affirm that I went into this business, in the first place, to see if I could not myself do all that was claimed for the spirits; and after I had produced all the phenomena, I gave it up, and exposed it.

"I furthermore state, that while Mrs. Porter was in a pretended clairvoyant state, I rapped for medical prescriptions, she naming the list of remedies, I rapping to certain

medicines, which were given, as I am informed, with success.

“LEMUEL J. BEARDSLEE.”

“Bridgeport, Feb. 4, 1851.

“There personally appeared before me Lemuel J. Beardslee, and made solemn oath to the truth of the foregoing statement, and affidavit. Attest,

WM. H. NOBLE,

Justice of the Peace.

“Fairfield County, Bridgeport, Conn., Feb. 4, 1851.

The Rev. Eli Noyes, in a letter to Mr. Burr, says:—

“I have examined sixteen cases of the rappings, all of which proved perfect failures. I have never heard sounds, nor seen tables move, which might not have been accomplished by persons in the room; and whenever I have heard noises, I have detected the motions which produced them.”

In another letter, published in the *Morning Star*, the same gentleman remarks:—

“I have heard no noises which I could not produce myself, and *I did produce such in four different ways, so as to effectually deceive the whole company.*”

At the time that Mr. Burr was pursuing his investigations, the Fish and Fox fraternity were exhibiting at Buffalo, New-York.

Here three intelligent physicians undertook to ascertain the cause of the mysterious rappings. The results of their investigations will appear from the following extracts, copied from their *Discovery and Explanation*, published soon after:—

“On carefully observing the countenances of the two females (Mrs. Fish—now Mrs. Brown, and her sister, Margaretta Fox), it was evident that the sounds were due to the agency of the younger sister, and that they involved an

effort of the will. She evidently attempted to conceal any indication of voluntary effort, but in this she did not succeed. A voluntary effort was manifest, and it was plain that it could not be continued long without fatigue. . . .

“ Various facts may be cited to show that the motion of joints, under certain circumstances, is adequate to produce the phenomena of the rappings ; but we need not now refer to these. By a curious coincidence, after arriving at the above conclusion respecting the source of the sounds, an instance has fallen under our observation which demonstrates the fact, that noises, precisely identical with the spiritual rappings, may be produced in the knee-joint.

“ A highly respectable lady of this city possesses the ability to develop sounds similar, both in character and in degree, to those professedly elicited, by the Rochester impostors, from the spiritual world. We have witnessed the production of the sounds by the lady referred to, and have been permitted to examine the mechanism by which they are produced.

“ We have witnessed repetitions of experiments in the case just referred to, sufficient to exhibit to us all the phenomena of sounds belonging to the Rochester rappings ; and without further explanations at this time, we append our names in testimony of the facts contained in the foregoing hastily-penned exposition.

University	} AUSTIN FLINT, M.D.	
of		} CHARLES A. LEE, M.D.
Buffalo.		} C. B. COVENTRY, M.D.

“ Feb. 17, 1851.

This communication was first published in the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*. As soon as Mrs Fish saw it, she sent a communication to the same paper, inviting the doctors to an interview, to detect her in making the raps if they could. The following is Dr. Lee's account of the interview :—

“ On the evening of the 18th, we attended at their rooms, in compliance with the above invitation. Some eight or ten individuals, including three ladies, friends of Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox, were present, and, at our request, Mr. N. Rogers, of the Phelps House, Mr. Marshall, attorney-at-law, and Judge Stow. The preliminaries being arranged, we asked whether the spirits would be present and communicate with us through the evening. After an interval of a minute or so, raps were heard, and continued in quick succession for some time, which Mrs. Fish declared to be an affirmative answer. This was repeated, so that there would be no mistake as to the willingness on the part of the spirits to accommodate us. This being settled, Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox were requested to be seated on chairs, their limbs extended, and their heels resting on cushions. The reasons for placing them in this position were stated,—viz., that we believed, in order that the raps should be heard, that the feet should have some solid support, serving as a *fulcrum*; else the contraction of the muscles of the leg would not throw the bone (head of tibia) out of place; or if so, no sounds would be heard, unless the concussion or vibration which would be thus produced, could be communicated to some sonorous or vibrating body.

