

SPIRIT RAPPING UNVEILED!

AN EXPOSÉ OF THE
ORIGIN, HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

OF CERTAIN ALLEGED COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE

SPIRIT WORLD,

BY MEANS OF
"SPIRIT RAPPING," "MEDIUM WRITING," "PHYSICAL DEMONSTRATIONS,"
ETC.

With Illustrations.


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ASTRONOMY," ETC., ETC.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE design of the following pages is to expose one of the most remarkable delusions that has ever prevailed in any age or country. In all the annals of the past we find nothing at all comparable with modern "spirit-rapping." It is the grand climax of soothsaying, astrology, witchcraft, phrenology, mesmerism, clairvoyance, psychology, Fourierism, Millerism, Mormonism, and all other superstitions, delusions, and isms that ever have been, or probably ever will be.

Appealing to that love of the marvelous, for which, as a nation, we are somewhat distinguished, and also to our natural affection for the departed; and not having been regarded hitherto as really worthy of refutation; the delusion has gone on from one step to another, and from year to year, till it has undermined the faith of thousands, and has already ruined its hundreds for time and for eternity. And yet some continue to say, "*Let it alone; it will soon die of itself.*" But are such counsels wise? Why is it not dead already? Is *silence* the best antidote for the spread of error? Especially, are watchmen placed upon the walls of Zion, and pledged to "banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word," to discharge their duty by a studied silence? Alas for us and for the cause of God, when such comes to be the general policy of Christian ministers!

"I am perfectly aware," says Rev. Dr. Clark, of Hartford, "that to ascribe so much importance to such a subject as this, will lead those who know nothing about it, to suspect the soundness of one's judgment, and it will be said that our wisest course is to let it alone; it is one of the humbugs of the day, and will soon die of itself. It may be so, but the indications do not point that way at present."

"Few really know," says the *Journal of Commerce*, "how the belief in the spiritual nature of these rappings is increasing. And this, too, not among the ignorant, but among men of learning and standing in society." The "spiritualists," as they style themselves, now number their "mediums" by thousands, and their disciples by tens of thousands. They are making powerful efforts to disseminate their principles by means of lectures, books, and papers; and are now organizing for a

regular and concerted movement against the *Bible* and all our religious institutions. "There is a work going on in this spiritualistic movement," says a distinguished minister, "which we shall soon be obliged to meet, in some more potent way than mere official malediction. It is undermining the ancient faith in many quarters more effectually, because more secretly, than any other influence now at work in our community."

With these views and sentiments I most heartily concur; and it is under similar convictions that I have bought and examined spirit books, taken periodicals, and made experiments, and lectured and written. And to have done otherwise, under the circumstances, would have been to have disregarded the clearest convictions of duty.

In regard to the *best mode* of treating such a subject, different views may be entertained. To me it seemed important to vindicate the *Sacred Writings*, as the *only infallible standard of truth*, and to set forth their teachings, in regard to the intermediate state, as beyond all controversy. In contrast with these, I judged it best *fully to state*, and even to *illustrate* the new "spirit" philosophy; that its absurdities might be the more apparent, and the impression made the more vivid and distinct. Hence the cuts are mere pictorial representations of principles or phenomena described by the "spiritualists" themselves. If, therefore, they complain of the cuts, they must lay the blame to their own bad "philosophy," and not to the author or publishers.

In the progress of the exposé, it has been thought best to cite numerous quotations from the writings of the spirit-rappers, not only to sustain the general propositions respecting their views, but to place every point charged beyond all cavil. Many of these quotations, I am aware, are of the most pernicious character; and if found in any other book than a professed *unveiling* of a dark and iniquitous system, their repetition would be not only an offense against good taste, but a questionable antidote to error. But, under the circumstance, I had no alternative but to leave the infidelity and licentiousness of the system to be admitted upon my bare assertion, or to support every charge by indubitable proof. The latter course was judged to promise the best results, and was consequently adopted. Indeed, it would be impossible to review and expose a system of error *fairly* and *effectually*, without quoting from the works containing it.

Of the *literary* character of the work it is due to say, that it has been written in the midst of other and pressing duties, and in much less time than should have been devoted to it. Not a page of it has been transcribed or rewritten. It would be strange, therefore, if it was not in many respects unfinished. Still, it will probably be understood, even by unlettered readers, and that is the main thing desired.

As to the *style* and *price* of the book, the author has no control or responsibility. Not wishing the care and trouble of publishing it myself, it was placed in the hands of an enterprising and honorable publishing house, and appears in good style, and at as low a price as circumstances would justify. The engravings add materially to the expense of publication.

May the God of the HOLY BIBLE—the Author of everlasting life—approve and bless the effort to vindicate His own truth, and to save His people from error and sin, and from their consequences, now and hereafter.

*New York, April 9, 1853.*

H. MATTISON.

# CONTENTS.

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## CHAPTER I.—HISTORY AND ALLEGED PHENOMENA.

Origin of Spirit-rapping—Its Progress—Recent alleged Phenomena—Rapping and Writing Media—Speaking by “Afflatus”—Seeing and hearing Media—Physical Demonstrations, &c. . . . . 9

## CHAPTER II.—ALLEGED CAUSES—THEORY OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

Disembodied spirits—Spheres and Circles—Progress—Low and high spirits. . 16

## CHAPTER III.—STANDARD OF TRUTH—THE BIBLE ON PSYCHOLOGY.

Truth distinguished from Error only by comparison with some acknowledged Standard—The *Bible* treats fully of Spiritual Matters: of Man, his Origin, Nature, and Destiny: of various Sciences, but never in Error—Good Authority on Psychology—Endorsed by “Spirits”—Often appealed to by Necromancers. . . . . 24

## CHAPTER IV.—THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

The Soul distinct from the Body—Nature of Death—Souls do not linger about their former Homes, or the Grave of the Body—Depart from Earth—Intermediate State—Not to return till the Second Coming of Christ and the General Resurrection. . . . . 28

## CHAPTER V.—MINISTERING SPIRITS.

Who are the “Ministering Spirits” of the Bible—Angels not the spirits of men—Good and evil angels. . . . . 39

## CHAPTER VI.—WITCHES, WIZARDS, ETC., OF THE BIBLE.

Origin of Witchcraft—Witches and Wizards—Necromancers and Soothsayers—Astrologers and Magicians—Modern Fortune-tellers—How classified in the Scriptures—Denounced by Jehovah—Simon Magus—Elymas—Ghost-books burned—“Medium” at Philippi. . . . . 42

## CHAPTER VII.—APPARITIONS, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

Apparitions of the Bible—Modern ghosts—Who see them—Why so seldom seen—When and where—Ghosts caught—Different kinds—General conclusion respecting. . . . . 49

## CHAPTER VIII.—VARIOUS ALLEGED SPIRIT MEDIA CONSIDERED.

Recent "Spirit Communications"—Various Modes of Communication—Rapping Process—Card Process—Writing Media—Hand used by a Spirit—Spiritual Atmosphere Process—Spirit Occupation Process—Spiritual Impression Process—Spirit Photography—Independent Spirit Writing—Speaking Media—A Spirit Lecture—Several Spirits in one Body—Trance—Pointing Media—Dancing Media. . . . . 52

## CHAPTER IX.—THEOLOGY OF THE "SPIRITS."

Sources of information—Both matter and spirit eternal—Man never fell—Needs no conversion—Christ a mere man—Never made any atonement—Never rose from the dead—Never wrought any miracles—Borrowed his wisest sayings—The Bible not of God—One of the worst of books—No devils—No hell—No resurrection—No Day of Judgment—Christianity no blessing—Ministers hypocrites—Churches must be broken up—Civil government abolished—No Sabbaths—Marriages annulled—Practical nullification—Summary of spirit theology—Who are the "mediums?"—Davis, Hammond, Brittan, Post, Ballou, Partridge, Spear, Hoar, Winchester, Ambler, Harshman, Boynton, &c. . . . . 83

## CHAPTER X.—LITERATURE OF THE "SPIRITS."

Spirits alone responsible—Mediums in the fog—Not to be relied upon—What have they revealed?—Spirit orthography—"George Washington's" spelling—Mr. Brittan correcting John Wesley's communication—A sublime production—Spirit poetry, from Franklin and Washington—Spirits forgetting how to spell their own names—Palpable forgeries—Spirit autographs—Spirit Hebrew—Translation by Professor Vail. . . 103

## CHAPTER XI.—SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE "SPIRITS."

Spirit astronomy—An interview with "the Seer"—Spirit cosmogony—"Development" theory—Mr. Davis' illustrious ancestry—Spirit geology—A spirit plagiarism—New motive power—Essence of spirit discovered—New mode of education—Taking the lightning out of a lady—"Spiricity" in the lump—"Tom Paine's" philosophy—The earth self-luminous—The sun opaque—True source of "spirit philosophy. . . 121

## CHAPTER XII.—MISTAKES AND CONTRADICTIONS OF THE "SPIRITS."

Number of spirit spheres—Distances—Spirit homes—Intercourse just opened, and yet opened ages ago—Deceptions exposed by a rapper—Tom Paine contradicting himself—Lavalette and George Fox at odds—California mediums and election returns—Another medium in a fix—Still another ditto—Philadelphia mediums in error—Another spirit plagiarism—Books and no books in the Schools of the Spheres—"John Wesley" contradicting himself—Mr. Harvey's "spirits" all Methodists—Le Roy Sunderland done for—The Fox girls ditto. . . . . 132

## CHAPTER XIII.—ASTONISHING REVELATIONS BY THE SPIRITS.

What have they revealed?—Davis' sublime philosophy—Judge Edmonds' "kitten"—Learning to write in the Spheres—Ladies most intellectual—Bloomer dresses to prevail—Ladies to pay addresses to the gentlemen—All to live without eating—"Pay the printer"—Spirit wanting gin—Spirits want money in the Spheres—Birds and other animals in the Spheres—Playing cards in the Spheres—Parties, balls, and concerts in the Spheres—A battle in the Spheres—Spirits won't serve the press—Won't operate in public—Deception and collusion. . . . . 142

## CHAPTER XIV.—EFFECTS OF SPIRIT-RAPPING.

Frauds by the spirits—Spiritual banking—Ruin of George Doughty—Insanity—Orville Hatch—Melissa Haynes—Adaline C. Moore—Robert G. Shaw—Samuel Cole—Ninety insane rappers—Remarks of Judge Roosevelt—Tendency to suicide—Bishop Peabody—Mrs. Rich—S. W. Lincoln—Murder by a medium—Suicide of Matthew Langdon. . . . . 154

## CHAPTER XV.—CAUSES OF ALLEGED SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

Sophistry of the rappers—Rapping in a school-room with the toes—Discovery by the Buffalo physicians—Detection of the Fox girls—Rapping with the feet or ankles—Wiseacres deceived by a young girl—Medium tables with machinery—Disclosure at Hartford—Statement of Mr. Pack—Confession and affidavit of Mr. Beardslee—Experience of Mr. Burr—Physical demonstration—Moving of Tables. . . . . 167

## CONCLUSION.

Keep away from the "circles"—Of ghost-books and papers—A word to ministers—Appeal to the press—A word to mediums. . . . . 188

# SPIRIT-RAPPING UNVEILED.

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## CHAPTER I.

Origin of Spirit-rapping—Its Progress—Recent alleged Phenomena—Rapping and Writing Media—Speaking by “Efflatus”—Seeing and hearing Media—Physical Demonstrations, &c.

It is now several years since the first accounts of spirit-rapping were published to the world. Two young ladies by the name of Fox, residing in the city of Rochester, N. Y., heard certain strange and unaccountable rappings about their room; and on asking whence the noise proceeded, the invisible agents called for the alphabet (*how*, we know not), and, by rapping out certain letters and words, indicated that they were the spirits of the dead, and wished to communicate with them! Such was the commencement of what was first known as the “Rochester Knockings.”

For some time after the opening of the supposed intercourse between the dead and the living, no messages of any extent were received: they were all very brief and orthodox. But the news that messages from the unseen state were being received at Rochester spread like wildfire, and was read everywhere with avidity. The staid and sober portion of the press gave the alleged facts, but withheld their endorsement; while a few editors were found who lent their columns and their influence to foster the new-born wonder.

In almost every community some were found who at once had full faith in the spirit-rappings; and, in a short time, such disciples, and others who were not believers, but wished to see and hear for themselves, began to flock to Rochester, and in-

quire for "the Fox family." The young ladies soon found themselves in great demand. As "mediums,"\* through whom the "spirits" had deigned to communicate with this lower world, they could not, of course, be otherwise than wise and good, and were caressed and admired by troops of pilgrims to our modern Mecca. This, of itself, was doubtless highly gratifying to the young ladies, especially as, but for the distinction conferred upon them by the spirits, they might have lived and died in obscurity, as

"Many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

But smiles, and adulation, and expressions of astonishment would not buy fine furniture, nor rich clothing, nor ornaments. Besides, it was no small trouble to be consulted so often, and by so many, so that the Misses Fox were compelled, in self-defence, to charge a small fee for admission to their "circles." This feature of the "knockings" (of course, not anticipated at the first, but now fully sanctioned by the "spirits") was soon noised abroad wherever the first tidings had gone; when lo! in a very short time, the "raps" began to be heard all over the land!

From this small beginning the spirit-communication business has gone on, till men and women have been "developed" from "rapping mediums" to *write* and *speak* for the spirits, to *see* and *hear* them, and to be the media and witnesses of the most astonishing "physical manifestations." Hundreds, if not thousands, have fully embraced the faith of spirit revelations; some eight or ten periodicals have been started, devoted to the spread of the "new philosophy;" and from fifteen to twenty different volumes have been published, in different parts of the country, all professedly written by the spirits of the dead, and unfolding the secrets of the unseen world!

Such, in brief, is the history of the rise and progress of our modern necromancers, down to the present writing; and though

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\* We prefer the word *medium* to *media*, because more easily understood by general readers.



the reader may exclaim with St. James, "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" the fact cannot be denied, that whether a reality or a deception, the doctrine that the spirits of the dead are in constant communication with our world, through certain mediums, is already the faith of thousands; many of whom, we should suppose, had too much sound sense, and were too well versed in the teachings of the Bible, to be led away by such a delusion. But what error was ever promulgated that did not find its votaries? Even the licentious vagaries of Mormonism have built a city, and peopled a state; and what wonder if the spirit-rapping enterprise should be equally successful!

There are, no doubt, some who have fallen in with this new mania who are honest and sincere at heart—deceived, and not deceiving. We have known a few such, men and women of prayer, conscientious and upright, but whose judgments were not perfect, though their motives and intentions were good, and who, consequently, were beguiled into a belief in this "vain philosophy," while they honestly intended to follow nothing but the truth. Such persons should be treated with great tenderness and forbearance by friends, and especially by their pastors and brethren, if members of the church of God. The views they cherish may be more their misfortune than their fault; and it becomes us, in all such cases, to endeavor to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering that we ourselves may also be tempted.

Should this book fall into the hands of any who fear God, and wish to know the truth, and yet have been inclined to believe in the reality of the alleged "spirit manifestations," I shall have full confidence that such readers will be set right by the perusal of its pages, will cut loose from the fireship before it consumes them, and will join us not only in pursuing the "old paths," that lead to heaven, but in exposing and arresting this terrible delusion, that is spreading so fearfully over our country, and leaving blight and mildew in its path wherever it goes.

Having thus glanced at the rise and progress of the recent

“spirit” movement, I shall now enter upon a direct examination of its claims, as set forth by its advocates, and professedly by the “spirits” themselves. First, then, let us inquire, *What are the phenomena alleged to have been exhibited*, and which are referred, for their cause, to the agency of the spirits of the dead? That we may do no injustice to the friends of the new doctrines, the alleged phenomena shall be stated in the language of one of their most zealous and able advocates. We quote from “*An Exposition of Views respecting the principal Facts, Cases, and Peculiarities involved in Spirit Manifestations, &c., &c.*,” by ADIN BALLOU.” The principal phenomena, as laid down by this writer, 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 of 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, &c.

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

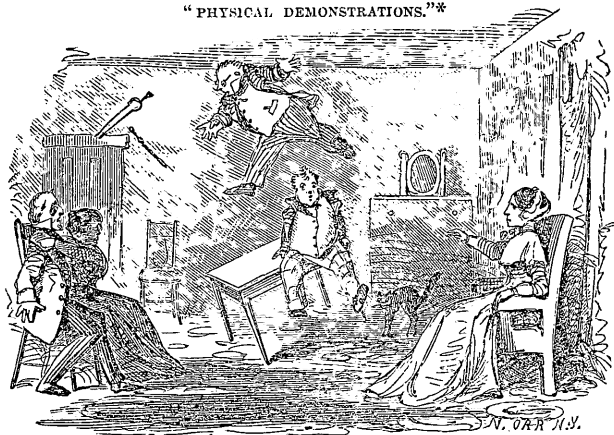
“4. Presenting apparitions—in some instances, of a spirit hand and arm; in others, of the whole human form; and in others, of several deceased persons conversing together; causing distinct touches to be felt by the mortal living, grasping and shaking their hands, and giving many other sensible demonstrations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

“5. Through these various manifestations communicating to men in

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\* See cut on the opposite page.

## "PHYSICAL DEMONSTRATIONS."\*



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."

"This," says Mr. Ballou, "is a general statement of the facts to be considered and disposed of in a just discussion of this subject." But this catalogue of phenomena was written more than eight months ago, since which time other events still

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\* These alleged movements of ponderable substances, without any visible cause, are usually denominated "physical demonstrations." In this cut, the wonders discovered by Mr. B. are presented to the eye. The "medium" sits on the right, waving her hand, to direct the various movements. The table *will* tip up with a heavy man on it; other articles are flying about the room, and "the passive body" of another "athletic and heavy man" is seen in the act of being "carried from one position to another across the room, through mid-air!" He has not so much as a broomstick to ride upon.

more marvelous have transpired. Not only have "prescriptions of great efficacy" been given by spirits, if we are rightly informed, but in some cases, the spirits of several deceased physicians have been seen consulting together in regard to the sick; and in one case, it is said that a large tumor was removed from the person of a lady, in a most skillful manner, by the *spirit* of a deceased surgeon!

To the above phenomena we must now add the Hebrew and other ancient languages said to have been written by spirits in the room of Mr. Fowler (of which we shall speak more fully hereafter), and also the following, which has appeared in the "*People's Paper*" under the heading of "The Spirit World," and over the signature of Thomas Dexter, Brooklyn:

"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. What think you of a child not twenty months old, sitting down to a table and writing out lengthy communications in Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and many of the living languages, including the English? What think you of a girl, not fifteen, taking up a pencil and drawing you a portrait of some deceased friend, who died years before she was born?

"A friend of mine, a resident of Greenpoint, who a few months ago fell and dislocated his hip, was measurably cured by attendant spirits; and when enabled to rise from his couch, and while sitting one afternoon in his parlor, with the assistance of crutches, they were forcibly withdrawn, and himself, raised as if by the grasp of strong men, walked up and down the floor for some time, even in opposition to his will, his limbs exercised and much benefited thereby. There were several persons who witnessed this extraordinary circumstance. The crutches were apparently held by invisible hands and carried up and down the room with him, but at a distance of from three to four feet from his person. The same gentleman informs me that on several occasions he has seen the radiant form of his deceased daughter, and distinctly felt the tresses of her hair!"\*

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\* "I could fill volumes with facts," says Mr. D. "But, say some of my readers, how are we to know that these statements of yours are true? You certainly cannot, unless you take my word for it," &c. But why not go and see the "child not twenty months old" write "Greek, Hebrew, and Latin?" A two-cent ferry only separates the writer from Mr. D., and it is but a short distance to Astoria, and we will go with

These, also, and many other recent phenomena, must now be added to Mr. B.'s "statement of facts," so that we may be able to "consider and dispose of" all of them at the same time. It is rather remarkable, however, that instead of adducing *proof* that the alleged phenomena *are facts*, Mr. B. disposes of that important part of his duty by writing the following brief sentence:—"If any man presume to *deny* that they *are facts*, he is either one who, having never investigated the subject, is grossly *ignorant* of its merits; or who, pretending to have investigated it, is grossly *dishonest*!"\* But suppose one as honest and as intelligent as Mr. B. should say, "I have investigated this subject thoroughly, by reading, observation, and experiment, and the facts assumed by Mr. B. *are not facts*; the phenomena never took place, and no man or set of men living can cause them to take place, by the aid of "spirits" or in any other way; what, then, would become of Mr. B.'s castle built upon this bare assumption? And yet such is precisely the state of the argument so far as Mr. B.'s "exposition" is concerned. But let that pass for the present. It is enough that we have an authentic list of the alleged phenomena, preparatory to a consideration of the supposed *causes* of these wonderful "manifestations."

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him any day he may designate, and will give him \$100 to show us what he here pretends to have seen. *That* will settle the matter much quicker than any man's word, and to the pecuniary profit of Mr. Dexter. Let us have the truth of these statements fairly tested.

\* If the reader has any doubts as to the alleged "facts," he may avail himself of the indulgence of Mr. Ballou, who, after pronouncing every doubter either a knave or a fool, remarks, that "if any honestly doubt for want of adequate opportunity to observe the phenomena, or to examine testimony, they will of course suspend judgment till they can avail themselves of the necessary information. Light awaits all such," &c. The reader is at liberty, therefore, to remain in a state of suspended judgment if he choose, till he has "opportunity to observe the phenomena, or to examine the testimony;" and if, after repeated efforts here and there, he should fail to find any phenomena, except on the lips or in the books of our modern ghostmongers, he will be at liberty, we suppose, to keep his judgment "suspended" till the requisite "testimony" is adduced. Many thanks to Mr. Ballou for this gracious indulgence.

## CHAPTER II.

Alleged *causes* of the new Phenomena—Theory of Spirit Intercourse—Spheres and Circles—Progress—Low and high Spirits.

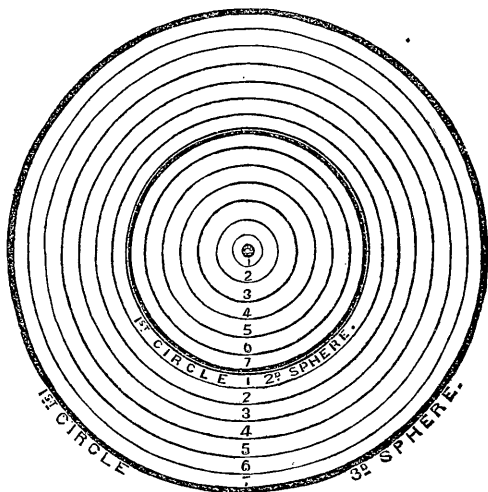
HAVING now an understanding of the alleged phenomena of “spiritualism,” it is appropriate to inquire after the *causes* of these remarkable manifestations. True, it would not be out of place thus early in the discussion to inquire whether there was any reliable evidence that these wonders ever transpired; but waiving this inquiry for the present, let us examine the *theory* by which our modern “illuminati” account for these miracles.

One of the first disclosures of the “spirits” at Rochester was to introduce and identify themselves to “the Fox girls.” “We are the spirits of the dead,” said they; and from that time onward the rapping, writing, physical demonstrations, &c., have all been attributed to the spirits of the dead—our parents, children, and friends, whose bodies we have buried. But it was not enough for the “spirits” to assert that they were about our world rapping, and creaking, and tipping, and jarring, as Mr. B. has it, but they have constructed, by the aid of their friends on earth, a regular theory of spiritual intercourse. This theory, so far as we have been able to gather it from numerous descriptions and several illustrative diagrams, is substantially as follows:

1. 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 following cut, from "*The Pilgrimage of Thomas Paine and others to the Seventh Circle*," &c., will illustrate the theory. It is entitled a "diagram representing the different

CIRCLES AND SPHERES IN THE SPIRIT WORLD."



This remarkable diagram is accompanied by the following sublime "explanation," we suppose of the qualities of the different circles in the first sphere, though the explanation does not say to which set of figures in the diagram it refers. We give it, however, precisely as we find it.

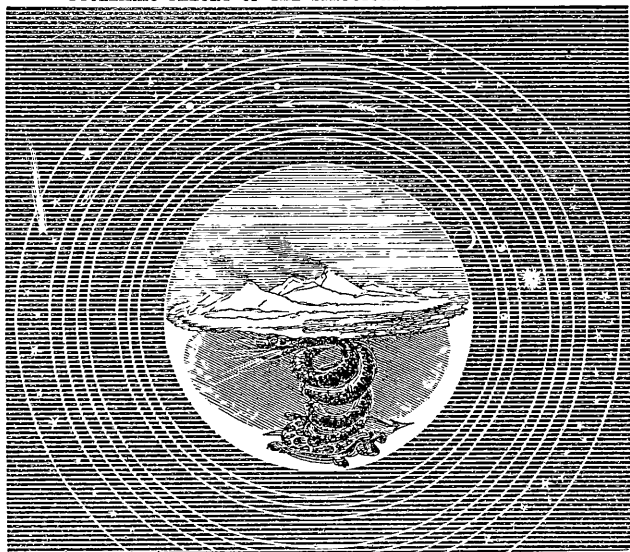
[EXPLANATION.]

1. Wisdom, wholly selfish, or seeking selfish good.
2. Wisdom, controlled by popular opinion.
3. Wisdom, independent of popularity, but not perfect.
4. Wisdom, which seeks others' good and not evil.
5. Wisdom in purity, or a circle of Purity.
6. Wisdom, in perfection to prophecy.
7. Wisdom, to instruct all others of less wisdom.

This diagram, it will be seen, gives us a view of only two of the seven spheres, so that we must imagine the remaining five spheres and thirty-five circles extending outward still beyond those represented in the diagram.

2. But it so happens that this sphere theory is by no means original with the "spirits." It is substantially the old Ptolemaic theory of the structure of the material universe, not of the spirit world. Ptolemy was an Egyptian philosopher who taught astronomy in the second century of the Christian era.

PTOLEMAIC THEORY OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSE.



He taught that the earth was a plane instead of a globe, and inhabited only on the "upper side," that it was surrounded by eight chrystalline spheres, in which the sun, moon, and stars were set, viz., the Moon in the first; Mercury in the second; Venus in the third; the Sun in the fourth; Mars in the fifth; Jupiter in the sixth; Saturn in the seventh; and the Fixed Stars in the eighth. Ptolemy had no knowledge of Uranus or Neptune.



According to the Ptolemaic theory these ponderous spheres revolved westward around the earth every twenty-four hours, carrying the sun, moon, and stars with them, &c. The chief points of difference between the recent "spirit" theory and the ancient theory of Ptolemy, are the following:

- (1.) Ptolemy had eight spheres instead of seven.
- (2.) He did not divide his spheres into "circles."
- (3.) His spheres were solid crystal, instead of open space.
- (4.) They were simply constructed to place the sun, moon, planets, and stars in, to keep them from falling down to the earth, and to carry them around westward, and not as the abodes of spirits in any sense. Indeed Ptolemy placed his "elysium" beyond the eighth sphere altogether; and little did he think while constructing a theory upon which to account for the movements of the heavenly bodies, that he was framing the structure of "the spirit world!"\*

3. The old physical theory of Ptolemy was first "spiritualized" by *Emanuel Swedenborg*—a visionary dreamer from whose writings Prof. Bush, Andrew Jackson Davis, and other "spirit" philosophers have all taken their cue. So that neither the "spirits" nor their mundane followers can justly claim the honor of having discovered the "sphere" philosophy. It is an old physical vagary, long since repudiated by all well-informed persons, but recently spiritualized and promulgated as a valuable revelation from the spirit world! Wonder if Ptolemy does not regard it as an infringement of his patent?

"When a man dies," says the new philosophy, "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 pos-

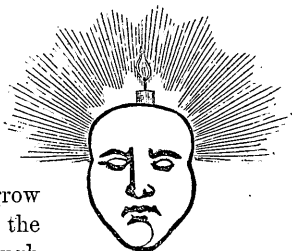
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\* For a more detailed description of this ancient theory of Astronomy, the reader is referred to the author's "*Primary Astronomy*," page eighth, from which the above cut is taken, or to the "*High School Astronomy*," page twelfth.

sible to attain in the "spirit world." And what is quite remarkable, though there are many "low spirits" in the "second sphere," as well as in the "rudimental sphere" in which we live, yet they are ever advancing or growing better, and can never grow worse. True, the spirits of the upper spheres can descend through all intervening spheres and circles to the rudimental and help their tardy brethren *up*, but the "low spirits" never pull their more advanced brethren *down*. So we suppose, by parity of reasoning, that none grow worse but all are growing better in our present "rudimental sphere."

5. The theory of "progress" as the spirit advances through the spheres is strikingly illustrated by the adjoining 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. The remarks respecting the cut, and accompanying it, are quoted precisely as given by the spirit.

In the same work we have another diagram, somewhat different, but designed to illustrate the same law of progress, and as it is a most convincing and interesting diagram, we insert it for the edification of our readers.

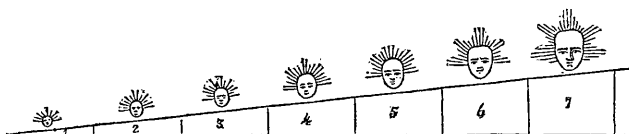


"This shows a law of progression—how the spirit must, progressing, go from one degree to that of another. This is the spiritual nature in man that makes him a progressing being, and prepares him for a higher sphere.—J. V. WILSON."

## LAW OF PROGRESS.

"This diagram," says the spirit of Mr. Wilson, through Mr. 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 develop 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."—*Love and Wisdom*, p. 14.

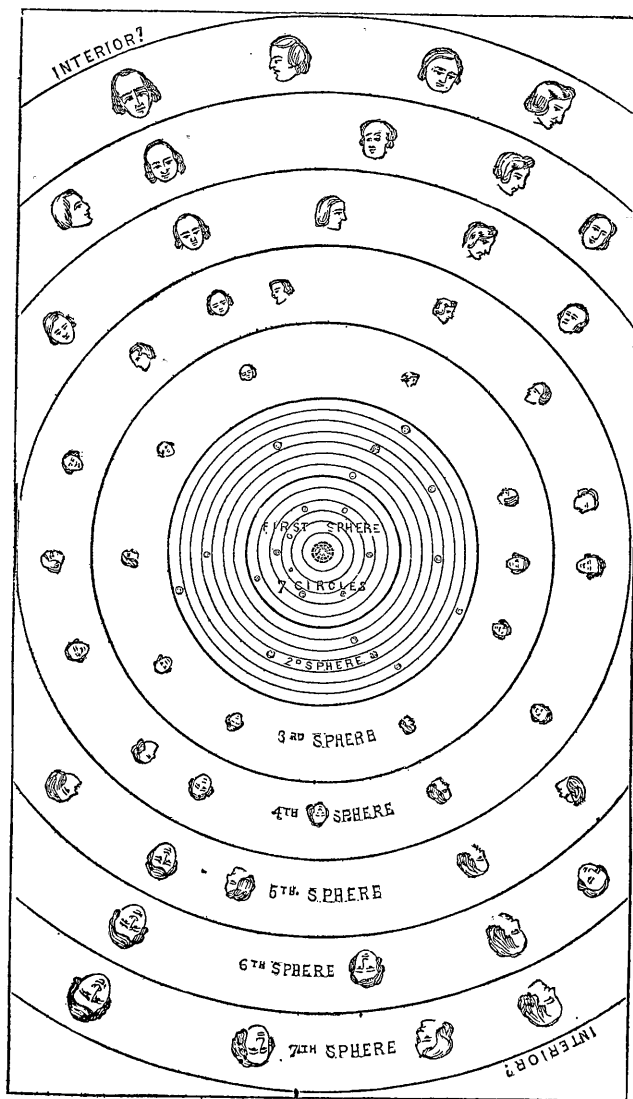
To make the above diagram correspond with the sphere theory and the preceding illustration, the spirit should have divided it into seven parts, and placed a head over each, expanding as it advances, thus :



We hope none of our readers will regard it as irreverent to suggest an improvement in a diagram drawn by a "spirit," as for aught we know Mr. J. V. Wilson may be a "low spirit," inferior even to some in the "rudimental state."

Let us now put these various descriptions and illustrations together, and see how they will look when presented to the eye in one grand progressive "diagram of the spirit world."

In accordance with the theory already described and illustrated, it is assumed by our modern necromancers that the spirits of the dead descend to the earth or "rudimental sphere" at pleasure, and thus communicate from time to time, and in various ways, with certain favored mortals called "mediums." At the same time they belong each to his own sphere, respectively, according to the time he has been "pro-



gressing," and his head is large or small according to the sphere to which he has attained. Indeed the earth, seen in the center of the cut, is a small affair compared with the heads of some of the sixth and seventh sphere progressives.

In regard to the sphere theory several questions will at once suggest themselves to the mind of the reader.

(1.) How happens it that the main features of it were promulgated by Ptolemy fifteen centuries ago, as the physical theory of the material universe?

(2.) If all spirits are 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 like to know how it is that so many of these immense heads can swarm around our little globe without coming in contact, to the great injury of their "cerebral developments?" Let the reader send twenty of the sixth or seventh sphere heads down to the first circle of the first sphere if he can, without either blending heads into each other (to say nothing of corresponding bodies), or actually knocking out each other's brains! This giving spirits material bodies, and then making them so very large, does not allow of their being brought into very narrow quarters; and rather excludes all but the "low" or small-headed spirits from visiting the "rudimental state."

(3.) In the technical language of the new philosophy, all messages from the higher spheres are "disclosures from the interior," i. e., the outer spheres. This use of the term "*interior*," which, according to the diagram, and 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 versa*.

(4.) It is somewhat singular that none of the "old mediums" (as the spirits are pleased to call the Prophets and Apostles), ever said any thing about this "sphere" and "circle" arrangement. Why is this? Was it not then in existence, or was the world at that time unprepared to receive so sublime a philosophy? So much for the "philosophy of spiritual intercourse."

## CHAPTER III.

Truth distinguished from Error only by comparison with some acknowledged Standard—The *Bible* treats fully of Spiritual Matters : of Man, his Origin, Nature, and Destiny : of various Sciences, but never in Error—Good Authority on Psychology—Endorsed by “Spirits”—Often appealed to by Necromancers.

WHOEVER enters upon the investigation of any subject, political, historical, scientific, or religious, starts off with the assumption that some things are *already known*, i. e., certain points are settled, and need no discussion. The astronomer assumes the truth of the Copernican theory ; the chemist that different elements have different affinities, &c. ; and the books in which these indisputable facts are laid down are regarded, so far at least, as standard works. And as they proceed with their inquiries, whatever contradicts these established and unalterable facts, is regarded as false in theory. Thus a system that did not recognize the Laws of Gravitation, or in other words was, in this respect, at war with the principles of nature, would be rejected at once as visionary. There must be some *first principles*,—some infallible standard with which to compare and by which to test all supposed discoveries, otherwise we might never be able to distinguish truth from error ; and that standard must always be found in the same branch of science or art in which these new phenomena are to be classified. We should never test music by Euclid, nor perspective drawing by a volume of Draper.

Let us apply these principles to the subject before us. Certain phenomena are alleged, and an explanation given, all of which are said to relate most intimately to man—to his physical, mental, and moral natures—to his present state and his condition after death. Nay, more ; these phenomena, and the theory based upon them, are set forth as pre-eminently “spiritual ;” indeed as the only spiritual doctrines in the land.

Our first business, then, is to determine with what to compare this new theory, and what to regard as *standard* upon this psychological and spiritual subject; and its very nature will at once suggest the BIBLE as the *first* and most important touchstone. If it involves Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, or History, let those parts of the subject which fall under these several heads be tried respectively by the canons of Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, and History; but as the general subject is one of psychology, spiritualism, and supernaturalism, let it be first tested by that book which, above all others, covers the whole field of modern Necromancy.

The reasonableness of testing the "New Philosophy" first by the Sacred Writings, will appear from the following considerations :

(1.) The Bible treats professedly and originally of spiritual and supernatural subjects; and more fully than all other books on earth.

(2.) It treats especially of MAN—his *Origin, Nature, and Destiny*—of Psychology, or the distinct existence of the soul, its separation from the body at death, and its condition after death—of the relations of the present to the boundless future—of angels—of Necromancy as such, and of the spirit world.

(3.) Though this book has been in being from eighteen to thirty-three centuries, during all of which time its first utterances have remained unaltered, while every branch of science has been growing and advancing, there has not a real discovery been made, from first to last, in any department of study, that when fairly submitted to the test, has been found at variance with the Bible.

"Notwithstanding the time and circumstances under which this book was written, and the variety of topics upon which it treats, there is not a solitary physical error in it—not one assertion or allusion disproved by the progress of modern science. None of those mistakes which the science of each succeeding age discovered in the books of the preceding; above all, none of those absurdities which modern astronomy indicates in such great numbers in the writings of the ancients—in their sacred oodes, in their philosophy, and even in the finest pages of the fathers of the Church; not one of these errors is to be found in any of our sacred

books. Nothing there will ever contradict that which, after so many ages, the investigations of the learned world have been able to reveal to us on the state of our globe, or on that of the heavens. Peruse with care our Scriptures, from one end to the other, to find there such spots; and while you apply yourselves to this examination, remember that it is a book which speaks of every thing, which describes nature, which recites its creation, which tells us of the water, of the atmosphere, of the mountains, of the animals, and of the plants. It is a book which teaches us the first revolutions of the world, and which also foretells its last; it recounts them in the circumstantial language of history; it extolls them in the sublimest strains of poetry, and it chants them in the charms of glowing song. It is a book which is full of oriental rapture, elevation, variety, and boldness. It is a book which speaks of the heavenly and invisible world, while it also speaks of the earth and things visible. It is a book which nearly fifty writers, of every degree of cultivation, of every state, of every condition, and living through the course of fifteen hundred years, have concurred to make. It is a book which was written in the center of Asia, in the sands of Arabia, and in the deserts of Judea; in the courts of the temple of the Jews, in the music-schools of the prophets of Bethel and of Jericho, in the sumptuous palaces of Babylon, and on the idolatrous banks of Chebar; and finally, in the center of the western civilization, in the midst of the Jews and of their ignorance, in the midst of polytheism and its idols, as also in the bosom of pantheism and of its sad philosophy. It is a book whose first writer had been forty years a pupil of the magicians of Egypt, in whose opinion the sun, the stars, and the elements were endowed with intelligence, reacted on the elements, and governed the world by a perpetual alluvium. It is a book whose first writer preceded, by more than nine hundred years, the most ancient philosophers of ancient Greece and Asia—the Thaleses, and the Pythagorases, the Zalucuses, the Xenophons, and the Confuciuses. It is a book which carries its narrations even to the hierarchies of angels—even to the most distant epoch of the future, and the glorious scenes of the last day. Well, search among its 50 authors; search among its 66 books, its 1189 chapters, its 31,173 verses; search for only one of those thousand errors which the ancients and the moderns committed, when they speak of the heavens or of the earth—of their revolutions, of the elements; search—but you will find none.”—*Gaussen*.

“ Whence but from heaven could men unskill’d in arts,  
 In different nations born—in different parts—  
 Weave such agreeing truths? Or how, or why  
 Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?  
 Unask’d their pains, ungrateful their advice,  
 Starving their gains, and martyrdom their price.”



(4.) Still further, we appeal to the Bible, first upon the subject of modern spiritism, because it is still good authority with the majority of our readers, despite all the efforts of infidelity to convict it of error, disparage its claims, and destroy its influence. Thanks be to God! of this book we may sing, as we sing of the New Jerusalem,

“Immovably founded in grace,  
It stands, as it ever hath stood,  
And brightly its Builder displays,  
And flames with the glory of God.”

Yes—“it stands, as it ever hath stood;” and so it will stand, as the island rock stands, having repelled the angry billows raised by a thousand tempests, when a thousand generations of infidels have lived, and scoffed, and written against it, and passed away.

(5.) Though the Bible is degraded by such an indorsement, and it may seem irreverent to cite it, it is a fact that may weigh with one reader of a thousand, that the “Spirits of the Sixth Circle,” as they are called, while on the one hand they have denounced the Bible as not being what it professes to be, have indorsed it as of equal authority with the “revelations” they have recently made to the world through the medium of Mr. Ambler. We quote from the “*Spiritual Teacher*,”—written by “Spirits of the Sixth Circle,” through “R. P. Ambler, Medium:”

“The spirits would therefore speak in the outset of the real origin of the book which is revered as the word of God. \* \* \* Far back in the depths of humanity’s history, there lived individuals who were morally and spiritually advanced beyond the medium development of the age in which they lived. \* \* \* The spirits have reference to the persons mentioned in the writings of the Old and New Testaments; such, for example, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Christ, Paul, and John. Those persons were seers and prophets. In their systems dwelt that peculiar essence of spiritual life which prepared them for an intercourse with the dwellers of the second sphere; were unconscious of this truth, and knew not the source of their inspiration; they naturally ascribed the impressions which they received to the direct agency of the Supreme Being, and

really imagined that they wrote and spoke as they were dictated by the Deity himself. \* \* \* The seers and prophets, whose names are mentioned in the Primitive History, were mediums. \* \* \* It was in this manner that the writings of the Bible, which have been properly termed the Scriptures, were originated. \* \* \* Therefore will the spirits assure the world that the Bible is not the direct and infallible word of God. \* \* \* The spirits would claim the authorship of these records as they were primarily given to the world."

Even then, according to the "spirits" themselves, the writings of the prophets and apostles are of *equal* authority with their more recent productions, through the medium of Mr. R. P. Ambler and others. We hope, therefore, it will be admitted on all hands as good authority in the present discussion.