“ While thus seated, more than fifty minutes elapsed, during which no raps were heard, though the spirits were urged and called upon by Mrs. Fish to ‘manifest’ themselves. A part of this time, Miss Fox was allowed to seat herself on the sofa, her limbs and feet resting on the cushions of the same. No sounds having been heard, it was suggested that the ladies be allowed to take any position they pleased, and see if any raps were then heard. Accordingly, they seated themselves on the sofa, their feet resting on the floor, when immediately a loud succession of raps followed, and continued for several minutes.

“We then proposed to try another test; so, seating ourselves before the ladies, we grasped each of their knees firmly, so as to prevent any lateral movement of the bones; the raps immediately ceased, and were not heard while the knees were thus held, except near the close of the experiment, which continued once forty minutes, when two slight sounds were heard on slightly relaxing my grasp, while at the same time I distinctly felt the heads of the bones grating on each other, and the muscles contracting, which, though a very positive kind of evidence to me, I am aware is not so satisfactory to bystanders.

“I should state that our hands were removed several times from the knees during the trial, and raps were always heard during the interval of removal. At the close of the sitting, which continued till past eleven o'clock, Miss Fox was much affected and shed many tears, which excited much sympathy on the part of some of the gentlemen present. I need not add that our position was triumphantly sustained, and that public opinion here is now almost universally on our side.

“On the evening of the 19th, a party of ladies and gentlemen met at the house of Professor F., when Mrs. P., the lady whom we accidentally discovered to have the power of rapping in her knees, was present. During the evening, all the phenomena of the Rochester knockings were produced, the sounds being exactly similar in character and degree to those produced by the Foxes. I should state, perhaps, that the sounds are produced, not as first suggested, ‘by the muscles inserted into the upper and inner side of the large bone of the leg (the tibia) near the knee-joint, being brought into action, so as to move the upper surface of the bones just named, laterally upon the lower surface of the thigh bone (the femur), giving rise to a partial lateral dislocation,’ but the partial dislocation consists in the movement of the *tibia* outward, partly occasioned, I

believe, by pressure on the foot, there being great relaxation of the ligaments about the knee-joint ; but chiefly by the action of the muscles of the leg below the knee. At least, this is the fact with regard to Mrs. P., for by placing the hand on the side of the joint, the bone can be felt, at the instant the loud double rap is heard, slipping out laterally, and as suddenly slipping back again ; although, by an effort of the will, it can be made to glide back noiselessly, so that only one rap is heard. But this can be repeated in pretty rapid succession for a long time, although it requires evidently considerable practice to attain great skill in this new and hitherto mysterious art.

“ You may very naturally ask, why has not this physiological phenomenon been known to physicians before ? I answer that it has, so far as the smaller joints are concerned. Every person, almost, can snap their finger-joints ; many, also, as Mr. Burr, can snap their toe-joints, and some their ankles, producing a pretty loud rap when placed in contact with some sonorous body ; but the same phenomenon is very seldom met with in the larger joints, as the knees ; and when it is, it has escaped particular observation, and not been made known to physicians, as it neither requires, perhaps, nor admits of, medical aid.

“ But it may be said by some that the above explanation is not altogether satisfactory, inasmuch as these rappings are heard in different parts of the room at the same time ; or sometimes on the table, then the door, then the walls of the room, and at a distance from the rappers, etc. After spending several hours a-day, for three days, with Mrs. Fish and Miss Fox, during which the raps were invariably heard whenever called for, without, as I recollect, a single exception, I found that in no one instance did the sounds seem to proceed from the door, unless Miss Fox was near enough to touch it with her heel ; nor did the sounds seem to proceed from the table, unless she was near

enough to the leg of the table to touch it with her foot ; but generally they proceeded from the floor, apparently in her vicinity, although the floor could be felt to vibrate at some distance from her, just as the whole table would vibrate when she placed her foot against one of its legs. Much of the confusion and error on this subject arises, doubtless, from an ignorance of the laws which regulate the propagation of sounds. We should recollect that sounds may be propagated in various ways, as—