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## CHAPTER IV.

The Soul distinct from the Body—Nature of Death—Souls do not linger about their former Homes, or the Grave of the Body—Depart from Earth—Intermediate State—Not to return till the Second Coming of Christ and the General Resurrection.

WE now turn with confidence to the holy Scriptures to ascertain what light, if any, they shed upon this otherwise mysterious subject.

1. In the very opening of this wonderful book, we are met with an account of the origin of the material universe. "the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Gen. i. 1. Then follow in order the arrangement of light, and sea, and land; the clothing of the continent with vegetation; the peopling of the land, and seas, and air with their respective animal inhabitants; and, finally, the origin of man himself. "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul," Gen. ii. 7. Here the physical form, made of material elements, existed as a perfect organism before the "breath of life" or the soul was "breathed into,"

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or connected with it. It is obvious, that the soul and body of Adam were originally distinct, and actually existed independently of each other; and it is equally obvious that his natural life began with the uniting of his spirit with his body.

2. The curse which consigned his body to the dust had no reference to the "breath of life," or spirit that dwelt in the body, as consigning it also to darkness and silence. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,"—Gen. iii. 19. Only that part of Adam which is composed of "dust," or was "taken out of the ground," is consigned to earth again by this decree; and as the "breath of life," or soul, was not of earthly origin, it neither dies nor sleeps in the grave in virtue of this malediction.

3. As the Scriptures represent life, in the case of Adam, as commencing with the *union* of his physical and spiritual natures, so they uniformly represent death as the *separation* of soul and body—the "giving up of the ghost."

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years; and was gathered to his people."—Gen. xxv. 8.

"And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people."—Gen. xxxv. 29.

"And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."—Gen. xlix. 33.

"But man dieth and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"—Job xiv. 10.

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said: Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."—Luke xxiii. 46.

"While we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. \* \* \* We are confident, I say, and willing, rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."—2 Cor. v. 6-8.

"Knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle."—2 Pet. i. 14.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."—Jas. ii. 2.

"And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto

the Lord, and said: O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come into him again."—1 Kings xvii. 21.

"And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."—1 Kings xvii. 22.

The above passages are sufficient to show that natural death is the separation of soul and body—the "giving up of the ghost"—the being "absent from the body"—the "putting off" of the material "tabernacle"—the leaving of the body "without the spirit." But the same point will be still more fully established as we proceed to our next proposition.

4. The Scriptures teach not only that the soul leaves the body at death, but that it *leaves this world*, and does not tarry about this terrestrial ball to be seen or heard by, or to communicate with its inhabitants. Then commences the journey to

"That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn  
No traveler returns."

"And it came to pass as her soul was in departing (for she died)."—Gen. xxxv. 18.

"Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"—Eccl. iii. 20.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."—Eccl. xii. 7.

"O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more."—Psalm xxxix. 13.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."—Psalm xci. 10.

"To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 43.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."—2 Tim. iv. 6.

"Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ."—Phil. i. 23.

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you."—Acts xx. 29.

Now, if at death we not only give up the ghost, but "go upward"—"return to God"—"go hence"—"depart"—"fly away," &c., it is certain that we shall not remain about our world to rap, and tip, and "peep and mutter," as it is assumed

that we shall by the "new philosophy." We leave earth at death.

"——— In heaven or hell,  
Their disembodied spirits dwell."

The spirits of the good then "rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

"The saints who die of Christ possess'd,  
Enter into immediate rest :"—

"The body which came from the earth,  
Must mingle again with the sod ;  
The soul, which in heaven had birth,  
Returns to the bosom of God."

It would lead us too far from our main design to inquire into the character of the intermediate state, or the difference between the states of the righteous and the wicked, between death and the resurrection ; and their ultimate and unalterable condition after the resurrection of their bodies, and the decision of the General Judgment. We wish simply to show (as we trust we have done), that the spirits of the dead do not linger about our globe after death, but depart to the distant regions of eternal retribution.

5. "But, admitting that the spirits of the dead depart at death, as the Bible has always been understood to teach, do they not *come back* at pleasure, to revisit the scenes of their former probation, and to mingle once more with the mortal living ?" It is no part of our duty to prove that they *do not* come back. Having proved that they go away, if any assert that they return, it devolves upon them to prove what they assert. As the man who admits future punishment, but denies that it is eternal, must himself prove its termination or fail in his argument, so he that believes in "*departed*" spirits, but asserts that they have returned, must himself prove such return. It is enough for us to trace them away—to "*pursue them where they fly*"—to show that they depart. Still it is not difficult in this instance to show that the spirits of the

dead having left their bodies and gone away, do not and can not return till the general resurrection and final judgment.

"But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but *he shall not return to me.*"—2 Sam. xii. 23.

"Cease, then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence *I shall not return.*"—Job x. 20.

"When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence *I shall not return.*"—Job xvi. 22.

The doctrine of the above passages, that the dead do not return to earth is still more clearly taught in the account of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 19–31. In relation to this account it should be observed, (1.) That Lazarus was borne away from earth at death—"carried by the angel to Abraham's bosom," v. 22; (2.) That immediately after the rich man "died," "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment," v. 23. (3.) When the rich man desired Abraham to send Lazarus to mitigate his "torment," he was told, first, of the justice of his present sufferings, and secondly, of the non-intercourse between "hell" and "Abraham's bosom," or heaven. "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed," &c., v. 26; thus flatly contradicting the "new philosophy," that the spirits of the "higher spheres" may descend to and assist the spirits of the "lower spheres." (4.) The rich man then requests that the spirit of Lazarus might be sent back to earth to warn his "five brethren," "lest they also come to this place of torment," v. 28. To this request Abraham replied that they have revelation enough already, and no such visits from the dead were necessary: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them," v. 29. But the rich man suggests that an apparition and a message from the spirit world would be more effectual for the reformation of his wicked brethren, than the inspired Word of God. "If one went unto them from the dead, they will repent," v. 30. To this Abraham answers, that to such as reject divine revelation—the BIBLE—apparitions and messages from the dead would be of no avail. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," v. 31.

From this whole account, therefore, it is clear not only that there is no intercourse between the saved and lost in a future state, but that neither the spirits of the wicked nor of the righteous are permitted to revisit our mortal shores. And if the writings of "Moses and the prophets" so clearly taught man's duty and destiny as to render apparitions and "spirit messages" superfluous and inadmissible; much more, now that we have Moses and the prophets, and the Gospels, and the Epistles, and the Apocalypse, would such apparitions and messages be inadmissible and impossible. The whole narrative is directly and flatly against the new doctrine of spirit intercourse.

6. The Scriptures always represent the righteous dead, at least, as dwelling with Christ, away from earth, and in heaven. Accordingly, heaven is a "house"—a "city"—a "country," &c., all of which figures indicate a *locality*. Hence, the language of Christ—"What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend where he was before," John vii. 62. "I leave the world and go to the Father," John xvi. 28. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be," John xii. 26. "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also," John xiv. 2, 3. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more," &c., Rev. vii. 15.

"No oppressive heat they feel,  
From the sun's director ray;  
In a milder clime they dwell,  
Region of eternal day."

And if the righteous dwell in their Father's "house"—the "New Jerusalem"—the "better country"—"where Christ is," and serve God, "day and night," in his heavenly temple, they are not hovering about our earth, rapping and moving tables, either to amuse or astonish poor credulous mortals at a dollar a head. Neither is it likely that the wicked (the "low spirits" of the new philosophy) are more highly privileged in

this respect than their "high sphere" brethren. Either, therefore, we must reject the new doctrine of spirit intercourse, or reject the obvious teachings of the holy Scriptures.

7. The only general return of spirits mentioned in the Bible is that of the spirits of the saints, at the second coming of Christ and the general resurrection. "And the Lord my God shall come, and all his saints with him," Zech. xiv. 5. "At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints," 1 Thess. iii. 13. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints," Jude v. 14.

Thus the Scriptures teach most distinctly and unequivocally, as a general doctrine, that the soul and body are distinct essences; that death is the separation of the soul from the body; that at death the soul departs from earth; that it dwells away from earth during the intermediate state, or period; and that it does not, and can not, except as a miracle, return to earth till the second coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the dead.

To this general law, however, there have been a few exceptions; and to these exceptions, or supposed returns of departed spirits, we shall now direct our attention.

8. The apparition of immortals to Abraham and Lot (Gen. 18th and 19th chapters) will be reserved for consideration in the next chapter, when we come to speak of "angels and ministering spirits;" but the cases of Samuel, and Moses, and Elias require consideration in the present chapter; for we concede that the latter two were really Moses and Elias; and that if there was actually a spirit or body present in the former case, they were those of Samuel. In the analysis of the narrative of this case, however, as we find it recorded in the twenty-eighth chapter of the First Book of Samuel, the following points should be observed: (1.) Samuel was dead and buried at Ramah, some distance from Endor, ver. 3. (2.) God had forsaken Saul, and "answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets," ver. 6. (3.) When the woman saw the "gods," as she called them, that preceded the apparition of Samuel, and afterwards the form of "an old man covered



with a mantle," she was terribly frightened, and shrieked out for fear, or "cried with a loud voice," ver. 12. This shows that the apparition was unexpected to the woman, and not the usual result of her incantations. Upon this point, Dr. Clarke observes :

"The woman certainly meant no more than making her *familiar* personify whomsoever the querist should wish. In the evocation of spirits this is all that, according to the professed rules of their art, such persons pretend to ; for over human souls in *paradise*, or in the *infernal regions*, they have no power. If we allow that there is such an art founded on true principles, all it can pretend to is to bring up the *familiar*, cause him when necessary to assume the form and character of some particular person, and to give such notices relative to *futurity* as he is able to collect. And this, even in the cases to which authenticity is generally allowed, is often scanty, vague, and uncertain ; for fallen spirits do not abound in *knowledge* : this is an attribute of God, and rays of this perfection are imparted to pure and holy intelligences ; and even Satan himself, as may be seen from most of his temptations, is far from *excelling in knowledge*."

(4.) Whatever might have been the real character of the apparition, he "*said*" what he had to communicate in an audible manner, and in a language well understood. No "circle" was formed ; no "rapping" out words and sentences, letter by letter ; no writing with the hand of the "medium ;" nor was any "electrical apparatus" seen, as in the pretended apparition of Benjamin Franklin, in the room of Mr. Fowler. (5.) The message communicated was a straightforward and important prediction in regard to the fate of Saul, every word of which was literally fulfilled, in perfect contrast with the silly messages and seldom fulfilled predictions or guesses of our modern necromancers.

Here, then, admitting all that can be asked—that the spirit of Samuel was actually there—we have one solitary instance of the return and appearance of a human spirit, in a Scriptural history extending over more than forty centuries, and that case recorded as a distinguished miracle. And, still further, differing so essentially from the mode in which spirits are said to communicate in our own times, as to stamp the pretensions of

the present race of necromancers as savoring more of trickery and deception than of honest, outspoken communications from the spirits of the dead.

9. The case of the appearance of Moses and Elias on Mount Tabor, at the transfiguration of Christ, is clearly an instance of the reappearing of the departed. "There appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him," Matt. xvii. 3. But in regard to this case also, there are several particulars worthy of special note.

(1.) One of the two, at least, was not a mere spirit, but a glorified human being, soul and body together, such as the righteous shall be after the "change" at the last trump, or the general resurrection. Elijah was translated to heaven, soul and body, without seeing death (2 Kings ii.); and it is not likely that his soul left the body in heaven, i. e., that he *died* there, and that his spirit only appeared on the mount. This, therefore, was not an instance of the return of a disembodied spirit. (2.) It is far from being certain that Moses was in this respect different from Elias. He had died on Mount Nebo some fifteen centuries before, and God had buried his body somewhere "in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor," but where no man ever knew. (See Deut. xxxiv. 1-6.) But from a seemingly incidental allusion to Moses in the Epistle of Jude, it seems that this was not the last of his body, when buried by the hand of God. "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses," &c., ver. 9. What the nature of this "dispute" was, between the good and evil angels about the body of Moses, is not known. It has been supposed, however, that God buried and concealed his body, that it might not become an object of idolatrous worship, as the serpent lifted up in the wilderness afterward became (2 Kings xviii. 4), and that Satan, on the other hand, greatly desired to discover his body to the Jews, that it might become a stumbling-block and a snare to Israel. And hence the "dispute" between Michael the archangel and Satan "about the body of Moses." If this explanation is correct (and to

say the least, it is highly probable), it affords much ground for the belief that God had settled the "dispute" by raising the body of Moses from the dead, and that he appeared on the mount of transfiguration precisely as Elias appeared. As the saints are to appear with Christ hereafter "in glory," and the bodies of the just are to be "raised in glory," so of Moses and Elias it is said "they appeared in glory," which, we think, implies the full redemption of both soul and body. The only Scriptural objection to this view of the subject is the general statement that Christ should be "the first that should rise from the dead;" a statement that might no more be intended to apply to the case of Moses—whose body God took under his own special charge, and which may never have seen corruption—than to the cases of Enoch and Elijah, whose bodies God translated to heaven. (3.) These two immortals "talked" face to face with Christ. No table nor "circle," no "rapping" nor writing; but, as in the case of Samuel, all is open and intelligible. (4.) The *subject* of their communications was of the most exalted character—the great atonement for sin—for they "spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Compare such a theme with the subjects of our modern "spirit messages," and how do they appear? (5.) The whole account shows that the evangelists regarded the transfiguration and the appearance of Moses and Elias not as an ordinary occurrence, but as an unusual and wonderful event—a stupendous miracle. And who that considers the narrative, the personages, the celestial brightness, and the voice from heaven, can regard it in any other light? This case then, like that of Samuel, so far from favoring the new doctrine of general intercourse between the two worlds, by rapping and writing, goes to rebuke it as a most insipid and bungling attempt at imitation, bordering upon sacrilege.

10. One more case of the apparition of a spirit remains to be considered—that of the spirit seen by the Revelator (xix. 10), who said, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren," &c. But *where* was this spirit seen? John, it is true, was "in the isle that is called Patmos;" but the vision or "revelation"

which he had was not of Patmos, nor of earth. He had seen "a door opened in heaven," and heard a voice, saying, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter," (iv. 1), and the scene which opened before him was not in our dark world, but in the far-off and brighter regions of eternal day. There, he saw the elders and the white-robed company; there, he heard the harpers and the songs of the rejoicing multitude, "like the sound of many waters;" and *there*, he saw the spirit of a "fellow-servant," so glorious in the image of Christ, so much as he had seen the Redeemer at his transfiguration, as to betray him into the error of offering worship to him as divine. Indeed, not only this passage, but the whole Apocalypse, is a decided refutation of the notion that the dead linger about our world. The happy company who had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, dwell not on earth, but in "heaven;" not around our globe, but "round about the throne."

The most, then, that can possibly be made of these several apparitions mentioned in the Scriptures is, that from first to last two spirits of the departed—Samuel and Moses—have returned to earth; and that one entire man, soul and body, has also returned—three cases in over fifteen centuries! Does this seem to favor the doctrine of great familiarity between the living and the dead? Do not these very exceptions confirm the doctrine of general non-intercourse?

All these cases are evidently set forth as *miracles*; and they no more prove that departed spirits generally have access to the living of earth, than the resurrection of Lazarus, after four days, proves that it is a law of nature that all men shall come to life after they have been dead four days. The very idea of a miracle requires that the general law should be violated or departed from; so that the miraculous appearance of one or two of the spirits of the dead, would only go to establish it as a general law, that *the dead can not return to earth*.

## CHAPTER V.

Ministering Spirits—Who are the “Ministering Spirits” of the Bible—Angels not the spirits of men—Good and evil angels.

HAVING shown, we trust, to the satisfaction of every candid reader, that at death the spirit leaves this world not to return except by special interposition of God till the second coming of Christ, let us now consider the question, *Who, then, are the “Ministering Spirits” of the Bible?*

Upon this subject we remark, that we fully recognize the doctrine of ministering spirits as a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. By “ministering spirits” we mean pure spirits who minister to or serve the people of God, and help them on in the way to heaven. This belief is founded not only upon the virtual affirmation, Heb. i. 14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,” but upon numerous instances on record in which angels have assisted and defended the people of God. But the question is, *who* or *what* are these angels? Are they the spirits of our friends, whose bodies we have buried, or are they a distinct and higher order of beings? A good poet but poor theologian has said,

“When the partition walls decay,  
Men emerge angels from their clay;”

and another, a poetess of brilliant fancy but doubtful logic and theology, has said,

“It is a beautiful belief,  
That ever round our head  
Are hovering, on viewless wings,  
The spirits of the dead!”

But however *beautiful* this belief may be as a poetic image, it lacks one essential element of beauty, and that is *truth*. *Spirits* may hover around the pathway of the righteous, but they

are not "the spirits of the dead." On the contrary, we shall beg leave to dissent both from the poets and the necromancers upon this point, and shall proceed to show that the "ministering spirits," or "angels," of the Bible, are not the spirits of the dead, as is assumed by the "new philosophy," but a distinct and higher order of intelligences.

1. If angels are the spirits of the dead, then there could have been no angels until some one had died. But we have abundant proof that angels, both good and evil, existed and manifested themselves before any human spirit had left the body. Cherubim, a high order of angels, were placed at the east of the garden of Eden, to keep the way of the tree of life, before the death of Abel (Gen. iii. 24); and the Almighty speaks of the joy of angels at the creation of our globe, even before man was created. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? \* \* \* When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job xxxviii. 4, 7.

The temptation of our first parents by Satan, before the death of Abel, the first who died, is proof in point that evil angels existed before the first human soul had left the body; and wherever the Scriptures refer to the fall of angels, and their becoming devils, the allusion is evidently to a probationary period enjoyed by them *anterior* to the creation of man. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," 2 Peter ii. 4. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," Jude 6. To this fall of the devil and his angels our Saviour alludes, John viii. 44, where he says, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth;" and also Luke x. 18, where he says, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

As we have nothing in human history answering in any wise to these allusions, and as they are evidently designed to account for the existence of devils, which we find in being before

any human being had died, it is certain that the "serpent" that tempted Eve could not have been a disembodied human spirit, but was, as the Scriptures teach, "That old serpent the Devil and Satan," who kept not his first estate, fell like lightning from heaven, and now goeth about with his angels seeking whom he may devour. And if both good and evil angels existed before any human being had died, it is clear that neither good nor evil angels can be the spirits of the dead. This fact of itself is enough to overthrow the Swedenborgian notion, now taken up by the necromancers, that all angels are disembodied human souls.

2. A clear distinction is kept up throughout the Bible between the angels, both good and evil, and the spirits of the dead. The evil angels are the "devils" that tempt and withstand the righteous. Such were often cast out by Christ and his apostles, when they had taken possession of the bodies of men and women. But will our necromancers admit that these "devils" were human spirits? So of the holy angels; the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. xii. 22), are distinct orders of beings; and the "nature of angels," and "the seed [or nature] of Abraham" (Heb. ii. 16), are entirely distinct natures. And in the visions of the Revelator the angels and the spirits of the redeemed are always distinct, except in one solitary instance (Rev. xix. 10), in which St. John seems to have mistaken one of the prophets for the Son of man.

3. In none of the instances in which human spirits have returned to earth, have they appeared as ministering spirits. The angels ministered to Lot, and Elijah, and Hezekiah, and Daniel, and Christ, and Peter, and Paul, and many others, and they are represented as having charge of and camping about the people of God; but when Samuel, and Moses, and Elias appeared, we hear nothing of their labors as "ministering spirits;" neither is it possible to find throughout the Bible the least intimation that the angels or ministering spirits of the Scriptures are the souls of the departed dead. Whoever, therefore, assumes this point to help out the new theory of

“spiritual intercourse,” is not only wise *above* what is written, but *against* what is written; and if he persist in his devotion to “the new philosophy,” he has no alternative left but to reject the inspired teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and become, sooner or later, an avowed Deist. But if, on the other hand, he is resolved to abide by the teachings of the BIBLE, whatever may become of human dreams and theories, he will at once abandon the notion of human angels, and reject the doctrine of intercourse with the dead. That holy angels come and go, as “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,” is clearly revealed; but these angels are *not* human souls; and so far from favoring modern necromancy, the very fact that holy angels are appointed of God to guard, and in various ways minister to his saints, proves that human souls, having left the body and departed from earth, are not required or allowed to return and minister to the living.



## CHAPTER VI.

Witches and Wizards of the Bible—Origin of Witchcraft—Witches and Wizards—Necromancers and Soothsayers—Astrologers and Magicians—Modern Fortune-tellers—How classified in the Scriptures—Denounced by Jehovah—Simon Magus—Elymas—Ghost-books burned—“Medium” at Philippi.