“1st. By *reciprocation*, as vibrations are excited in a sounding body, when it is capable of yielding a musical tone of definite pitch, and another body of the same pitch is made to sound near it. As examples of this, if two strings of the same length and tension be placed alongside of each other, and one of them be sounded with a violin bow, the other will be thrown into reciprocal vibration ; or if the same tone be produced near the string in any other manner, as by a flute or a tuning-fork, the same effect will result. So also glass tumblers are made to sound by a violin placed at some distance. Two watches, which do not tick alike, will soon beat in unison when placed near each other on the same table. On the same principle, sonorous bodies, as iron-blowers, pianos, etc., may be made to give forth sounds in the same room where the raps are made, at some distance from them ; and a gentleman of respectability informs me, that he has noticed this phenomenon in the room where the ladies were exhibiting here.

“2nd. We may have vibrations of *resonance*, which occur when a sounding body is placed in connection with any other. Here one or more parts will be thrown into reciprocal vibration, even though the tone of the whole be different, or it be not capable of producing a definite tone at all. If we place a tuning-fork in vibration, upon a table or sound-board, we find that, though the whole board has no definite fundamental note, it will divide itself into a num-

ber of parts, which will reciprocate the original sound, so as greatly to increase its intensity; and the same sound-board will act equally well for tuning-forks of different degrees of pitch, although when smaller bodies are used for resonance, it is essential that there should be a relation between its fundamental note and that of the sonorous body, otherwise no distinct resonance is produced. These principles are well known to scientific musicians, and they are occasionally illustrated in rooms where these raps are produced.

“3rd. Sounds, however, can strictly be said to be propagated only by vibrations of *conduction*, and in this way, for the most part, are the sounds produced by the rappers propagated. Thus, when Miss Fox raps, her feet resting solely on the floor, the sound, in consequence of the clothes falling closely about the feet, is somewhat muffled, and the vibrations being propagated to the floor in every direction, it is almost impossible to decide where they are most intense. Those having a nice musical ear, can generally locate them directly in her vicinity; but if the attention is drawn to another part of the room, then, as in the case of ventriloquism, the sounds seem to proceed thence. This power of distinguishing the *direction* of sounds, it is well known, is chiefly acquired by habit, and varies exceedingly in different individuals. Thus, when these raps have been heard, I have often known them to be located in different parts of the room by different persons present. We judge of the *direction* of sound chiefly, if not altogether, by the relative intensity of the impressions produced by the two ears respectively.

“If the sounds, then, be produced under circumstances where the same impression is made on both ears, or auditory nerves, then we are wholly unable to designate from what quarter they come. This often happens in a small room, where there are many vibrating bodies, when these

muffled raps are heard, although we have generally been able, by close attention, to locate them in the vicinity of Miss Fox. So, also, our idea of the *distance* of a sound is altogether an acquired perception, depending principally on the loudness or faintness of the sound, if we have no other indications to guide us. When we are entirely ignorant *how* a certain sound is produced, and how intense it might be expected to be, we have no means of judging of the distance of the sonorous body from us, and we may suppose that a sound proceeds from a remote part of the house, when it is actually located a few feet distant only. A shrill railroad-whistle, made several miles off, appears to be quite near to us, while a dull sound appears remote, although made in our immediate vicinity. These principles, which are often overlooked or unknown, will serve, I believe, to explain all the varieties and phenomena of sounds connected with the Rochester rappings, and to reconcile the various clashing opinions which have been formed with regard to their location, etc.

“ I hope I need make no apology for this communication, which is solely for the purpose of subserving the interests of truth, by clearing up a mystery which has thus far baffled many inquiries, and which has been productive of much evil in the community.

“ I am, very respectfully, yours,

“ CHARLES H. LEE, M.D.”

Another investigator of the rappings, the Rev. H. O. Sheldon, of Berea, Ohio, spent some time in investigating the subject ; and the mediums that he detected rapped by snapping their toes. Mr. Sheldon himself could rap beautifully with his toes, either sitting or standing ; and he says that had he not explained beforehand how it was done, no one would have suspected the true method.

At the trial of Almira Bezely, of Providence, for the murder of her brother, her father testified as follows :—

“She made the knocks with her feet (Mr. Bezely here described the mode in which the rappings were conducted). I saw her make these rappings with her foot the day she was arrested. She came into the room where I was, and confessed the murder, and asked me to forgive her; she then showed me how she made the rappings by knocking with her foot; she limped a little, and said it affected her foot.”

Mr. S. B. Holliday testified—“I asked her if she had practised deception. She replied that the rappings were an imposition, and that so far as she had anything to do with the matter, they were through her instrumentality, and told me several ways in which she produced them. She stated to me that she produced the rappings with her foot and thumbs.”

Mrs. Remington testified—“While the rappings were going on, I saw the boddice of her waist shake; I asked her if the spirits convulsed her; she said ‘Yes.’ . . . I visited her in prison; she said she had made every rap.”

Coelia Bezely testified—“After her arrest, Almira told me she made the rappings, and explained how they were produced by her feet.”

And yet this young girl, not fourteen years of age, succeeded in deceiving hundreds, and those, too, who *thought* they were above deception. Her father says, “There were many who came to see the rappings;” another witness says, “There was great excitement upon the subject.”

In other instances, the mysterious sounds are produced by delicate machinery concealed in the table around which the mediums sit. Mr. Hiram Pack, a respectable manufacturer of cabinet furniture, at New York, who made two or three of these tables, with a frankness which proves him to have been no accomplice in the deception, communicated to Professor Mattison, the following facts:—

“Having been called upon by Professor Mattison, in relation to certain tables made by me for parties in this

city, I am free to state that I have made two 'medium tables' during the last year ; both of which had machinery concealed in them for producing 'raps' at the will of the operator. The beds, one inch and a quarter thick, were cut out in the centre, so as to admit the machinery, and then carefully covered, so as to leave a hollow, and make the sounds louder. Wires were carried out to the legs of the table, inside the cover and the legs, by which the machinery was worked. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the *machine* and the *manner of working it*, to describe them in detail ; my business was simply to make the *tables* for the reception of the 'spirits ;' and that I have done this in two instances, and am ready to do it in two or twenty more if I can be paid for it, I am willing to assert. And if people will give a dollar a piece to hear a little hammer strike inside a table bed, and run crazy about it, it is not my fault.

“ HIRAM PACK.

“ 488, Pearl Street, New York, March 25, 1853.”

The writer in the *Zoist* expresses the following opinion with regard to the mode of producing the rapping sounds. He says : “ As to the raps, they are successfully made with the foot against a leg of the table or the chair. Place the sole of one of your boots or shoes with one side bent downwards (one foot being crossed over the other, if you please), so that the upper edge shall touch the leg of the table or chair ; and then a very slight movement of it backwards or forwards will give you the precise rapping sound : and you may give any intensity you may think proper. Striking the inner edges of the two soles together will also give a tapping sound.”

CHAPTER X.

CRIMES AND CASUALITIES ARISING OUT OF SPIRIT
MANIFESTATIONS.

HAVING now traced the history of the spirit manifestations from their earliest origin down to the period at which we write ; having waded through masses of spiritual literature, and examined the theology which branches out of it, and chronicled the avocations of the spirits in the different spheres ; having classified and described the various descriptions of mediums, and shown that "dollars" are at the bottom of all the manifestations, and having finally brought together all the explanations of these said manifestations that we have met with during a long and patient research, nothing more is left for us to do but to string together a few incidents connected with our subject that did not seem properly to belong to any previous section of our work. It is lamentable enough to see the youngest among the nations of the earth, and that which one would have thought to have been strongest in the power of common sense, originating some of the most glaring impostures of modern times, and offering yielding convert after convert to swell alike the ranks, and the purses, of legions of false prophets ; but it is doubly distressing to note the crime and misery that have followed in their march, independent of the wholesale corruption of the morals of a people which the development of such gigantic frauds as Mormonism and Spirit Rapping must undoubtedly produce. There are individual instances of crime arising out of the latter imposture, that it makes one's heart sick to contemplate. First

of all we have the case of Almira Bezely, a rapping medium of Providence, Rhode Island, who predicted, by the rappings, the death of her infant brother; and then, to make her prophecy come true, bought arsenic and gave to him, and took his life. On being arrested, she confessed the crime, and the causes which led to its commission. On her trial for the murder, Samuel B. Holliday testified as follows:—

“She only gave me one reason for the commission of the crime. She said there had been a gradual change coming over her. It had not come on in a moment, but in a month or weeks. The cause of this was the deception she had practised in regard to these rappings.