NOTWITHSTANDING the general hostility of the “spirits” and the spirit-rappers to the Bible, they are by no means slow to avail themselves of any thing they can find in the Scriptures that can be pressed into the service of their ghostly cause. Hence we frequently hear the questions: “Does not the Bible often speak of witches, and necromancers, and familiar spirits? and does not the mention of these things in the Scriptures show that in old times invisible beings communicated with mortals?”

It is not denied that holy angels and devils sometimes mani-



fested themselves to men, and that the one sometimes ministers to the righteous, while the other seeks to destroy. But the design of these questions is to suggest that the witches, necromancers, &c., among the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Canaanites, were not mere pretenders or impostors, but that they really had intercourse with departed spirits. Let us inquire, then, for a moment, into the origin and character of their pretensions.

1. The knowledge of a future state was early revealed to man; and the frequent apparitions of angels during the patriarchal and Mosaic ages, tended to support the belief in a spiritual and immortal life. And wherever the doctrine of the immortality of the soul prevailed, associated as it always was with the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, there was not only a measure of solicitude about the future, but a conviction that, as the dead had *experienced* what the living had not, so they *knew* what the living did not. It was hence concluded that, if the living could only commune with the dead, they would at once learn their own future history, and all the mysteries and secrets of the unseen world. Add to this a natural desire in every unrenewed heart to pry into the future, and learn those "hidden things that belong to God," and we have the original element that gave birth to witchcraft and every other system of divination.

The manifested anxiety to know the future of the present life, was doubtless the main incentive to the early diviners to pretend to divine, or, as we say in modern times, to "tell fortunes;" and finding that such professions not only gave them notoriety, but could also be turned to their pecuniary advantage, they yielded to the temptation and set up as diviners.

2. Of these diviners, or fortune-tellers, there were several classes, generally distinguished by the manner in which they professed to obtain their superhuman information.

(1.) *Witches* and *wizards* were those who professed to divine by the aid of the devil. These claimed to be in league with the prince of darkness, and to have each a "familiar spirit," or

devil, who revealed to them the secrets which they revealed to others.

(2.) The *necromancers* were those who professed to divine by intercourse with the dead. The term *necromancy*, from *nekros*, the dead, and *manteia*, to divine, signifies to divine by the dead; and as our modern spirit-rappers have professedly repudiated the devil, and claim to divine only by the dead, their appropriate name is *necromancers*.\*

(3.) The *soothsayers* pretended to divine by the clouds, and by the flight and chatter of birds. Of this class was Balaam, the son of Beor, whom Balak hired to curse Israel, and who was afterwards slain by the Israelites. See Joshua xiii. 22.

(4.) *Astrologers* professed to divine by the aspects of the planets, stars, &c., like several impostors that are now constantly advertising themselves, and getting their living by thus imposing upon and defrauding the credulous and superstitious.

(5.) The *magicians* were those who performed seeming miracles by legerdemain, or sleight of hand. Such were Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses; and such are Messrs. Anderson, Blitz, and others of our own times, except that the latter gentlemen frankly declare that their apparent miracles are only a deception.

(6.) Besides the above there were *sorcerers*, *conjurors*, *enchanters*, &c., the precise character of whose pretensions it is not easy at this remote period to ascertain. And from these we come down to our modern gipsies, and "fortune-tellers" of every class, whether they "divine" by a pack of cards; by looking into a black stone, or into a hat; by examining the wrinkles in your hand, or the settlements of your tea-cup. They are all of the same general family, and all equally reliable.

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\* Invocations of the dead were practised among the Greeks in the time of Homer, and afterwards among the Romans; but we have the most satisfactory proof that in all cases they were a work of science and art, like our phantasmagoria or dissolving views, and had nothing preternatural about them. See *Thompson's Philosophy of Magic*, vol. 1, p. 261, and onward.

3. Astrology, magic, and other kindred arts, were practiced and taught in Egypt—the land in which the Israelites sojourned for four hundred and thirty years previously to the Exodus, and in which Moses was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians”—and also among the Canaanites and Babylonians. When Moses wrought miracles in Egypt, Pharaoh called for his magicians; and when Nebuchadnezzar had a troublesome dream, he also called for his “magicians, and astrologers, and sorcerers,” to interpret it to him. But all this merely proves that such arts were taught, and such pretenders were common, without in the least favoring the idea that they were any thing more than impostors and deceivers.\* And when the Almighty saw fit to release the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, that they should thenceforward be his own peculiar people, he not only prohibited and denounced “divination,” but exacted the most stringent laws for the punishment of such offenders.

4. The general character of the diviners mentioned in the Scriptures, and the light in which they were regarded by the Almighty, may be inferred from the following :

(1.) There is not a word in all the Bible in favor of witchcraft, necromancy, or divination of any kind, or that goes to show that they were not in all cases a deception.

(2.) The Scriptures uniformly classify witchcraft, sorcery, and necromancy, with the worst of abominations. In Rev. xxi. 8, “sorcerers” are classed with the “abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and liars,” who are to “have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” The apostle Paul classifies “witchcraft” with “fornication,” and “murder,” and other “works of the flesh,” Gal. v. 20, and then adds, “of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past,

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\* It is well known that several of the discoveries of modern times both in the arts and sciences, were known to the ancients, but were lost for want of the art of printing, and by being kept in their temples by the priests, as the means of deceiving their disciples, and keeping the multitudes in awe.

that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The Revelator, also, enumerates "sorcerers" with "dogs, and whoremongers, and murderers," who are forever excluded from the New Jerusalem.

(3.) So offensive to God were these blasphemous pretensions, that under the Jewish theocracy they were visited with the same punishment as murder, and that too by the special command of the Almighty. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," Ex. xxii. 18. Again: "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a NECROMANCER. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God hath driven them out from before thee. \* \* \* For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners; but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee to do so," Deut. xviii. 10-14. Of Manasseh, king of Judah, it is said, "He observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with familiar spirits, and with wizards; he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. He made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to sin, and to do worse than the heathen," 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6, 9.

(4.) In the progress of Christianity during the apostolic age, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we have several instances in which the apostles came in contact with these diviners. Philip found one Simon, at Samaria, "which beforetime in the same city used sorceries, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one." (How exactly like the leading Necromancers of our time, Davis, Ambler, and others!) This "Simon" desired to buy the power to communicate the gift of the Holy Ghost, doubtless for purposes of gain, and was told by the apostles that he had nei-

ther part nor lot with them—that his heart was not right in the sight of God, and that he was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, Acts ix. 9–23.

St. Paul found another, one *Elymas*, a sorcerer, at Paphos (Acts xiii. 6–11), who withstood the apostles, and to whom Paul said, “O full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to prevent the right ways of the Lord?” And yet our modern ghostmongers would have us believe that sorcerers and necromancers are the only real Christians in the land!

The effect of a revival of pure religion at Ephesus was, that “many confessed and showed their deeds. Many of them, also, which used curious arts [the sorcerers and necromancers of Ephesus] brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed,” Acts xix. 18–20. And as the “word of the Lord” and pure religion prevailed, deception and intrigues were exposed and confessed, and the “books” from which they learned these “curious arts,” were committed to the flames. Who can read this account without thinking of the numerous and high-priced ghost-books now in circulation, and of the uniform hostility of all such works to the religion of Jesus Christ?

In the sixteenth chapter of Acts we have an account of the imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi: “And it came to pass as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this she did many days. But Paul being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, and brought them to the magistrates,

saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city," &c. This ancient "medium," it will be observed, was not only a "damsel" like most of our rapping mediums, but she also had "masters," or keepers, who made "much gain by her soothsaying," and were specially indignant "when the hope of their gain was gone." And have we not a perfect parallel to this in the sensitiveness of certain gentlemen of our own time, who are more or less interested in the "gains" received by certain mediums? And have we not here the reason why it is so difficult for them to keep their seats in public assemblies, while the delusion is being exposed? To be sure they never refer to the pecuniary interest they have in keeping up the deception, but simply exclaim, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city;" but so long as the sale of their books and papers, in which they have invested money, is dependent upon the perpetuity of the delusion, so long they must be expected to resist exposure to the utmost of their power.\*

These passages are sufficient to show that witches, necromancers, sorcerers, and soothsayers, are mentioned in the Scriptures only to be denounced; and if such mention of impostors and deceivers amounts to an indorsement of their pretensions, then a law prohibiting the sale of galvanized watches at mock auctions would prove that such auctioneers are honest men, and that every yellow watch they sell is pure gold. We have no evidence that even those possessed with devils, like the "medium" mentioned above, had any knowledge of the future by that means, or of the invisible state.

So far, then, as the Bible is concerned, it is scarcely possible that it could have borne a more decisive and terrible testimony against necromancy and all similar pretensions than it has done.

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\* So extremely sensitive are our self-styled "spiritualists," in regard to the exposure of their tricks, that in almost every instance, where the writer has lectured upon the subject, he has been interrupted more or less during his lectures by medium-keepers, or ghost-book publishers, or both together; and in one instance a lady "medium" lavished her "*spirit-u-ality*" quite profusely upon the devoted head of the lecturer

And even on the supposition that the ancient diviners really held intercourse with devils and familiar spirits, it is enough for any Christian to know that "ALL THAT DO THESE THINGS ARE AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD."

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## CHAPTER VII.

Apparitions of the Bible—Modern ghosts—Who see them—Why so seldom seen—When and where—Ghosts caught—Different kinds—General conclusion respecting.

HAVING shown in the preceding chapters that the spirits of the dead depart at death, not to return till the general resurrection—that the "ministering spirits" of the Bible are holy angels, and not disembodied human spirits, and that necromancers and other similar characters are mentioned in the Bible only to be denounced, I shall now devote a few pages to the question, "*If the spirits of the dead do not have access to our world, how shall we account for the various apparitions or ghosts that have been seen in all ages of the world?*"

1. In regard to the apparitions mentioned in the Scriptures, it is sufficient to restate what has already been shown, that most of them were apparitions of holy angels, who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. And the few instances in which human spirits reappeared after death are recorded as *miracles*, and go to show that non-intercourse with earth is the general law governing all human spirits after death. While, therefore, we admit that apparitions have in a few cases occurred, as also resurrections from the dead, we claim that they no more establish general intercourse with earth as the law governing departed souls, than the resurrection of Christ and Lazarus proves that the resurrection of all men soon after death, is a law of nature. We ask no better evidence, therefore, of the general non-intercourse of departed spirits with our

world, than the few miraculous apparitions of the spirits of the dead recorded in the Bible.

2. The alleged apparitions of modern times rest upon a different basis. The time was when a majority, perhaps, even in this country, believed more or less in ghosts, and "spooks," and "goblins" of various kinds; but happily that time has long since passed by; and but for the recent efforts to revive the ghostology and ghost stories of the past, they must soon have found a grave together in a common oblivion.

During the last forty years, observation and experience have taught several lessons in regard to apparitions and ghost-seeing, that ought not to be overlooked in the discussion of this subject.

(1.) It has been observed that the number of ghosts seen in any given community, depends altogether upon the *character* and *circumstances* of that community. If they are ignorant and superstitious, have been early taught to *believe* in ghosts, and are terribly *afraid of them*, they will be very likely to see them. Hence it is that some people are always seeing "spooks," while others, equally sharp-sighted, never see any. And hence it is that we now so seldom hear of an "apparition," when fifty years ago every tenth person you met had seen one or more ghosts during his life. Until recently ghosts and ghost stories had become quite obsolete. And why? Had the ghosts really withdrawn from our mortal shores? or were the people less favored with "second sight?" Or have the *Pulpit*, the *Press*, and the *Schools* of our country banished the ghosts from the *imagination*s of the people?

That the latter is the true cause of the scarcity of apparitions for the last twenty years, is evident from the fact that, in many rural districts in Europe, where not one of ten can write his name, ghosts are far more plenty now than they ever were in this country. This shows an intimate connection between common schools and ghost-seeing.

(2.) It has been observed, in regard to ghosts, that they are generally seen, not only by those who *believe in* and *fear* them, but just about *when* and *where* they expect to see them. And



what is very strange, though regarded as ethereal and shadowy beings, and of course difficult to be seen under the most favorable circumstances, they always select the night-time for their apparitions, when human vision is necessarily most imperfect. The first instance is yet to be recorded in which a modern ghost has been seen in the day-time; and they even fly before a lamp or taper of any kind, as if their very breath was darkness.

(3.) When ghosts are overtaken and caught (as they frequently have been), they are always found to possess physical qualities, like other mundane substances. A roguish *student*, with a sheet wrapped around him; a *goat*, carried into the college belfry and tied to the bell-clapper; a *bush* or *stump*, near a grave-yard, or in some deep and dark glen; a loose *shingle*, flapping upon the roof; the *limb of an old tree*, chafing against the clapboards, or a *screech-owl* in the garret. Any of these will answer for a ghost, provided they have an "impressible" subject to work upon. Indeed, many of us have been ghosts ourselves to others; some purposely, and others without knowing it at the time; and in several instances human life has been sacrificed, when the persons committing the homicide supposed they were firing at ghosts.

From all these circumstances, it is a legitimate conclusion that all modern ghosts are mere creatures of the imagination, like the "griffs" and "elfs" of other countries; or, at least, that they are nothing but mundane objects, transformed into "apparitions" by superstitious fears. From the clear and unequivocal testimony of the Scriptures, in regard to the circumstances of human souls during the intermediate state; as well as from the known influence of fear and superstition in creating ghosts, or in transforming earthly objects into them, and the influences of education and religion in banishing them from the land; it is doubtful whether the first immortal human being has manifested himself to man in any way, either visibly or audibly, since the apocalyptic vision upon the isle of Patmos. If any think they have, they must either admit all the ghost-stories to be true, and call many things spirits that we know to be material and earthly, or else winnow out the genuine from the

spurious, as the necromancers are now trying to do with their "spirit messages."

We have no disposition to treat this subject irreverently, or to trifle with the honest convictions of the reader, should he dissent from the views here presented; but with the above indisputable facts before us, corroborative of the teachings of the Sacred Scriptures, are we not fully borne out in saying that the notion that human souls "appear to" mortals on earth has no support whatever from observation or experience; and as it is not a doctrine of revelation, but directly opposed to the obvious teaching of the Bible in regard to the dead, it should be rejected, as having no foundation in fact? It is vain, therefore, to appeal to the obsolete superstitions of the people, to support the pretensions of modern necromancy.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Recent "Spirit Communications"—Various Modes of Communication—Rapping Process—Card Process—Writing Media—Hand used by a Spirit—Spiritual Atmosphere Process—Spirit Occupation Process—Spiritual Impression Process—Spirit Phonography—Independent Spirit Writing—Speaking Media—A Spirit Lecture—Several Spirits in one Body—Trance—Pointing Media—Dancing Media.

HAVING now considered the several preliminary questions that stand connected with the subject of modern necromancy—what may be regarded as the *a priori* argument—and having seen that, from all that we can learn of the condition of the dead, there is not the least probability that they *do* or *can* communicate with the living of earth; we shall in the present chapter take up the subject of *mediumship*, and the various methods by which it is said the "spirits" communicate with our world.

A cardinal principle in the "new philosophy" is, that a small portion of our race have such an amount of "electricity" in their composition that the "spirits" can use them as "me-

diums;" while others, and by far the larger portion, are destitute of this electricity, and are consequently non-conductors of spirit-messages. Of the *philosophy* of this theory we shall speak in a subsequent chapter, as we wish to confine our present inquiries to the various kinds of media, and the various methods employed by the "spirits" in communicating with our world.

## RAPPING MEDIA.

The "rapping process" is in some respects the most important of all. It was by mere "raps," heard in "the Fox family," that this "new era" of ghosts was introduced. But it was not long before the spirits "called for the alphabet." By what rap or raps they signified "alphabet" to the young misses, we know not. Indeed, it would be very difficult for a dumb man, or one who could not speak a word of English, to make known by sounds a wish to have the alphabet called over. His only mode would be to get a spelling-book, and point to the letters. But these very tractable "Foxes" could tell at once, by mere raps, that the spirits wanted the alphabet called over. And the same intuition enabled them to understand that, with the spirits, one rap meant *no*, and three raps *yes*.\*

To arrange for the rappings, the following conditions must be observed:

## 1. There should be twelve persons in the circle:

"As there are twelve elements and attributes in every human soul, abstractly considered, so should there be twelve persons constituting a circle; the twelve consisting of six males and six females."—*Spirit of J. R. Fulmer—Telegraph*, No. 26.

## 2. One of the circle, at least, must be a "medium."

"In order to have spiritual manifestations, it is necessary that a medium be present."—*Phil. Hist.*, p. 11.

"Though the presence of a medium is necessary for the production

\* When the spirits went to Philadelphia, "arrangement was made with them that one rap should signify *no*, three *yes*, and two a *medium between yes and no*."—*History of Recent Development*, &c., in Philadelphia, by "a member of the first circle," p. 22.

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 favorable as possible, yet the sounds cannot be produced without a medium."—*Ibid.*, 13,

3. We are told that "positive and negative persons must be placed alternately in arranging the circle."\*

"There is a peculiar electrical condition that is necessary for the production of sounds or raps."—*Phil Hist.*, p. 11.

"It is essential that circles be always organized 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," &c.—*Tel.*, No. 26.

4. To succeed well in getting raps, &c., the room in which the circle are in session should be made dark. "Put out the lights."

"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*—*Tel.* 26.

5. There is an intimate connection, it seems, between the character and "condition" of the "medium," and the character of the communications:

"The character of the communications depends very much on the condition of the medium. A high order of communication cannot be

\* It is impossible for two persons to be one positive, and the other negative, unless they are separated by a non-conductor. As positive means simply having *more* electricity, and negative *less*, and bodies are positive and negative in reference to each other relatively; and inasmuch, also, as electrical equilibrium is produced the instant the two bodies of different electrical states are connected by any conducting substance, it follows that two persons standing upon a floor, or the earth, or any thing but glass, cannot be the one positive, and the other negative. However, such philosophy will do to help keep up appearances, and cover the deception and trickery of the spirit-rappers.

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 favors 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."—*Phil. Hist.*, p. 11.

6. The "medium" must give herself entirely up to the control of the spirits; that is, abandon herself to her imagination, if not to any thing else that may occur. This "giving up wholly to the control of the spirits," is so universally insisted upon that it is scarcely necessary to cite authorities.

"In order to prepare a medium, the person must give up all self-control, all resistance, and resign him or herself 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."—*Phil. Hist.*, p. 11.

7. It is quite important that no "materialists" or "skeptics" 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.\*

8. Although we believe it is not always regarded, yet the direction of the "spirits" is, that in all cases the "medium" should repeat the alphabet.

"Always let the medium repeat the alphabet."—*Spirits to circle in Phil. Hist.*, p. 26.

Every thing being arranged, the "circle" take their seats at the table, darken the room, and in due time the "rappings" begin.

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\* What a beautiful "philosophy" this is, and how congenial with the views and practices of a certain class. It not only mingles males and females, "positives and negatives," in the same circle; but excludes the "skeptics," inculcates "entire non-resistance," and then puts out the lights.

## A CIRCLE OF SPIRIT-RAPPERS IN SESSION.



In the cut, the lady "medium" sits on the right, with her "secretary" behind her in the background. The members of the circle look (as they should) very "impressible;" and quite "negative," both as to "electricity" and common sense. And the gentleman who has just paid his admission-fee, and is about to enter the circle, is obviously sufficiently "honest" and "truth-seeking" for all practical purposes.

The raps being heard, the medium inquires if the spirit of such a one is present. Rap, rap, rap, (yes). "Will the spirit of —— communicate with us?" Rap, rap, rap. "Shall we call over the alphabet?" Rap, rap, rap. The medium then begins, "a, b, c, d," &c., 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 "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.

"*A member of the first circle*" in Philadelphia, describes this process as follows :

"The first mode is performed by having the alphabet repeated by some person (the medium is preferred); this should be done slowly and distinctly, with a pause between each letter; and when the letter is arrived at which the spirit communicating desires, there will be heard a rap, more or less distinctly, the letter responded to; it must be set down, and the alphabet again commenced and repeated, and in like manner will the desired letter be responded to. This process is repeated again and again, until words are formed, and from these sentences are constructed. The sentence when finished will usually conclude with the word 'done.' These sentences will give what the spirit wishes to communicate. This mode of communication is very slow, tedious, imperfect," &c.—*History*, p. 47.

To ascertain precisely how "slow" and "tedious" this method of spirit telegraphing is, the following plan was adopted: The writer requested a friend (Rev. Mr. Ayars, of the New Jersey Conference) to act as "medium" in calling over the alphabet, while he (the writer) acted the part of the "spirits" by rapping at the letter desired; and the following was first written out and then communicated from the writer to Mr. Ayars by spirit-rapping:

"*My Dear Friends: I am glad of an opportunity of communicating with you.*" Mr. Ayars 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 any man thinks he can rap out

messages letter by letter at a faster rate, let him try the experiment, and he will be convinced of his mistake.

Now let us apply this *fact* to the communications that it is said have been rapped out by the spirits on various occasions, and 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.

Another fact worthy of note, is, that the rapping media, have up to this time been, and still are, nearly all ladies. A gentleman "rapping medium" has seldom, if ever been heard of. No *Mr.* "Foxes," or *Mr.* "Fishes," but in all cases ladies. Why is this? Have the spirits a stronger "electrical affinity" for ladies than for gentlemen? Or is it because ladies would, for certain reasons, be less liable to detection and exposure? Whether the "spirits" think of it or not, we mortals know that their *sex* and *costume* is a fine security against detection. And may not this be the reason why most of the raps are made through lady mediums?

It is also somewhat remarkable that all the "spirits," Hebrew, Greek, Roman, French, German, and Irish, rap in English. The second number of the *Mountain Cove Journal* contains a message said to have been received August 5th, 1852, 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 English. In a few instances only have the spirits intimated that they understood other languages than that of the mediums. On one occasion a spirit gave a message in Hebrew, by raps, Prof. Bush calling over the alphabet (which message for some cause was carefully suppressed), and in another case, where a departed "spirit" in New York had made four grand mistakes, in regard to his age, when he died, and the time, place, and circumstances of his death, the lady medium said the error arose from the fact that the spirit responding to the inquiries was the spirit of an *In-*



*dian*, who did not understand the English language! But with a few exceptions the spirits all rap in English—a very significant circumstance in regard to the real origin of the “intelligence.”\*

Now admitting that we know not the origin of the sounds, any further than it is indicated by circumstances, we have enough already before us to show beyond a doubt, that they originate in the medium herself. There must be *one* medium, i. e., one person who *knows how* to rap, and has no conscientious scruples upon the subject. She must be a *lady*, to prevent scrutiny and detection. The room must be *darkened* and “skeptics” excluded for the same reason. The alphabet must be called over by the medium, because she knows what she wishes to “communicate,” and when she names the letter she wants, can the more easily rap at the right letter. And the “spirits” know no language except that of the medium, and the “messages” are just as sensible as the medium is, and no more so. A high order of communications cannot be obtained through a low (i. e., an ignorant) medium; and to this we may add the fact, which any one can demonstrate for himself, that many of the communications are of such a length that they *could not* have been rapped out letter by letter, in the time specified. It is certain, therefore, that many of them, at least, were written by the media at their leisure, without even a “rap” from any spirit *embodied* or *disembodied*.

## THE CARD PROCESS.

The demand for “communications” being good, and the letter-rapping process being “very slow, tedious, and imperfect,”

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\* A Dutchman, consulting the rappers, and discovering the sudden change of his wife’s vernacular, reasoned on this wise: “Ish dat you, Mrs. Hauntz?” inquired the Dutchman. “Yes, dearest, it is your own wife, who—” “You lie, you ghost,” interrupted Hauntz, starting from his seat, “mine vrow speak notting but Dutch, and she never said tear-est in her life. It was always, ‘Hauntz, you thief!’ or ‘Hauntz, you shkamp!’” And the Dutchman hobbled from the room, well satisfied that the “rapping spirits” were all humbug, and that he was safe from any further communications with his shrewish vrow on this earth.

another method has been adopted by which the "raps" are dispensed with. A card having the letters of the alphabet printed upon it is placed before the medium, and the spirits take her hand and *point out* the letters wanted.

"This process consists in the medium taking the card, when a communication is desired, and commencing by voluntarily passing the hand over it, touching every letter with the forefinger. 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 jerks 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. This is a much more perfect mode of communication than the former, and is altogether more preferable. In this manner spirits are able to converse through mediums, long before they can make the sounds. Thus important information is communicated to circles, and encouragement given to them for weeks before responses are heard."—*Phil. Hist.*, p. 71-2.

Upon this method, the following questions naturally arise:

1. Why can the media least developed use the card before they can make the raps? Is it because it requires more *practice* to rap well than it does to spell words by pointing out the necessary letters?

2. If "spirits" can communicate by the card before the medium can make the raps, and the card process is so much better, why did not the spirits call for the card in the first

place? Why adopt the slow and more difficult process of rapping?

3. Who invented this "card process?" The first we hear of it is in the Philadelphia History. Did the "spirits" call for the card, as they originally called for the alphabet?

4. What *proof* have we, beyond the bare word of the medium, that she does not select the letters, and move her hand to them herself? Can the "spirits" select the letters just as well if she is *blindfolded*, or looks another way? If not, then the selection of the letters and movement of the hand are obviously the work of the medium, and not of any foreign agency.\*

5. This "card process" was in full vogue in Philadelphia in April, 1851 (see History, pp. 37-39, &c.), and yet, when the "spirits of the sixth circle" write their lecture on the "*Modes of Spiritual Intercourse*," by the hand of Mr. Ambler, March 10-13, 1852, they say nothing about this "card" process. (See Ambler's "Teacher," pp. 6 and 137.) Now, why is this? Were the "spirits" in Springfield ignorant of what had been done by the spirits in Philadelphia? And if so, were they prepared to write intelligently upon the "modes of spiritual intercourse?"

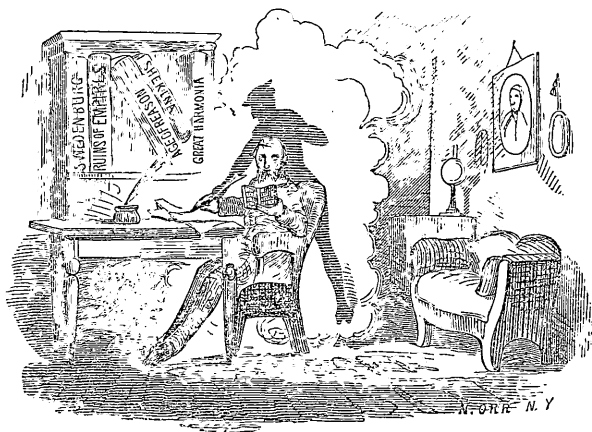
#### WRITING MEDIA.

From the pointing out of letters printed on a card, the transition to *writing* with the hand of the medium is very natural and easy. And as communications were eagerly sought for by a certain class, and the idea of spirit-books had occurred to the media, a class of "writing media" were soon "developed." The philosophy of this process is, that the "spirits"

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\* The author has offered a premium of \$500, and hereby repeats the offer, to any card medium who will publicly spell out an intelligent communication blindfold, the writer being allowed to procure the card, and place it before the medium after she is blinded. This would prove conclusively that the hand was moved by a will and intelligence foreign to that of the medium. Will Mr. Brittan, A. J. Davis, or some of the Philadelphia gentlemen, attempt to make good their pretensions, by submitting to this test experiment?

## A WRITING MEDIUM—DIRECT PROCESS.



take the hand and arm of the medium, paralyze it so that the medium shall have no control over it, and then write with it, as if it were their own. The “spirits” do not agree as to the *manner* in which the hand of the medium is controlled. Some say the spirits *take hold* of the medium’s hand and write with it. They can *feel* the “spirit’s” hand, and sometimes *see* it holding theirs. This, therefore, we denominate the *direct process*.

In all instances, the writing media claim to have no agency whatever in the production of the writing, more than to lend their arm and hand to the spirit.

“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 endeavoring with all my volition to write something else.”—*Hammond’s Pilgrimage*, p. 7.

“The reader will bear in mind, that the medium through whom this account was written was a young lady of sixteen, member of a refined and highly cultivated family, conscientious in the highest degree, and therefore above deception. But this was impossible, had it been intended. 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.”—*Warren’s Supernal Theology*.

“This 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.”—“*Spirits of the Sixth Circle*,” in “*Elements of Spiritual Philosophy*,” p. 3.

“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,” &c. “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.”—*Boynnton’s “Spirit Unfoldings,”* p. 1.

“I found my pen moved by some power beyond my own, either physical or mental, and believing it to be the spirits,” &c. (*Post’s Voices from the Spirit World*, p. 7.) “It depends upon the knowledge or wishes of the communicator what writings are given.” (*Ibid.*, p. 12.) “You only endeavor to keep your mind from acting.”—*Spirit of Geo. Washington to Mr. Post—Ibid.*, p. 33.

The above quotations are sufficient to show that the “spirits” are alone responsible for the writing; chirography, orthography, and all—a point that will be of some importance when we come to examine their communications. The media were obliged to disclaim all agency in the getting up of the books, beyond the mere lending of a paralyzed hand, otherwise they would make little stir as “spirit revelations,” “voices,” “unfoldings,” “messages,” &c., and consequently would have but a limited sale. The idea of supernatural authorship must sell the books. But a word further respecting this process.

1. How is it that the “spirits” have suddenly forsaken *lady rappers*, and betaken themselves to *gentlemen writers*? Of all the ghost-books hitherto produced (and they are not a few), not the first one has been written by the hand of a lady. Why

is this? Is it because gentlemen did not make good rappers on account of their liability to detection, while having less conscience and more capital they would make better authors and publishers of "spirit revelations?"

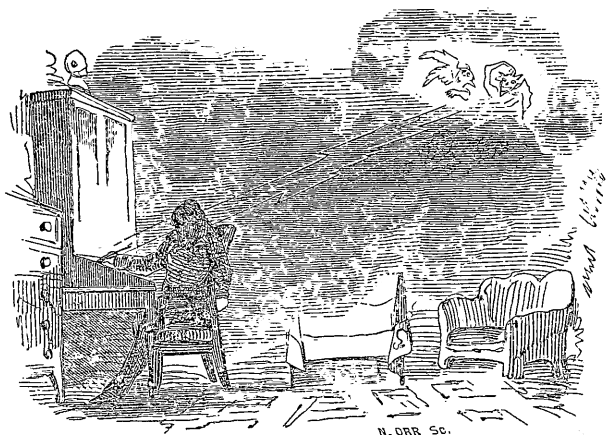
2. If the media have no agency in the production of the messages more than to lend their hands to the spirits, they can of course look away from the desk, converse, or read aloud from a book, while the "spirit" is using their hands. Hence the representation in the cut. But will the gentlemen writing media consent to have their pretensions tried by this test? No indeed. We have tried over and over again, both in public and in private, to induce some writing medium to attempt to show that he does not concoct and write out his messages himself, by writing something when *his mind* is obviously engaged upon something else; but as yet no such attempt has been made. The offer of \$500 for a successful "message" written under these circumstances, made at the Tabernacle in January, 1853, and repeated in Philadelphia and elsewhere, has not yet been accepted, and never will be. The mediums know too well that their spirit "communications" emanate from their own brains, and that if they are not allowed to give their thoughts and attention to the writing, they cannot write.

This method of medium-writing has been employed in but one instance, so far as we know, viz., that of Mr. Ambler, the youthful "seer" of New York. This gentleman tells us that the "spirits" sent down a current of electricity, or "spiritual substance" from the clouds, "about two miles distant," and by this means controlled his hand, as represented in the cut. He, of course, has no thought or responsibility in the matter, and is consequently represented as taking a nap in his chair while the spirits are writing with his hand. (See opposite page.)

The following is the description of this process, as given through Mr. Ambler, by "spirits of the sixth circle:"

"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 breathes out the spiritual atmosphere which he inhales towards the individual who now writes,

## WRITING MEDIUM—ELECTRICAL PROCESS.



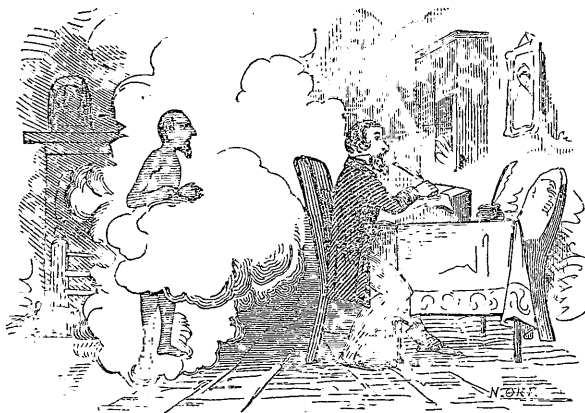
and in this manner causes a complete chain of spiritual substance to be established between the directing spirit and the system of the medium, by which chain a perfect connection is formed from one to the other, so that the hand and arm are moved by the will of the spirit, while at the same time the mind of the medium is entirely passive."—*Spiritual Teacher*, p. 77.

In further describing this method of writing, Mrs. Ambler, 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 that 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 immediately commenced in the same sitting, without any previous knowledge on the part of Mr. Ambler, according to his own statement, with regard to the subject to be discussed."—*Teacher*, p. 7.

Here we have it again, "*according to his own statement*;" and it is *simply* upon the "statement" of some ghost-book speculator that we are to believe that all these wonders have

## WRITING MEDIA—SPIRIT-OCCUPATION PROCESS.



taken place. But suppose Mr. Ambler had interest enough, and was corrupt enough, to deceive in this matter, and state what is not true? What proof have we that he did not think out his Lectures as he wrote them, and move his own hand to write them, instead of its being moved by spirits? Nothing but his bare assertion; and that, too, when he dare not submit to any test that would demonstrate its truth or falsehood. Certainly a man must be credulous enough, to believe so transparent a romance.

The above method of using a medium is very different from the preceding. The medium takes his seat at the table, and just steps out of his body, and the "spirit" desiring to communicate, steps in, and uses the body, brains, hands, and muscles, as if they were his own.

"The spirit wishing to communicate produces the requisite magnetic condition of the system of the lady (which is a negative one, quite analogous to death), when her spirit leaves the body, and the one desiring to speak takes possession, giving somewhat its own earthly style of speech, tone of voice, gestures, &c. In this way many interesting and convincing demonstrations are daily being made," &c.—*P. B. Bristol—Telegraph, No. 2.*



"Q. Can you describe how you are able to write through a medium, &c.? *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."

"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 Alice's [the medium's] body, I assume my own."—*Spirit of Adin A. Ballou*—"Spirit Manifestations," pp. 222, 224.

The same doctrine is very distinctly taught, as *the* philosophy of medium-writing, in a letter from D. J. Mandell, published in the forty-fourth number of the *Telegraph*.

When this principle of the "new philosophy" was stated by the writer, in his lectures at Hartford, Ct., A. J. Davis, who was present, denied that the "spirits" or "spiritualists" taught any thing of the kind. The *ground* of this denial was (as many who were present well recollect), that *he* (Mr. Davis) had not seen any such teaching. And yet he had been referred, the evening previous, to the very pages in Mr. Ballou's book from which the last two of the above extracts are taken; and he stated at the time of his denial that he had consulted the pages referred to, and that no such doctrine was there inculcated. Here, then, was a question of fact, or rather of *veracity*, between the writer and Mr. Davis, and one which I was unable at the time to settle, for the want of Mr. Ballou's book, or the extracts copied from it. But with the above extracts before him, the reader will now be able to judge for himself, and to determine how far Mr. D. is to be relied upon, even in matters respecting which he professed to be well informed.

In regard to this occupation or possession process, a few points are worthy of special note.

1. How is it that this spirit was unable to control the will or muscles of the medium, when other spirits control media by paralyzing their hands, and by electricity, even at the distance of two miles? Is not here a slight discrepancy in the philosophy of the spirits?

2. As death is a separation of the soul from the body, and life is restored when the spirit returns to the body, it follows

that, if the soul of the medium leaves the body, and another spirit takes its place, the medium is dead—a disembodied spirit; and the spirit previously disembodied comes to life, or becomes embodied. Surely, the “new philosophy” affords remarkable facilities for dying and coming to life at will, and not only gives the “spirits” a chance to try the mechanism of different bodies, as they pass from medium to medium, but the media’s spirits have a chance, in turn, to experiment upon the disembodied state, and to try their hand as “rapping” spirits while out of the body. Who knows but most of the “raps” heard are made by the spirits of writing media, who have been crowded out of their own bodies by other spirits, and having stood long and impatiently (like the ghost of the medium in the cut), are rapping for admission into their own material “forms?” But,

3. If souls can come and go from the body with such facility, it would of course be very easy for two spirits to exchange bodies, or for two persons to exchange souls. Let the spirit of A go out, and enter the body of B, and that of B enter the body of A, and the exchange is effected; and if this “new philosophy” is true, and is practically adopted, the time is not far distant when exchanging souls, and paying the difference, will be as common among the “seers,” at least, as any other branch of traffic. And if a spirit had plenty of money to pay the difference between old and worn-out bodies, and young and vigorous ones, he has only to keep exchanging his old “forms” for new, as the body does with its garments, and he could live here forever. Verily, these are days of “progress!”

4. But suppose one of the “lower spirits,” of which we hear so much in the “new philosophy,” having got possession of the medium’s body, and crowded his soul out into the disembodied state, should refuse to go out of the body when he had done writing with it, what would the poor medium do? His soul is fairly in the land of shades, dead to all intents and purposes, and another spirit has his body, and refuses to evacuate. Now what will he do? If he take out a writ of eject-

ment, the ghost has the advantage of possession;\* and besides, how are the jury to ascertain which spirit really owns the body? So this "new philosophy" will probably lead to a new class of chancery practice.

5. The spirit-occupation theory gives the mischievous "low spirits" a chance to use the bodies of media for other purposes than writing. The spirit controls the "will" and "muscles;" so that if a *thievish* spirit gets into a medium, he will have a "will" to *steal*, and the "muscles" will endeavor to execute that will: and so of other "spirit" propensities. Is not this a dangerous philosophy while there are so many "low spirits" about? But the thief, or murderer, or adulterer, would have this advantage: he could plead that his body was occupied and used by another spirit in the commission of the crime, while his own innocent spirit was "out" all the while, deploring the event; and if the "new philosophy" is true, the excuse should be considered satisfactory.

6. Another rather laughable result of this sublime "philosophy" is, that it quite confounds the sexes, and obliterates all the distinctions of natural history. In the case cited by Mr. Ballou, the spirit of a deceased *gentleman* enters the body of a *young lady*! Adin's soul in Alice's body!! Well, then, which is it, Alice or Adin? a lady or a gentleman? Could the "medium" answer the question? Would she not find it as difficult to identify herself as a certain Mr. Ami, of whom we once heard? Awaking one morning after a night's lodging in the gutter, his clothes torn and muddy, and his person not a little disguised, he was heard thus to soliloquize: "Am I *Ami*, or am I *not Ami*? If I *am Ami*, *where* am I? And if I *am not Ami*, *what* am I?" So Miss Alice might have inquired: "Am I *Alice*, or am I *not Alice*?" Will some of our "seers" inform us who the medium was, under the circumstances, Adin or Alice? a lady or a gentleman?

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\* "Possession," they say, 'is nine points in law,' and it seems to sustain a similar proportion in its relations to the spiritual phenomena and demonstrations of the age."—*Tel.*, No. 44.

7. This "occupation" theory bears a striking resemblance to one of which we hear much in the New Testament, with this difference, that the "spirits" in those times were *devils*. These entered into bodies *with* human spirits, and were often cast out by Christ and his apostles; and if Mr. Davis and his followers will admit that the "low spirits" of the "new philosophy" are the "devils" of the New Testament, we will let the occupation process pass without further criticism. That "low spirits" have lately taken possession of certain media, we are not disposed to question.

8. But waiving all this absurdity, nonsense, and irreligion, and admitting for the moment that this occupation theory *might* be true, what proof have we that it *is* true? Like all the rest of the system, it rests upon the *bare word of the medium*, whose interest is served by keeping up the delusion. And upon their very disinterested assertions we are called upon to throw aside our Bibles, open our mouths, and swallow their silly transcendentalism and infidelity, as revelations from heaven. Certainly, they must think the public mind very "impressible."

#### WRITING MEDIA—SPIRIT-IMPRESSION PROCESS.

This class of media are not conscious of having their hands used by an invisible power, nor yet of having their bodies occupied and used by the spirits of the dead; but they, nevertheless, write by "spirit impression," the thoughts and words being "impressed" upon their minds. Of this class is Mr. Harshman, of Dayton, Ohio, and others.

"When the spiritual influence commenced, present thoughts and preconceived ideas vanished and disappeared from my mind, and after a few minutes, without any 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."—*Harshman's Love and Wisdom from the Spirit World*, p. 7.

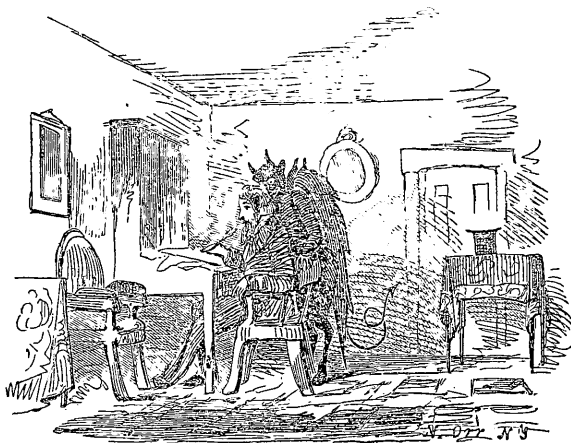
Here we have it again. Mr. Harshman *says*: "My mind was guided by the spirit's will," and "they tell me they had to impress every word and sentence upon my mind;" but might not Mr. H. have mistaken his own imaginings or cogitations for "impressions" from spirits?\* And is it not possible that he fabricated this story, to awaken curiosity and sell his book? Still further; is it not possible that Mr. H. is partially insane, as many of the media are well known to be?