“It was in evidence before the coroner’s jury, that the death of the child was predicted at these rappings. My impression is, that the child died about the time predicted.

“I do not think she could have committed this crime without the influence of spirit rapping. I suppose the deception and fraud practised had weakened her moral principle, and prepared the way to crime.”

As yet only one murder has arisen out of the influence of spirit rapping; but that numerous suicides can be laid to its charge, will be seen by the subjoined cases gathered from the American papers.

Matthew Langdon, a printer, 38 years of age, became insane by attending the circles, and finally took his own life. The following extracts from the testimony aken before the coroner’s jury, will show the real cause of this event:—

“Maria Langdon, being sworn,—says, ‘I am wife of Matthew Langdon, now lying dead at this place; I do not know when he was born; my husband and myself lived at No. 91, Eleventh Street, up to the time he cut his throat; he cut his throat on Monday last, between one and two o’clock P.M. He did not sleep on Saturday nor Sunday night, and constantly talked of spiritual manifestations. For the last ten months, he has been in the habit of read-

ing what he called spiritual papers, to wit, *The Spiritual Telegraph*, published in this city; also, *The Mountain Cove Journal*. His mind seemed absorbed in these papers; he has been attending the spiritual circles for the last ten months, and for the last three weeks twice a-week; one circle met at Mrs. Fish's, in Seventh Avenue. I lost a daughter ten months ago; her death made him feel very bad, and was the cause of his consulting these mediums; he said they told him that if he would become a *seeing medium*, he could see his child; he told me that this would satisfy him, and that he consulted the mediums for this purpose.'

"Ellsworth Elliott, M.D., surgeon of Bellevue Hospital, where Langdon was sent after he cut his throat, said—'He told us he had been influenced by spiritual manifestations (in which he expressed his belief) to commit suicide; he said about ten months ago he had lost a daughter under peculiarly aggravating circumstances. He spoke of spirits that were about him—of Brother Harris, of Mountain Cove, Fayette Co., Va., of *The Spiritual Telegraph* and *Mountain Cove Journal*.'

"After hearing all the evidence in the case, the jury returned the following verdict:—'That Matthew Langdon came to his death by exhaustion consequent upon mental excitement, and from a wound inflicted by himself upon his throat. We also find that this state of mind was superinduced by his connection with persons calling themselves spiritual mediums. We also recommend the grand jury to take measures for the suppression of circle meetings at the houses named in the testimony.'"—*New York Times*.

Here are several other cases:—

"Mr. Bishop Peabody hung himself in a barn in Grafton, Lorain county, on Friday last. He was an amiable, intelligent, and respected young man, but became so absorbed in spirit rappings when that delusion appeared

in his neighbourhood, as to completely unbalance his mind. The case of Mr. Peabody is but one of a long list of insane, or partially such, caused by modern rappings and spiritualism as taught and practised by the Fishes, Foxes, Finneys, Davises, and their followers."—*Cleveland Herald*.

"A Mrs. Rich, of Kirtland, was taken suddenly, in what appeared to be a fit, about four o'clock on the morning of February 18. Her family supposed her to be in a Mesmeric trance, and consulted a couple of spirit mediums to ascertain what was the matter. The mediums wrote that she was in a Mesmeric state, and would not come out until two weeks from that day. Her friends refused to administer any medicine, or allow any others to do so, supposing, as they did, that she was in a trance. At one time she recovered enough to tell her attendants if she did not have some medicine that she should die, and then became unconscious. She lived along in this manner until February 23, when she died."—*Geauga Republic*.