But if any insist that his insipid and almost senseless pages, well sprinkled with infidelity, were actually written "by spiritual impression," is it not most probable that fallen angels are the real "spirits" at work, who have suggested what he has written to his mind? If "low spirits" can so easily pass themselves off for "spirits of the sixth circle," and other exalted characters, as the new philosophy admits; and if the apostles and prophets could not distinguish the disembodied human spirits, which moved them to write the Bible, from the Spirit of God (see quotation from Ambler, page 27 of this work), is it not possible that Mr. Harshman, and all other media of his class, have mistaken impressions made by Satan for those made by departed spirits? To our view, this is by far the most scriptural and philosophical explanation of the "spirit-impression process." The cut on the next page will illustrate the manner in which the process is most probably conducted, as it appears to the eye of God and holy angels. It no doubt represents the only external agency employed in the operation.

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\* Mr. A. J. Davis, "the seer," has inadvertently thrown a ray of light upon Mr. Harshman's inspiration. At the close of the author's lectures at Hartford, Ct., February, 1853, Mr. Davis stated publicly that he saw Mr. Harshman just before in Ohio; that Mr. H. gave him one of his books; that he (Davis) had not yet read it; and that Mr. Harshman wished Davis to help him to determine whether the book was dictated by spirits, or was the product of his own brain. And yet Mr. H. *sent the book forth*, notwithstanding his misgivings as to its origin, as a veritable spirit's revelation. Like Judge Edmonds, he seems to have had some terrible doubts as to his inspiration—a symptom, we should think, of returning rationality.

WRITING BY SPIRITUAL IMPRESSION.



This process must be far more productive of evil than for Satan to simply transform himself into an angel of light; for by this means he can dictate “spirit revelation” to any extent, fill the land with counterfeit “disclosures” which the people will read, and at the same time strike a good blow at the Bible, the ministry, the churches, and at Christianity itself. If there are such beings as devils (as we have no doubt), they must have been deeply concerned in the getting up of the various infidel ghost-books that have recently been published.

## SPIRIT PHONOGRAPHY.

In all the preceding modes of communicating, it is necessary for the medium to enter his “superior state” (which is several degrees beyond clairvoyance), and to remain in that state till the communication is all written out. This too, like rapping out messages, is somewhat tedious, as it is very fatiguing to keep up the “abnormal” or supernatural appearances for several hours together. To relieve this difficulty, the “spirits” have a kind of *celestial phonography*, by which very long messages may be given in a short time, and translated by the

“medium,” or some other person, at their leisure. The following description of this spirit-language is taken from an article by Dr. Bristol, of Danville, N. Y., published in the thirty-fourth number of the *Spiritual Telegraph*:

“The following is said to be 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 of an hour long. What will *not* progression yet reveal to us?”

Now, what does the reader think of spirit-telegraphing? The “spirits” have a *written language*, in phonetic character, very comprehensive; and while they write it by one medium, they have taken a young lady to the “spirits’ home,” and have taught her the language, so that she translates it with ease and facility. And how very convenient for the “spirits!” If a word of thirteen letters, like “Ki-e-lou-cou-ze-ta,” can be expanded to 45 words, or 183 letters (say fourteen-fold), what an immense saving of time from “the superior state!”

But who knows that the “medium” who writes the “*ki-e-lou*,” &c., is controlled by any foreign influence? And what evidence have we beyond her bare word that “Miss H.,” the translator, does not read this spirit phonography precisely as a Gipsy fortune-teller would read off your fortune from the

wrinkles in your hand ; *i. e.*, makes it up as she goes along ? This, of course, is all the translation there is about it.

#### SPIRIT-WRITING—INDEPENDENT PROCESS.

This process is simply the use of a pen or pencil by the "spirits," independently of any media whatever. It is described by Mr. Ballou as "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," &c.—*Manifestations*, p. 9. Efforts at this kind of writing, by an "illiterate spirit," are described pp. 187-8. In this way it is said that a "sentiment" was written in the room of Edward P. Fowler, New York, on the night of Dec. 22d, 1851, by the spirit of Benj. Franklin, and signed by some fifty other spirits ; and in the same way the celebrated Hebrew quotation (of which we shall speak hereafter) is said to have been written by spirits in Mr. Fowler's room in the day-time, Dec. 10th, 1852. See *Telegraph*, Nov. 9th and 22d.

On one of these occasions Mr. Fowler saw Benj. Franklin *with a large box of electrical apparatus* (galvanic we suppose) ; and when the autographic spirits were subsequently asked "if the signatures were in each case executed by the will of each spirit whose name appears, or done by one operator for the whole ?" the answer was, "Each for himself, BY THE AID OF THE BATTERY !" — *Telegraph*, No. 22.

Leaving the "Autographs" and the "Hebrew" to be considered in the chapter on the *Literature* of the Spirits, a remark or two will suffice in regard to this method of writing :

1. It is very remarkable that although this notable miracle was wrought, according to Mr. Fowler, in December, 1851, it was not published to the world till July and October, 1852.

2. Who is Mr. E. P. Fowler ? Is he a shrewd, cautious person, who would not be likely to be imposed upon ? or is he a young and visionary student, who would be very likely to see ghosts, and to be selected as a fit subject for an imposition ? And has he not, moreover, an *interest* in the sale of ghost books, and the propagation of ghost stories ? Is he in any



way related to Fowlers and Wells, Phrenologists and Publishers? It is much more likely that certain gentlemen in New York, engaged in "spiritual" matters, have selected him as the "medium" for a "spiritual" trick and imposition, than that Benj. Franklin and others appeared to him with a galvanic "battery" under his arm, and wrote "by the aid of the battery." The whole story is too ridiculous to be told in any civilized community; and as it rests, like all the rest of these wonders, upon the saneness and veracity of the medium, we leave it without further comment. Let those believe it who can.

## SPEAKING MEDIA.

The speaking media claim to be occupied by "spirits," like one class of writing media, and to speak *just what the "spirits" choose to speak through them*, without any thought or volition of their own. In this way the spirits preach, lecture, &c. A certain Mr. Finney, and Mr. Ambler, of New York, claim to be speaking media, and to discourse by "spiritual afflatus."

Speaking of Mr. Finney, Mr. Ambler says:

"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."—*Spirit Messenger*.

In his Messenger, No. 7, Mr. Ambler says:

"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, Mr. Hewitt, his secretary, says:

"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. The first of these was given in the town of Essex, Mass., some twenty-five miles northeast of Boston, on the first Sunday of April last. The second was delivered at Portsmouth, N. H., on the Fourth of July. Since that, he has been the instrument of the same kind of influence, in giving discourses at Hop-

dale, Milford, Mass., and at Milford, N. H.; and subsequently, he has delivered several in the city of Boston, at private circles, and conferences."—*Messages*, p. 45.

Of these speaking media Mr. Ballou says :

"Spirits not only rap out the messages in languages foreign to the medium, but by impressing the mind of a suitable medium, enable him to speak in a language to him entirely unknown."—*Manifestations*, p. 253.

Accordingly Mr. Finney and others sometimes speak in "unknown tongues," like the Mormon "elders" that were exploring the country a few years since. But in all cases, so far as we can learn, the "tongues" are not only "unknown" to the medium, but to everybody else. It is very easy for an impostor to jabber over certain incoherent sounds, and call them an "unknown tongue," in order to deceive the people; but there is not a speaking "medium" in the Union through whom any spirit can speak a sentence in Greek or Latin, French or German, unless the medium first understands the language to be spoken. Then they may pretend to speak by "afflatus" in those languages as well as in any other.

These are the principal modes of "spiritual communication," so far as we know; and it is easy to see that they are all an unmitigated deception, and an imposition upon the public. There may be "writing and speaking media" who are so hallucinated as to *think* and *believe* that their hands or tongues are used by the spirits of the dead, for the purpose of writing and speaking; but all such "impressions" are like the whims and fancies of a maniac, and the visions of a victim of delirium tremens.

But some are sane, and *know* very well that not a word of what they write and send forth to the world as messages from the dead, comes from any other source than their own intellects. And this we design fully to prove before we get through.

It is a fact worthy of note, that these gentlemen find no difficulty in making appointments to speak "by spiritual impression," and invoking the spirits precisely when they want them;

but if an interview is desired, at which it is feared that the knavery and deception of the thing may be exposed, the excuse generally is, that "the spirits cannot attend."

2. Lectures have been delivered "by spiritual impression," in one case, at least, that were in type before they were delivered, if not actually printed.

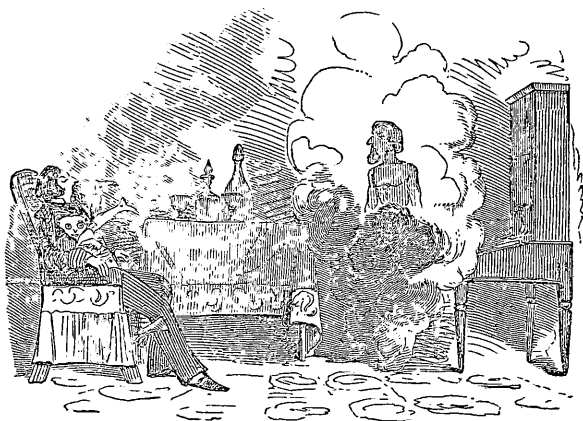
3. These lectures delivered by "afflatus," if rightly reported, would be a disgrace to a Hottentot, much more to any man of common intelligence. The following is a description of one of Mr. Ambler's "spiritual lectures," copied from the Brooklyn Eagle:

"A SPIRITUAL LECTURE.—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 to be 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 mouth-ing 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 realized 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."

But what more could have been expected? Mr. Ambler is an illiterate and weak-minded man, as is obvious from his writings; and how *could* he give the people any thing but "chaff?"

Besides the various modes of spirit-communication already

## SEVERAL "SPIRITS" IN ONE BODY.



described, there are certain other "abnormal" phenomena attributed to the spirits that deserve to be noticed in this chapter.

## MEDIUM IN A TRANCE.

The spirit of Adin A. Ballou has revealed to us the reason why media sometimes fall into a *trance*; namely, that the spirits not only crowd the soul of the medium out of the "form," but several spirits crowd into the forsaken body at the same time.

"More than one spirit can enter the medium at once. The mediums all go into the trance by means of several spirits entering the body at one time."—*Manifestations*, p. 222.

This is an interesting item of "spirit philosophy," and worthy of pictorial illustration. The above cut presents its leading feature to the eye. The *spirit* of the "seer" has stepped out, and may be seen as a spectre off at the right, while his "*form*" is left reclining in an arm-chair, and crowded with "spirits," even to overflowing. By this means it is thrown into a *trance*. The poor spirit in the background looks quite meek and patient, and yet a little *anxious*; as any spirit would naturally feel, to see its "*form*" occupied by several spirits, hustling

against each other, and throwing the body into a trance. "Ah," says he, "that is rather rough usage for any poor 'form!' A great want of 'harmony' here. One at a time, gentlemen; one at a time: let *Franklin* communicate first, after which we will hear from *George Washington!*"

This manifold occupation theory will no doubt suggest to the reader the following parallel, taken from the twelfth chapter of Matthew:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

"Then he saith, I will return into mine own house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished.

"Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first."

Now, if the "spirits" of the necromancers are the "unclean spirits" of the New Testament, we have no further controversy with them. Certain it is, that in no case are media made better by the new possession; the "last state" is invariably "worse than the first."

#### POINTING MEDIA.

The following description of the pointing media is from the pen of Mr. Hammond, the Rochester "seer," as published in the 13th number of the *Télégraph*:

"The pointing mediums signify to each other by signs what is required, and their silent language is readily obeyed. I saw whole circles formed and placed in their proper order without a word being uttered, and I saw no one suspicious of evil or disposed to reproach the medium, because it was not comprehensible to their minds. All were disposed to wait the result without anticipating a judgment."

Astonishing! "Whole circles formed, and placed in their proper order" by signs, "without a word being uttered!" Verily this *must be* an age of miracles!

#### DANCING MEDIA.

In the 39th number of the *Telegraph* we have a letter from

Mr. McCann Dunn, describing "the phenomena at the West." In that letter, Mr. D. 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 recognized 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 skeptical."

In the 13th number of the *Telegraph* (which it seems Mr. Dunn had not read), Mr. Hammond thus describes the same phenomenon :

"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."

In the same number of the *Telegraph*, a correspondent writes from Cleveland, Ohio, as follows :

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\* The "spirits," it seems, do not dance without music; and like most other dancing characters, they are very fond of the "fiddle." Really, this *must* convince the "skeptics."

## DANCING MEDIA IN DIFFERENT CHARACTERS.\*



"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 spiritualized 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

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\* The reader will observe that the "national character" of the "former individual" is exhibited by the media during their dances; so that if six spirits—say the spirit of a "*Shaker*," a *negro*, an "*old maid*," an *Indian chief*, a *Turk*, and a "*brother Jonathan*," were to make a descent upon a circle of six media, enter their bodies, and set them to dancing, they would act out the six characters that had entered them as represented in the cut. It is no caricature of the "new philosophy," but a faithful representation of it, as it would appear in practice. Those, therefore, who have never seen a "spirit dance," can see one in the above cut, drawn to the life.

Sunday all the circles meet in a large hall, and various exercises are enjoyed as the spirits direct."

And if "the spirits direct" them to *dance* on the Sabbath, of course they dance; especially as they "cannot help" it, and dancing is "necessary to prepare persons for a mediumship." And yet this gross immorality is labelled "spiritualism;" and even some professed Christians are disposed to apologize for it, as consistent with Christianity.

In A. J. Davis' address delivered at Cleveland, Ohio, on Sabbath, December 7, 1852, we find the following:

"'What will people say?' Perhaps you belong to the Church, but your spirit o'erleaps the rigid formality thereof, and feels like dancing. 'What will people say?' Perhaps you feel like bursting away from your sectarian bonds, and doing your own thinking."

It is obvious from the preceding extracts that the "spirits" are not only much given to dancing, like the satyrs of old, but that dancing is an important part of the discipline requisite for "developing" media. And from A. J. Davis downward, it seems to be admitted that spirit-dancing is a legitimate branch of the "new philosophy." It is this feature, no doubt, that has attached now and then a "Shaking Quaker" to this "spirit" movement, besides some others who wish to be religious, and yet are very fond of dancing.\*

But it is time to close this chapter. We have now a fair and unvarnished exhibition of the various alleged modes of "spiritual communication," from the first raps down to writing without a medium, and speaking through human throats; the descriptions being mainly in the language of the necromancers themselves, and faithfully represented to the eye in the cuts. And if all history can furnish another such chapter of absurdities, contradictions, nonsense, and imposition, we should like to see it. Salem witchcraft and Mormonism are fairly eclipsed, and left forever in the rear.

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\* The reader will find some still more remarkable "developments" upon this subject in chapter xi., under the head of "Remarkable Revelations of the Spirits."



## CHAPTER IX.

## THEOLOGY OF THE SPIRITS.

Sources of information—Both matter and spirit eternal—Man never fell—Needs no conversion—Christ a mere man—Never made any atonement—Never rose from the dead—Never wrought any miracles—Borrowed his wisest sayings—The Bible not of God—One of the worst of books—No devils—No hell—No resurrection—No Day of Judgment—Christianity no blessing—Ministers hypocrites—Churches must be broken up—Civil government abolished—No Sabbaths—Marriage annulled—Practical nullification—Summary of spirit theology—Who are the “mediums?”—Davis, Hammond, Brittan, Post, Ballou, Partridge, Spear, Hoar, Winchester, Ambler, Harshman, Boynton, &c.

FROM the various kinds of media, or modes of communicating, as described in the preceding chapter, let us now turn our attention to *the communications themselves*. These we take as we find them in the ghost-books and papers, and shall endeavor by a careful analysis of them to exhibit the teachings of the so-called “spirits,” as respects their theology, philosophy, consistency, &c. The present chapter will exhibit the

## THEOLOGY OF THE “SPIRITS.”

To economize space, and avoid circumlocution, I will first state the doctrine taught by the “spirits,” and then support the articles, one by one, by quotations from the “messages.”

I. *The spirits teach that both matter and spirit are eternal; or in other words, that nothing was ever created.*

“Matter and spirit are both eternal co-existent substances,” &c.—*Ballou*, p. 11.

“Matter is eternal; it ever *was*, it ever *will* be.”—*Boynton’s Unfoldings*, p. 15.

“The Divine Soul is the Parent of the human soul—both eternal.”—*Messenger*, No. 7.

Here we have not only the doctrine that our souls have existed from all eternity, but that the material universe, also, never had a beginning. But if matter is eternal, then *eternity* is

not a peculiar attribute of Deity; and if nothing ever was *created*, then there is no CREATOR, and the transition to atheism is natural and easy. No wonder, therefore, that the "spirits" seldom allude to the Supreme Being, more than if he had no existence.

II. *Man never fell; and the doctrine of natural depravity is false.*

"Man never fell. \* \* The idea of total depravity, or original sin, in the human race, is an absurdity, a relic of the past, developed in mythologic times."—*Spirits through Finney—Messenger*, No. 11.

"Q. Then man was not made, originally, as perfect physically and spiritually as he is now?

"A. No; many changes have taken place. He has progressed in his physical being with his spiritual development."—*Colloquy with spirits—Phil. Hist.*, p. 90.

"What God has made pure and holy in its nature, can never be rendered impure and unholy. \* \* \* Man can never, in any circumstance, or by any possibility become totally depraved, but the soul remains pure," &c.—*Spirits through Ambler—Teacher*, pp. 35, 36.

"A general sentiment has prevailed, among the most advanced minds on the earth, that the world needs to be reformed; that the structure of existing society is wrongly constructed, and that it is a source of prevalent evils which do not exist inherently in the nature of man. This sentiment the spirits recognize as perfectly correct, and they have been pleased to witness its rapid progress among the minds of the mass. It is a true and righteous thought that humanity is at present in a degraded state, and that this state results, not so much from any inherent tendency to evil, as from the false and unnatural position in which it is placed."—*Ibid.*, p. 125.

III. *Men need no external assistance, like conversion or regeneration by the Spirit of God, in order to reformation.*

Speaking of the causes by which the desired effect of human redemption may be produced, the "spirits" say:

"These causes are inherent in the constitution of man; they are already established in the organization of both body and spirit, and all that is needed to be accomplished by those who are the unseen agents of the work here represented, is to bring these causes into active and successful operation. In other words, there are certain established principles in the human structure—certain relations subsisting between the body and spirit, and certain influences at work upon the entire system of man, by which the desired and designed result of a universal reformation can be and will be attained."—*Teacher*, p. 127.

Thus the spirits strike at the very foundations of the evangelical system; and while they flatter the pride and self-sufficiency of the depraved heart, set aside the only means which God has instituted for man's recovery and salvation.

IV. *Jesus Christ was a mere man—a reformer, like many others.*

Mr. Boynton, of Waterford, N. Y., represents *John Wesley* as writing the following with his (Boynton's) hand :

"It has been supposed and believed that Jesus was all of God, and also a perfect man, which thing is false. Jesus was a great and good man; but there was nothing more miraculous about his conception, birth, life, and teachings, than any good man. Jesus never taught people to pay divine homage to him; he never taught that he was the Son of God, except in the sense in which other men might be the sons of God."—*Unfoldings*, p. 7.

"What is the meaning of the word Christ. 'Tis not as is generally supposed the son of the Creator of all things. Any just and perfect being is Christ. The crucifixion of Christ is nothing more than the crucifixion of the spirit, which all have to contend with before becoming perfect and righteous. The miraculous conception of Christ is merely a fabulous tale."—*Spirit of Elias Hicks—Telegraph*, No. 37.

"God adopted him as his Son from his birth, as he would every individual who should walk in the path that Christ walked in from his birth."—*The Bible as a Book*, &c., by *Alfred W. Hoar*, medium—p. 22.\*

V. *Jesus Christ never made an atonement for sin.*

In the "*Pilgrimage of Thomas Paine, and others, to the seventh circle*," &c., by G. Hammond, medium, we find the following :

"Thy wisdom will be increased, when thou shalt see the atonement in thyself, and not hope for it because another has it. \* \* When thou shalt agree with the Bible, in regard to the atonement, then thou wilt find the atonement in thy works, as thou now seest it in Christ. \* \* Doing good is the atonement," p. 120.

\* This book, purporting to be from *St. Paul*, is probably the worst in the whole list of ghost-books. In the title we have 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*."

It is published by *Bela Marsh*, Boston, who is the publisher of several other books of the same character. Parents, guardians, Christians, and Christian ministers, will do well to beware of books having his imprint.

"Christ, as I have said, gave man a way by his example, to be redeemed from his sins, by following, in his daily life, the laws of his being, as Christ did; but if man thinks that by Christ's spilling his blood on the cross, his sins will be forgiven without following the law and gospel, of which Christ has set the example, he has fallen into a mistake that he should speedily rid himself of. \* \* This verse [Collos. i. 4] should read, "In whom we have redemption, by following his example, even the forgiveness of sins."—Hoar's *Bible as a Book*, p. 65-6.

The "spirits of the sixth circle" thus ridicule the atonement, through the mediumship of Mr. Ambler. After speaking of the efforts to extend Christianity on the earth, they ask:

"And yet what is the effect of all this? Answer, ye who rely upon the saving power of religious faith. Answer, ye who have believed in the redemption of the world through human blood. Answer, ye who have cherished the faith that the race are cleansed from its corruptions through the sufferings and death of an individual who lived on the earth more than eighteen hundred years ago."—*Teacher*, p. 99.

In the 21st number of the *Spirit Messenger* the editor gives an account of "another visit to Hartford," in which he says:

"It may be stated as an item of interest that Mr. Davis was consecrated to the work of human redemption under the name of a guide and leader, by the light of whose revelations those who now sit in the valley and shadow of death may be brought forth to the blissfulness of a new day."

So it seems that these sorcerers have installed A. J. Davis as the redeemer of the world, in the place of Jesus Christ!

#### VI. *Jesus Christ never rose from the dead.*

In a letter from Dr. Bristol, Dansville, N. Y., published in the *Telegraph*, No. 34, we have the following:

"On Sabbath evening, November 28, we were favored with a highly interesting and *pungent* discourse, on the 'resurrection of the body,' by the spirit of Wm. Ellery Channing. It came very apropos, as a discourse was being delivered at the same time in one of the churches of the town on the same subject. After listening to the spirit some forty-five minutes, a gentleman present raised a question concerning the resurrection and ascension of the *earthly body* of Christ. The spirit said it was contrary to immutable law, hence could not be. He then explained the Scripture thus: the spirit of Christ was not wholly separated from the body when he was placed in the tomb, and the guardian spirits, who had attended him through life, using him as a medium, rolled away the stone, restored the spirit to the body, and Christ walked

bodily out of the tomb. Some time afterward he died naturally, his body was left to molder back to dust, and his spirit, seen only by those who were mediums, ascended to heaven."

This letter was sent to Mr. Brittan, to be published "*if he thought best*," and its publication in the Telegraph shows that Mr. Brittan, its editor, thinks it *best* to deny the resurrection of the Son of God, and as far as possible to destroy all faith, not only in his Messiahship and redeeming acts, but in Christianity itself. Well do these infidels understand, that if they can throw doubt over the resurrection of Christ, they succeed, to the same extent, in throwing doubt over the whole system of human redemption. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

VII. *Jesus Christ never wrought any miracles.*

In the letter from Dr. Bristol, already referred to, the spirit of Channing says :

"The gentleman then inquired how Lazarus was raised after having been dead three days, and his body offensive by decay? The reply was: 'Were you there, sir, to *know* that his body was putrid? It was not. \* \* The spirit of Lazarus had not entirely left the body; he was in a trance. Christ in his superior condition saw this, and by his magnetic power restored the action of the system. The same was done at the restoration of the maid.'—*Telegraph*, No. 34.

In perfect keeping with the above, take the following from Brittan's "*Shekinah*," p. 218 :

"It is interesting to the Christian to learn, that the same miracle, repeated by Jesus of Nazareth, of 'walking on the water,' is recorded of the long-haired Samian, nearly six hundred years before the time of the Saviour; and that he also calmed the tempestuous waves and soothed the waters of the angry seas, that his disciples might safely pass over them. And we shall be reminded of the same holy prophet of Galilee, and of the voice heard at his baptism in the Jordan, by the story told of the divine Pythagoras, ages before, that in crossing the river Nessus, with a large company of his disciples and friends, a clear voice from the stream was heard to speak distinctly, by all present, saying, 'Hail! Pythagoras!'"

"Christ is spoken of as feeding a great many people with bread and fishes. This was not correct. \* \* God never gave power to any spirit or object of his creation to put aside any law of an object of his creation."—Hoar's *Bible as a Book*, pp. 27, 28.

Speaking of the account of the transfiguration of Christ, the same "spirit" says: "This is true, except as it relates to Moses and Elias," p. 29. Of his miracles, generally, he says: "In respect to the miracles which he performed before the eye of man, they are to be taken as things of time, which have been and are now shown to the world," p. 38. Of the death of Ananias and Sapphira he says: "The people thought that it was a miracle, yet this was not the case," p. 47.

In order to degrade the Redeemer of the world as much as possible, he is not only classed with wise *men* (and some not very wise) as only one among them, but his wisest and most admired sayings are represented as having been *borrowed* from others. In the *Messenger*, p. 187, "Jesus, Socrates, and Confucius," are mentioned together as "the world's most immortal teachers." And Mr. Brittan, after having promised his readers lives and portraits of the "seers," "both ancient and modern," in the "*Shekinah*," inserts portraits of Pythagoras, Judge Edmonds, Jesus Christ, Benjamin Franklin, and S. B. BRITTAN! thus putting Judge Edmonds and himself among the "seers," and so far as appears to the contrary, on a level with Jesus Christ.

The following account of the origin of the golden rule, is from Mr. Brittan's *Shekinah*, p. 308.

"Do unto another as thou wouldst be dealt with thyself. Thou only needest this law alone; it is the foundation and principle of all the rest.—*Confucius*, B. c. 550.

"Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you.—*Jesus*.

"It is much more holy to be injured than to kill a man.—*Pythagoras*, B. c. 600."

Here the obvious design is to represent Jesus Christ as borrowing the golden rule, &c., from Confucius and Pythagoras.

In the 16th number of the *Messenger* a writer says:

"If I understand correctly the position of spiritualists, the theory of *super-naturalism* is precisely the thing which they are aiming to overthrow."

In accordance with this design, the following fling at the miracles of the Bible is inserted in the *Shekinah*, p. 218. Speaking of Pythagoras, the writer says:

"Perceiving likewise an ox at Tarentum feeding in a pasture, and eating among other things green beans, he advised the herdsmen to tell the ox to abstain from the beans. The herdsmen, however, laughed at him, and said that he did not understand the language of oxen, but if Pythagoras did, it was in vain to advise *him* to speak to the ox, but fit that he himself should advise the animal to abstain from such food. Pythagoras therefore approaching the ear of the ox, and whispering in it for a long time, not only caused him then to refrain from beans, but it is said that he never after tasted them. Those who have a firm belief in the stories contained in the Hebrew Scriptures will easily receive this account, as it is much more credible that a being like Pythagoras should speak with intelligible influence to the ox, than that Balaam's ass should turn and rebuke the sinful prophet."

The writer of the above, it will be seen, does not believe the "stories contained in the Hebrew Scriptures," but puts them down as far less "credible" than the stories he tells about Pythagoras. Indeed, it is the constant efforts of the "spirits," and of the self-styled "spiritualists," to either explain away or to ridicule all the miracles of the Bible. But to proceed with the creed of the "spirits:"

VIII. *The Bible is the work of disembodied human spirits, and not the Word of God.*

"The seers and prophets whose names are mentioned in the primitive history [the Bible] were mediums. \* \* It was in this manner that the writings of the Bible, which have been properly termed the Scriptures, were originated. \* \* \* Therefore will the spirits assure the world that the Bible is not the direct and infallible Word of God. \* \* \* The spirits would claim the authorship of these records as they were primarily given to the world."—"*Spirits*" through *R. P. Ambler—Teacher*, p. 46.

"The Bible, when first written, was nothing more than a book written through mediums, as I am now writing through my medium. Its contents were not composed of all the books that are in it at present. Some of the Old Testament was written by men who had no more power than I had to preach the gospel before I had my conversion."—*St. Paul, through Mr. Hoar*, p. 9.

Thus the Bible is degraded to a level with the infidel ghost-books, from which we are now making extracts. Read also the following, on the subject of inspiration:

"Revelation is one of the natural gifts which the Divine Father be-

stows upon his earthly children. There is nothing which is in the least supernatural in any of the revelations that have ever been given to man. But in all ages the influx of truth has visited the human mind in a mode as simple and natural as that in which the light flows from the sun, or the raindrops fall from the clouds."—*Ambler's Messenger*, No. 3.

Mr. Finney's views, when "under spiritual influence," are thus set forth by Mr. Ambler :

"Mr. Finney, in his lectures, passes high eulogiums upon the character and extraordinary powers of Christ, but denies the Trinity. He believes in a God of great controlling power ; but denies a God of special providences or partiality and vengeance : nor does he believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible," &c.—*Messenger*.

IX. *The Bible is one of the worst of books, full of error, and a source of profanity and corruption.*

"The influence and effects which have flowed from the authority of the Bible have been of the most deleterious character, tending to degrade rather than elevate, to confine rather than expand, and to crush and to destroy rather than to ennoble and save."—*Teacher*, p. 44.

In the "Spirit Unfoldings," written through W. Boynton, *John Wesley* is represented as saying :

"The men who wrote the Bible were not always under full control of the spirit communicating, so that many errors crept into the Bible ; besides, with interpolations and wrong translations, we have the truth greatly adulterated. \* \* \* The Bible has more good teachings than any other work, and has more evil ; choose the good, discard the evil."

In an address delivered in Cleveland, Ohio, Sunday, November 7, 1852, by A. J. Davis, we have the following :

"From the New Testament alone you may find the entire vocabulary of the profane man. And when any clergyman preaches against the use of profane language—a habit, like smoking and chewing, unfit for man—would it not be well for him to look somewhat into its origin ? Let him show the people—no matter what they say—how children learn to swear ; and where, from what source of corruption, the disgusting words are drawn."

"From the New Testament alone you may find." Surely it must be a "seer" who can write with such perspicuity. But, muddy as he is, he manages to convey the idea that the New



Testament is a "source of corruption," and this is one of the obvious designs of all his writings and lectures. If there is such a being as an infidel on earth, A. J. Davis is one; and yet he is looked up to by nearly all the "circles" in the land as the great pioneer and high-priest of the "new philosophy."

The esteem in which Mr. Davis holds the Bible, may be inferred from the following editorial remarks, taken from the "*Light from the Spirit World*."

"We notice that the celebrated seer of our time has recently appeared in the pulpit of the Rev. Theodore Parker, in the city of Boston. \* \* The seer's text for the occasion was 'All the world's a stage,' from which he unfolded his discourse, which is said to have produced a profound impression upon his audience."

Here we have a professed "seer" in the pulpit of a professed minister of Christ, pouring contempt upon divine revelation, on the holy Sabbath, by taking a text out of Shakspeare! In perfect keeping with the spirit of their great leader, the infidel spiritists of Ohio held an anti-Bible convention, in which the most blasphemous resolutions were presented and discussed, and the spirit-papers published the proceedings, and rejoiced over the movement as one promising great good to their cause. In the same manner, a slur upon the Bible published in the *New York Tribune* is copied at once, both by Brittan and Ambler, as a choice morsel for their readers. The following is Mr. Ambler's preface to the extract:

"THE PRIMITIVE HISTORY.—The book, which is esteemed sacred by the Christian world, is beginning to be regarded with a more searching scrutiny than is consistent with the claim of infallibility. When the veil of sectarian bigotry is removed from the mind, it appears that this book, though long worshiped as the embodiment of all truth, is not so altogether faultless and reliable as has been commonly supposed. The following statement of facts, which we copy from the *Tribune*, throws a slight shade on the primitive history."

"A. W. Hoar, medium," represents the spirit of St. Paul as going through the Bible, and speaking of the different books on this wise:

GENESIS.—"About as true as any fictitious work that is now printed," p. 10.

EXODUS.—“As good a book as could be expected in that day.”—*Ibid.*

LEVITICUS.—“Not directly from God, as man supposes,” p. 12.

NUMBERS.—“Such an absurdity as that [the facts stated in chapter 1st] ought to be cast into the lowest depth of the infernal regions,” p. 13.

JOSHUA.—“Almost the whole book is false.”—*Ibid.*

JUDGES.—“About the same as the others; and it needs no argument to show that it is void of inspiration,” p. 14.

RUTH.—“Without inspiration, the same as the others,” p. 15.

SAMUEL.—“A part of it is correct,” p. 15.

KINGS.—“Multitudes of mistakes—not correct—no inspiration,” pp. 16, 17.

EZRA.—“By a person bearing its name, without inspiration,” p. 17.

JOB.—“Written through mediums—would have been correct, had it not been that man destroyed its purity,” pp. 18, 19.

PSALMS.—“Written in the same way, and some of them are correct,” p. 19.

The rest of the books in the Old Testament are said to be “somewhat correct in the main” (p. 20); and in reference to the whole, this “spirit” of darkness says: “Let me say unto you, O man! at this day, in regard to the Old Testament, ‘MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN,’ ” p. 21.

In the same strain this “medium” passes on through the New Testament, exclaiming, as he passes from book to book, through the gospels, epistles, and Apocalypse, “not correct,” “mistake,” “fictitious,” “contrary to the will of God!” &c.; and as a climax, we have the following:

“The Bible, as a book, represents God as a changeable Being, changing so as to suit the different periods of earth. At one time it represents Him as a savage monster, sending forth his word to men to slay one another; and at another time it represents Him as a merciful Being, dealing out mercy to all the people of earth. At another time He sends them into a hell of fire and brimstone.

“Such, O man! are the principles the books you call the Bible are conveying to the inhabitants of the earth. O horrible!” pp. 91–2.

“The Old Testament, which Christ declared wrong and wicked, you are still calling the Word of God. \* \* \* Although your angelic fathers, by the wisdom of God, are allowed to come unto you, and do away with the wicked precepts of your Bible,” &c., pp. 93, 95.

In a word, there is no one point on which the spiritists are more open and undisguised than in their contempt of the Word

of God. There is not one in fifty of them that has any faith whatever in the Holy Scriptures; and yet the very "spirits" who declare, as in the first quotation upon this point, that they indited the Bible, declare in the same book, as above cited, that it is one of the worst of books.

X. *There are no such beings as devils.*

"The imagination of evil spirits is an image, only belonging to the human mind while such mind is yet in an unenlightened or undeveloped state," &c.—*Spirit of J. V. Wilson—Love and Wisdom*, p. 98.

"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.'"—*Telegraph*, No. 3.

"There are no *bad spirits*; that is, no devils or demons. Those spirits we have conversed with will not allow us to use the term."—*Supernal Theology*, p. 71.

"The spirits utterly disclaim all truth in the imaginations of individuals who believe in the doctrine of evil spirits."—*Teacher*, p. 116.

XI. *There is no such place as hell.*

"Hell, as I have said before, is no particular place."—*Bible as a Book*, p. 34.

"God, in his wisdom and mercy to man, has ordered that all men shall at last be happy."—*Ibid.*, p. 34.

In the ninth number of the *Messenger*, the spirit of Dr. Emmons is represented as saying:

"I was one of the Old School, a strong, bold preacher of the *doctrine of eternal punishment*; would that those sermons were buried in oblivion! They are a curse to the world."

On the twelfth page of Mr. Boynton's pamphlet, the spirit of *Lorenzo Dow* is made to say:

"Hell and devil are the creatures of fancy in the first place, and in the latter are mere personifications of evil and misery, which are all found and experienced when in the rudimental sphere."

Even Emanuel Swedenborg has something to retract upon this point:

"Friends, I have long wished to correct my errors—the errors of my writings. This was one of its most prominent ones, this antagonism of heaven and hell, of God and Satan, of light and darkness, of life eter-

nal and eternal death, which in contrast stands, but not in truth; only in my former rudimental misconception."—*Messenger*, No. 9.

Take also the following :

"The passive find no eternal hell; the spirits rap out 'no eternal hell;' and those spirits, from whom prejudiced mediums say they got their proof of an eternal hell, rap out that they are not sufficiently developed or advanced to be reliable; and the same spirits recommend Davis' Spiritual Intercourse to such mediums."—*J. B. Wolff—Telegraph*, No. 2.

In another number of the *Telegraph* we find the following "communication:"

"Who are you? (Answered alphabetically): 'Lawrence Corbett,\* the infidel.' Are you in heaven? Three raps then followed. Are you happy? 'Rap, rap, rap.' Were you ever punished for your sins on earth? 'Rap, rap, rap.' In what manner? It then spelled, 'By being debarred the pleasure of seeing God.' Is there any hell, such as is mentioned in the Bible? 'No.'"

## XII. *There will be no resurrection of the dead.*

This is taught where the resurrection of Christ is denied, and by representing the spirit as progressing onward forever, without ever alluding to the resurrection of the body. The doctrine of the resurrection finds no place in the "supernal theology."

## XIII. *There will be no future day of judgment.*

After having described the orthodox belief upon this subject, Mr. Boynton represents John Wesley as saying :

\* "Lawrence Cobbett" was an infidel, born in Manchester, England. This was the man who went to New Rochelle, N. Y., where the notorious "Tom Paine" was buried, dug up his bones in the night, and conveyed them to England, where he intended to have had them made up into *buttons*, to be worn by the infidels in a monster procession which he contemplated getting up in honor of Paine. But Cobbett dying suddenly, the bones of Paine were found among his bankrupt effects, and were sold as curiosities to the highest bidder. See "*Fate of Infidelity*," p. 75.

The reader will please observe, however, that though this spirit "answered alphabetically," he spells his name "Lawrence Corbett," instead of "William Cobbett," as he used to while on earth. What is the matter? Has the "spirit" forgotten how to spell his own name?

"All this I unqualifiedly assert is false; not a shadow of truth in the whole of it." See "*Unfoldings*."

To the same effect are the teachings of the "spirits" through Mr. Hammond, of Rochester:

"When will he judge the world? When the world do wrong, and when they do right. \* \* I know of no end to his judgment," &c.—*Pilgrimage*, pp. 119, 120.

"The day of judgment is every day with God, as long as the world exists."—*Bible as a Book*, p. 75.

XIV. *Christianity is a cunningly devised fable; an injury, rather than a blessing to mankind.*

"It is now proper to consider the inefficiency of the religion of the Church to renovate and reform the world. From a corrupt and polluting spring can flow no streams which will serve to impart life and vigor to the soil which it moistens; and on the same general principle, there can proceed no saving or elevating influence from the systems of religious faith which are intrinsically rotten and polluted. For long centuries has the religion of the Church exerted its influence on the world; and down through the channels of human society have flowed the murky streams of death, which have proceeded from the fountain that has been established in the very heart of the world."—*Spirits of the Sixth Circle—Teacher*, p. 99.

"In all the efforts of past centuries, this religion has been entirely incapable of promoting the true interests of the world. It has been unsuccessful in securing the reformation and refinement which it professes to have in view, and it has failed—signally failed—to create any deep and lasting effect which can be recognized as a blessing to humanity."—*Ibid.*

The reader will please observe, that the "spirits" are not speaking of existing churches as such, in contrast with primitive Christianity, but of the religion of Christ as a whole, from first to last. And what infidel ever spoke out more decidedly than these "spirits?"

"The religion which the Church aims to inculcate is a religion of form and ceremonies, in which there is not sufficient vitality to keep the soul from death; and the Church itself, being destitute of any animating life, is a dead and rotten organization, which is ready to crumble and dissolve."—*Teacher*, p. 86.

"The spirits have mourned that this has been the sad fate of those who have bowed before the altars of the Church, and they have seen

that the religion which is here born and nourished is the productive source of all the degradation of the soul to which these have been subjected."—*Ibid.*, p. 92.

"The adherents of the religion of the Church have been debased and contracted in all their thoughts, feelings, and desires; and that they have been deprived from receiving those pure delights and exalted pleasures which are enjoyed alone by the free mind."—*Ibid.*, p. 93.

While at West Winsted, Ct., not long since, the writer heard a Mr. P. C. Turner, whom Mr. Brittan pronounces "one of the most devoted friends of the spiritual cause," ridicule the Christian religion as "the Christian humbug." We use his own words; and yet this is "one of the most devoted friends of the spiritual cause" in all Connecticut.

XV. *Ministers of the gospel are time-serving slaves, full of hypocrisy and corruption, and the foes of human progress.*

"The priests, of whom I have before distinctly spoken, can, in your present state, do you little good. *They*, also, are in bondage. Your rulers, dependent constantly on public favor, cannot utter that thought, which has come from God, down into their inmost hearts. *They are slaves*; your rulers *are slaves*; SLAVES are they to those on whom they are constantly dependent; and they, together with your priests, would fasten fetters upon the people, and keep you, one and all, where you now are. They are unwilling to move onward, *because all motion*, ALL MOTION is unfavorable to their individual interests. They stand in the way of human progress. *They are*, THEY ARE its deadliest foes."—*Murray's Messages*, p. 139.