"S. W. Lincoln, of Malone, Franklin county, New York, whose thoughts have been on the spirit rappings mostly of late, and who had been promoted to the dignity of a writing medium, at last became quite crazed, and on the morning of the 11th instant, at four o'clock, leaped from the piazza of his boarding-house, fracturing thereby his heel and ankle-bone. This new victim of a vulgar superstition has a wife and family who depend for subsistence on his earnings."—*New York Times*.

Another newspaper informs us that "a lady in Livingston county, New York, sat up and read the *Spiritual Telegraph* till late at night, and then went out and pitched head-foremost into a well, and was taken out dead."

The effects of the rapping delusion in the production of insanity, have been most terrible, as will appear by the following extracts from different papers, selected during a period of merely a few months.

“ Mr. George Doughty, a farmer, residing on Long Island, a short distance from this city, and possessed of considerable property, having his interest excited by the reports of the doings of the mediums of this most mischievous and absurd delusion, resolved to seek out one of the professors of the spiritual doctrines and make himself acquainted with the mysteries which they pretend to disclose. With that intention he proceeded to the city of Pittsburg, in the State of Pennsylvania, where he was introduced to a professed medium, a lady named Mrs. French, whom, after a short acquaintance, he invited to visit him and his family on Long Island; and from that time—some two years ago—up to within a recent date, she has been a constant visitor at the farmer’s house, where she was, at the wish of the unfortunate man, treated as one of the family.

“ A few weeks since, however, she arrived in the city of New York, and, instead of proceeding direct to the farmer’s, as she was wont to do, took rooms at the Irving House, where she was accompanied by a strange man, whom, she informed the farmer upon visiting her, was about writing an interesting legend of the spirit land, she furnishing the materials and matter. We are not advised of the exact progress which the farmer made, or the steps by which he arrived at the results which followed; but the effect of his spiritual intercourse with the medium was to unbalance his mind and deprive him of the proper use of his reasoning faculties. Of course, the medium took advantage of the poor man’s insanity, and such was the influence she had acquired over him, and the strange delusion under which he laboured, that she induced him to adopt her as his daughter, and finally to make over to her nearly his entire property.

“ The wife of the unfortunate victim endeavoured to restrain him in his mad career, but did not succeed. By threats of violence he compelled his gentle partner to make

an assignment of her interest in his affairs to him ; after which, he proceeded to convert his effects into cash—which amounted to about 15,000 dollars in all—and this he immediately paid over to the medium at the Irving House, upon which the latter took *French*-leave and departed, going, it is reported, back to the city of Pittsburg. The next day he seemed partly to realise the extent of his folly, and called upon his friend the medium—but, lo and behold ! the charming creature was missing, as was also the fabulous book-writer. He then asked to be shown to the room she had occupied, and declared he would commit suicide. His request was of course refused, and he was driven from the house.

“ He then proceeded to the residence of an acquaintance in New York, and there repeated his determination to ‘shuffle off this mortal coil,’ as life had become burdensome to him. He was only laughed at and chided for his folly, and told to go home. He next came to the house of his relatives in Brooklyn, with the intention of carrying out his designs against his own life ; but, as he afterwards stated, his friends treated him with so much kindness, that he felt his resolution give way, and partly abandoned the idea of self-destruction. He finally went home, and his friends, with very natural misgivings as to the propriety of permitting him to remain at liberty, had him arrested and conveyed to the New York Lunatic Asylum, where he now remains a confirmed lunatic. A telegraphic despatch has been sent on to Pittsburg for the arrest of the medium, who, it is hoped, will not escape ‘unwhipt of justice.’

“ The victim of this conspiracy is the father of two very interesting daughters, and has many respectable relatives and connections in this city, whose feelings with regard to the sad event may be easily imagined. Such are the particulars of one of the most infamous cases of heartless fraud and delusion, which has probably ever been recorded. The

reputed medium is reported to be an abandoned female of the worst character."—*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*.

In summing up his remarks on the case of Mr. Doughty, Judge Rosevelt remarked: "If things go on at this rate, we shall have to enlarge our lunatic asylums, and establish a bedlam wherever a rapping circle exists."

"Last autumn, a woman was brought from the country to one of our hospitals in a state of insanity, from this cause—then believed to be hopeless. She had been considered a person of strong mind, and withal had been much respected and liked by her acquaintances. Having, however, developed by frequent practice her latent rapping powers, and giving herself entirely over to the doctrine of spiritual intercourse, reason was unfortunately, though naturally enough, dethroned."—*St. Louis Republican*.

"Robert G. Shaw, known everywhere as one of the most wealthy and influential merchants of Boston, the *Fitchburgh Reveille* says, is crazy. He has been for some time deeply interested in spiritual manifestations, and it was to him the spirit of Daniel Webster is said to have communicated, and given, as an evidence of its identity, Webster's signature, which, by critics in such matters, could not be distinguished from the signature of an unpaid note of 1,000 dollars that Mr. Shaw holds against Mr. Webster. It may be, however, that his simple belief in spirits at all gives rise to such a report."—*Beloit Journal*.

"A girl about fourteen years of age, named Adeline C. Moore, was, before the police court yesterday, charged, upon complaint of her father, Jonathan Moore, of East Boston, with being a stubborn child. There was evidence that the girl did not stay at home, but went from place to place as her fancy dictated; but it did not appear that she was wilful or stubborn, and, upon her promising to go home with her father, she was discharged. Two or three years ago the girl became interested in the 'spirit rapping' ma-

nia, and was what is called a 'medium.' Since then she has exhibited symptoms of insanity, and wandered about in East Boston and Chelsea. She is a pretty and interesting girl, intelligent and modest, and we hope she will hereafter shun those delusions which have misled her."—*Boston Herald*.

"Mr. Orville Hatch, of Franklin, Connecticut, has become insane, he having devoted considerable attention to the subject of spirit rappings."—*New York Times*.

"A victim of spiritual rappings, from Little Falls, has recently been placed in the State Lunatic Asylum. When will this lamentable delusion cease?"—*Troy Times*.

Miss Melina Haynes, of Cincinnati, was sent to the lunatic department of the Commercial Hospital, a few days ago. The *Cincinnati Times* says, the true cause of the insanity is spiritual rappings.

"About two months ago, a young Irishman, said to be remarkably intelligent, died at the Sisters' Hospital in a state of insanity, brought on by frequent 'communication with the spirits,' as the phenomenon is called."—*St. Louis Republican*.

The superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane in Indianapolis, Indiana, says:—

"An elderly gentleman who had previously enjoyed good health, now an inmate of this institution, was living in peace and harmony with his family, until the 'spirit rappers' visited the neighbourhood. He attended their exhibitions, and believed their revelations; but, unfortunately for the old gentleman, it was revealed to him by one of the 'mediums' that his second wife, with whom he was then living, had caused the death of his former companion.

"The old man believed all to be a direct and truthful revelation from the spirit world, and from that hour his domestic happiness was at an end. Sleep forsook him, and he became a maniac, which he still continues to be, with but dim prospects of recovery."—*Report for 1852*.

Self-Sacrifice of a Medium.—"A man whose name is Samuel Cole, residing in Washington county, Ohio, who was made insane from the workings of the spirit rapping delusion, became possessed of the idea that he must offer, like Abraham of old, a sacrifice to the Supreme Ruler of the universe. He accordingly proceeded to carry his object into execution, by taking off one of his feet, which he succeeded in doing some days since, in a very scientific manner, and with an heroic determination that would compare with the self-sacrificing deeds done in the earlier ages. His family, fearing that some other of his limbs might be demanded in a like cause, had him conveyed to the lunatic asylum at Columbus, where he is now in the enjoyment of as much liberty as the nature of his disease will warrant the superintendent of that institution in granting him."—*Register, Philadelphia*, Feb. 1853.

But we must not stop to describe individual cases—for hundreds have lost their reason, and been ruined by this delusion. The number of inmates in the different insane asylums of the United States, during the year 1852, who lost their reason by "spirit rapping," were, according to the returns, under one hundred. So rapid a progress, however, do its believers make towards a state of mental decay, that during the first half of the year 1853, the spirit rapping lunatics were numbered, not by hundreds, but by thousands. Is not this a pregnant fact?

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