"I see you, your heads bowed down to the earth; but it shall not always be so. A better day is soon to dawn upon you. It must come. *Not suddenly*, my young friend; let not the inhabitants of your earth be disturbed. Important changes come *gradually*; and there will be ample time, as I have before said, ample time for the old teachers to make arrangements for themselves. They will go out, and engage in other and useful avocations; and let them go."—*Ibid.*, p. 128.

"And then he who *pompously*—O, he thinks, he thinks, of *himself*; that he is of *great importance*! O, he struts about on your earth, among the inhabitants thereof; and some of the people go down on their knees to him! But the light, my young friend, shall come; and he shall be stripped of that covering which now conceals him. O, *horror*! O, that *inside*! that *INSIDE*! We see it. With emotions of pity, of *pity*; we look upon it! His covering shall be taken off, and he shall stand up as he is."—*Ibid.*, p. 157.

To the same effect, Lorenzo Dow is represented as writing with the hand of Mr. Boynton :

"All Christians, or professed Christians, are idolaters ; they preach against idolatry, but they are paying divine homage to a created being. All are not thus hypocritical ; many are ignorant, but the priests, most of them, know better. When I say priest, I mean the clergy of all sects ; they are the worst class spirits have to deal with."—*Unfoldings*, p. 13.

The feeling of the "spirits" towards the Christian ministry, is apparent from the course taken by the spirit-papers towards different clergymen. As it is the great object of the infidel leaders in the movement to destroy Christianity, root and branch, it is very important to their success that, as far as possible, they destroy all confidence in ministers of the gospel. To this end, no opportunity for slandering the "priests" is allowed to pass unimproved. The *Telegraph*, especially, is famous for this diabolical work. Not only is the writer slandered in its vile columns from week to week, by the publication of the most unblushing falsehoods, but its wormwood and gall are poured out upon other ministers, and that, too, without the slightest provocation.

In the forty-fifth number of the *Telegraph*, Mr. Brittan tries his hand upon the reputation of Dr. TYNG, a well-known and excellent clergyman of this city. He represents the doctor as much annoyed by spirit-rapping in his house, and as saying in his pulpit that, "if this annoyance continued to increase, he should be obliged to abandon his ministry." This libelous editorial has been copied by the spirit-paper, and extensively circulated ; and yet the whole story is a fabrication, with scarcely a word of truth in it. Speaking of this article, the *Church Journal* observes :

"Our Philadelphia correspondent states that the papers in that city have republished a ridiculous paragraph concerning Dr. Tyng's connection with the rapping humbug, which originally appeared in a New York paper. Our correspondent is right in discrediting so absurd a statement. We have very good and direct authority for stating that the paragraph referred to contains about 'as many lies as lines.'"

Surely, Satan must be greatly delighted to hear gospel ministers thus slandered and vilified, and especially by professed messages from the other world. It is no small compliment, however, to the ministry of the country, that even on the showing of the "spirits" themselves, the ministers of righteousness are "the worst class the spirits have to deal with." May the God of all grace keep his watchmen faithful, and make them more and more a bulwark against every type of infidelity, and every species of delusion.

XVI. *The churches of the land must be broken up, and our houses of worship forsaken.*

In the *Telegraph*, No. 8, we find the following :

"This is the commencement of the millennium, and it will be established on the ruins of all churches. Sectarianism must come down before truth and love can reign among men. The clergy, instead of leading men to God, are barriers in their way."

In Ambler's *Messenger*, No. 7, we have the following :

"THE NEW THEOLOGY.—It cannot escape the observation of any individual, who will carefully note the movements and signs of the times, that there is a new system of theological teaching arising in the world to take the place of the old and threadbare doctrines which have constituted the essence of popular religion. \* \* \* Yet, though the theology which has been long cherished and defended by the Church is fast growing old, and is even now ready to vanish away, there exists an urgent necessity on the part of the true reformer to make his arm strong for its final overthrow and extinction."

In the same paper, it is said that "theologians and priests have reason to fear that their craft is in danger, and are earnestly inquiring : Men and brethren, what shall we do?" . So, in the *Telegraph* : "The priests begin to tremble at our progress, and to avoid the effect of our influence, have got up 'union meetings,' " &c. Ballou, Hammond, and Post, and indeed all the ghost-book writers, are of one accord, and unite in the common cry of "*Down with the churches!*"

"The true worshiper would scorn it. He would spurn you from him, should you come to him, and offer him gold and silver to engage in the praises of God. And the *man of black* stands there with solemn



face, and lengthened visage, and passes an hour, and goes away. Such, you call worship. It will pass away."—*Ambler's Teacher*, p. 130.

"The Church has lost its potency; it is no longer able to war successfully with reason, or suppress the rising and invincible spirit of investigation. Sectarianism and bigotry may retard the progress of truth for a season, *but its light they can never extinguish.*"—*Telegraph*.

"And may every true man, every reformer, join his hand, and heart, and power, in trying to elevate humanity, and to break up those huge and monstrous institutions, which only tend to darken his mind, to stifle the outgoings of his own nature, and to scatter death and destruction broadcast in the land."—*Messenger*.

Here the mask is fairly thrown off, and the design of these infidels to "break up" the churches of the land is openly avowed. But hear Mr. Ambler still further:

"Mr. Finney and myself have delivered several lectures in this city, which have been exceedingly well attended. Thus far, our lectures have been devoted chiefly to the pulling down of strongholds, and the dispelling of theological darkness from the minds of the people. It is clearly seen by spirits, that the time has now come when an open and fearless exposure of mythological errors is essential to the reformation which they are seeking to accomplish. Hence they will cause the mediums, whom they control, to speak plainly on theological questions. The ground which has been falsely deemed too sacred for mortal feet to tread, shall be examined by the light of reason; and the creeds and dogmas which are unable to endure the light, shall be dissolved thereby, and sink back into their native darkness."—*Messenger*.

In a "vision," written by Judge Edmonds, headed "*Spare the Clergy*," and published in the *Telegraph*, the people are represented as leaving their churches and ministers, and going off in droves after the spirit-rappers; and at length the minister also leaves the house of God, and follows his people into the "new philosophy." The judge has recently written a letter, in which he states that before he left for the South, for the benefit of his health (mental, as well as physical, we hope), he had terrible doubts as to the spiritual origin of his "visions." Like Mr. Harshman, he ought to have applied to A. J. Davis, to have settled the question for him whether he wrote from his own resources, or was assisted by some foreign "spirit." It is by no means strange that the judge should have some misgivings

upon this point; and if he does not lose his balance, and become a maniac before he gets through with his "visions," it will be next to a miracle.

XVII. *All civil governments and laws are wrong, and ought to be abolished.*

Upon this subject, the following is alleged to have been given by the spirit of George Washington, through the medium of Mr. Harshman :

"But O, how different is the case with those who have been illuminated from the spirit world! they need no arbitrary laws of human enactments to control their actions—no. They need no unenlightened legislative body, to meet in idleness and consume their earnings; to enact laws the most arbitrary and corrupt, to degrade and enslave suffering humanity. Those minds have no necessity for any human government whatever, they have been elevated by spiritual illumination above those selfish and terrestrial things; they need not the meeting of legislative bodies, for they are governed by internal and spiritual laws which are infinite in their being—laws of love, which govern the spirit of man in infinite wisdom and universal harmony."—*Love and Wisdom*, p. 180.

"Thus we desire to communicate to the nation that forms the front of spiritual progression, that your government is corrupt and arbitrary, and is not adapted to the government of spiritual men in the approaching era. There was a time when your government was adapted to the then present state of man's development, but that time is now going by. If you would introduce harmony into your nation, you must dispense with all arbitrary laws," &c.—*Ibid.*, p. 182.

"For as fast as man advances in spiritual wisdom by the laws of development and progression, so fast will he dispense with the selfish laws and customs of human construction, for they will become unfit for his government; he will see, by degrees, their unfitness and entire inadaptation to his more fully developed nature."—*Ibid.*, p. 192.

"The nation that is enabled to progress in this spiritual light, and under such spiritual influence, will be able to psychologize and reform the whole world."—*Ibid.*, p. 184.

XVIII. *The law of the Sabbath is of no binding force, and its observance ought to be disregarded.*

This follows from the rejection of the Bible as the rule of duty; and the "mediums" and "seers" pay no more regard to the Sabbath than to any other day. Many "circles" devote it

to rapping, dancing, and card-playing; and throughout their writing, from first to last, there is not the least reference to its sanctity. On the other hand, St. Paul is made to say, through "A. W. Hoar, medium," that "Christ had all days alike with him \* \* had no set time to work," &c., p. 43. I know not a man or woman who is prominent in this movement, who does not disregard the claims of the Christian Sabbath.

XIX. *The marriage institution is wrong, and ought to be abolished.*

The following is from the "Light from the Spirit World."

"Marriage is a law of heaven; the marriage of the spirit is the only marriage to abide in any condition. The marriage institution of man is wrong, and must be annulled ere the race is redeemed."

In the first volume of the *Shekinah*, p. 412, Mr. Brittan says :

"To change the entire structure of society is not the work of a day; nor can the transition be accomplished without a suitable preparation of the social elements. Those who aim at the *ultimatum*, without the appropriate intermediate steps," &c.

Here Mr. B. does not disguise the fact, that he and his associate necromancers design to change "the whole structure of society." This is the *ultimatum*; and he exhorts his deluded followers to take the "intermediate steps" to bring it to pass. He is now laboring most industriously to prepare "the social elements" for the much desired consummation. We trust, however, that if Mr. B. ever sees the "marriage institution of man annulled," he will have to go to the Great Salt Lake to see it; and as this feature of the "new philosophy" is now in vigorous operation there among the Mormons, he may perhaps reach his "ultimatum," without "changing the entire structure of society."

The creed of the "spirits" on the subject of marriage is clearly set forth in the *Pilgrimage of Thomas Paine*, &c., by "Rev. C. Hammond." On page 15, Paine is made to describe his own death. As he is dying, the spirit of a lady appears to him—one whom he had "loved in his youth," but who was

dead—and makes herself known. He says:—"We were united. Nothing but the form of marriage was wanting to make us one in the eyes of the world. We were married. I loved her," &c. And this lady is his "companion" in all his pilgrimage through the spheres.

Now let it be observed—

1. That the doctrine taught is that they *were married*, although no "*form of marriage*" had been observed.

2. Although they had never been married, this lady is his "companion" in all his travels, in preference to his first wife, who had been dead several years; his second wife, who had left him; and the woman with whom he was living in fornication at the time of his death. Thus the "marriage institution of man," as it is called, is set aside by the "spirits," as of no account whatever.

The following extract will throw some light upon the life and death of the hero of the "Pilgrimage:"

"His first wife is said to have died of ill usage. His second was rendered so miserable by neglect and unkindness, that they separated by mutual agreement. His third *companion*—not his wife—was the victim of his seduction, while he lived upon the hospitality of her husband. Holding a place in the excise of England, he was dismissed for irregularity; restored, and dismissed again for fraud, without recovery. Unable to get employment where he was known, he came to this country, commenced politician, and pretended some faith in Christianity. Congress gave him an office, from which, being soon found guilty of a breach of trust, he was expelled with disgrace. The French revolution allured him to France. Habits of intoxication made him a disagreeable inmate in the house of the American minister, where, out of compassion, he had been received as a guest. During all this time, his life was a compound of ingratitude and perfidy, of hypocrisy and avarice, of lewdness and adultery. In June, 1809, the poor creature died in this country. The lady in whose family he lived relates that 'he was daily drunk, and in his few moments of soberness was quarreling with her, and disturbing the peace of her family.' At that time 'he was deliberately and disgustingly filthy. He had an old colored woman for his servant, as drunken as her master. He accused her of stealing his rum; she retaliated, accusing him of being an old drunkard himself.' This is the character of the man who could write against the Bible."

The doctrine of the "new philosophy" is, that souls pre-exist

before they appear in this world; and that they are mated off before they start for this sublunary sphere, just as they should be mated here. But they seldom get together as they should on earth.

"All mankind were created male and female, in pairs, perfectly mated. The male generally comes upon the earth first, and is older, by few or many years (the difference being generally from five to twenty years); and they are generally located near each other, so that, if circumstances be favorable, they can meet and be united. But the chances are much against the union, as it is only about once in a hundred and fifty times that they meet in marriage on earth. Spirits pretend that they can ascertain who on earth are natural partners, and will sometimes inform them. Sometimes, however, they refuse, alleging that the person asking would be made unhappy by the knowledge. They perceive sometimes that one of the natural partners has become refined and pure, while the other is degraded in vice; and thus they think it best to conceal from us the fact."—Warren's *Supernal Theology*, pp. 79–80.

But the "spirits" and spiritists do not always think best to "conceal" the "fact." In several cases, they have informed men and women that they had not their "natural partners," and had better separate and be differently married; and in several instances that have come to my knowledge, the "new philosophy" has been carried into practical effect.

In one case, the wife of a man who was in California was informed by the "spirits" that her husband was dead, and that she must marry a certain young man.

"The next we hear from this misguided sister is, that she had been instructed by the spirits (*i. e.* they used her hand to write it out) that she must take a certain young man, named —, for her spiritual husband, and they (the spirits) would marry them; and, strange and incredible as it may seem, the simple youth was seduced into the ludicrous farce of a "spiritual marriage" with another man's lawful wife. A friend of hers, at whose house she then found a welcome home, charitably supposed that such strange conduct was induced by a fit of partial and temporary insanity, and earnestly, though ineffectually, endeavored to save her from the disgrace consequent upon a public exposure; and when it was found that he would give no sanction to the transaction by recognizing *such* a marriage (performed, as was pretended by the parties, by the spirit of her mother talking off through

another medium the marriage ceremony), and feeling no disposition, as he expressed it, to turn his house into a spirit brothel for their accommodation, they were instructed, as they claimed, by the spirits to leave, and directed where to go, to 'escape such bondage and oppression.' They obeyed, and found a cordial welcome in a family of believers (who, we will charitably presume, were about as insane or deluded as herself), where they were permitted to spend their 'spirit honeymoon' unmolested."—*New York Observer*, Oct. 14, 1852.

A similar case was reported to have occurred near Philadelphia, in the fall of 1852; and we have only to carry out the principles of the self-styled "spiritualists," to break up every family in the land.

Such are the religious views inculcated by the "spirits." From the "Great Harmonia" of Davis, down to the last ghost-book written, their "communications" are filled with the most loathsome infidelity. No creation—no depravity—no conversion—no divine Redeemer—no atonement for sin—no miracles—no Word of God—the Bible a source of corruption—no devils—no hell—no resurrection—no day of judgment—Christianity a curse—ministers hypocrites—down with the churches—down with all civil governments—down with the Sabbath—down with the marriage institution, and down with every thing that is lovely, and fair, and of good report! Such, in brief, is the creed of the "spiritualists"—a creed that embodies more elements of ruin than were ever before combined under any one system. Only let these views prevail, and they not only destroy every thing fair in religion and morals, but they upheave at once all the foundations of society; abolish the relations of husband and wife; and parents and children; annihilate all law; subvert all order; strike down all justice and right; and fill the land with anarchy, corruption, and bloodshed.

In this one system is blended more or less of Unitarianism, Universalism, Mormonism, Deism, Fanny Wright-ism, and Atheism; and at every point, and from first to last, it is diametrically opposed to all revealed religion, and to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Such being the fact, it is very natural to inquire as to the religious sentiments of the "mediums," and other leaders of the movement. For if it shall be found, on in-

quiry, that the spirit creed is composed of the views previously held by the mediums; and that the leaders of this "spiritual" onset against Christ and his kingdom are a company of superannuated Universalist preachers and infidels; there will be strong reason to suspect that the spirit messages all originate with themselves; and that they have seized upon this delusion as the means of filling the land with infidel books and papers. Let us inquire, then,

### WHO ARE THE MEDIUMS?

That there have been instances in which well-meaning and Christian people have been led into this spirit delusion, I am not disposed to deny; but nearly all the mediums, and all the writers of ghost-books, and editors and publishers of spirit papers, so far as I can ascertain, are infidels, or at least Universalists.

*A. J. Davis*, author of the "Great Harmonia," &c., is at best a Deist; and if he logically follows out his "development" theory, he will never stop short of atheism. For years he practised upon the credulity of the people in New York city and elsewhere as a "clairvoyant." For five dollars he would look through the body of an invalid, describe the disease, and prescribe a remedy. But this method of making money was too slow for the "seer," and he has been, for the last year or two, wholly absorbed in the "new philosophy."

*Charles Hammond*, medium, author of "The Pilgrimage of Thomas Paine," &c., was a Universalist preacher for some years; but getting rather a poor support in that line of business (as I learn from a correspondent in Rochester), he left his ministry, and went to writing ghost-books. I believe he has three different works already in the market.

*Isaac Post*, medium, author of "Voices from the Spirit World," is a Hicksite Quaker, which is only another name for a skeptic, and an enemy of all true religion.

*S. B. Brittan*, editor of the "Telegraph" and "Shekinah," was for a time a Universalist preacher in Bridgeport, Ct.; but became so "liberal," as he told me himself, that the Univer-

salists no longer invited him to their pulpits. He then went into the "rapping" business, and seems to find a congenial employment in editing a ghost paper, and delivering infidel lectures, wherever he can get paid for them.

*Adin Ballou*, medium, author of another "spirit" book, was first a Universalist preacher, and now preaches for a Fourierite community in the town of Milford, Mass. His book shows that he is now some degrees beyond common Universalism.

*R. P. Ambler*, medium, author of the "Spiritual Teacher," is an out and out Deist—an open and avowed enemy of the Bible, and of the religion of Christ.

*Charles Partridge*, joint publisher with Brittan of the "Telegraph" and "Shekinah," is a Universalist.

*John M. Spear*, medium, author of "Messages from the Superior State," by the ghost of old John Murray, "the father of American Universalism," is also a Universalist preacher.

*S. C. Hewitt*, editor and publisher of the "New Era," is a Universalist.

*Jacob Harshman*, medium, author of "Love and Wisdom from the Spirit World," has for years been regarded as a skeptic by those who have known him best, and has now shown himself to be a Universalist at least, if not a Deist.

*W. Boynton*, medium, author of "Spirit Unfoldings," is a Universalist.

*Alfred W. Hoar*, medium, author of "The Bible as a Book," &c., is an undisguised Deist; and the low and gross infidelity of his book, put forth in the name of St. Paul, more nearly resembles Paine's "Age of Reason" than any thing I have ever before met with.

*Mr Winchester*, editor of the "Mountain Cove Journal," is a Universalist. And so on to the end of the chapter.

And let the inquiry be made respecting the religious views of any "circle" in the country, and it will be found to be composed, to a great extent, of Universalists, Deists, and Atheists, and scarcely ever to include a sincere praying Bible Christian. These are *facts* that cannot be denied. They are seen and read of all men.



A few months since, the writer took occasion to speak against the spirit-rapping delusion at a camp-meeting near Oswego, N. Y.; whereupon a certain Mr. Tuttle, Universalist preacher at Fulton, N. Y., took up for the "rappers" with great zeal, and even issued a pamphlet, in part to vindicate their cause. This shows the sympathy between the two systems, so far as Mr. T. is concerned; but he is so small a light even among his own people, that I must not hold them accountable for his acts. Indeed, it would be a nice question to decide whether J. H. Tuttle has intellect and conscience enough to make out a fair case of moral accountability. And in regard to the other leading ghostmongers named above, I have no wish to afflict the Universalists by stating that these men were once with them; but I felt bound to state the *truth*, let the reproach rest where it may.

Now let the reader put all these circumstances together:—1st, the leaders and chief operators in this whole movement are infidels; and, 2d, the communications they profess to have received from the spirit world, and which they are publishing as revelations from the unseen state, are the very echo of their own infidelity, from first to last. Now which is most probable—that the dead have come back, contrary to the express teachings of the Scriptures, and selected a company of broken-down Universalist preachers through whom to wage war upon the Bible, upon Christ and his religion, and upon every thing sacred, both civil and religious; or that these infidel teachers have seized upon "spirit-rapping" as the means of filling the land with their pernicious doctrines? This last is the simple fact in the case. The books, professedly written by the "spirits," are, in all cases, the productions of the "medium;" and under the idea that they are "spirit revelations," many are induced to buy them, out of curiosity; and thus the land is being filled with infidel publications.

In no instance, perhaps, is this deception more palpable, than in the first book issued by Spear & Hewitt, of Boston. It is entitled "Messages from the Superior State; communicated by John Murray," &c. The book contains 167 pages, 101 of

which are called an *introduction*, and consist mainly of the "Life of John Murray." Then follow the alleged "messages" of the ghost of this old Universalist. But the trick succeeds; and that most pernicious book—the "Life of Murray"—with a new title, and a few "messages" attached, is having quite a run again. Let the people beware.

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## CHAPTER X.

### LITERATURE OF THE SPIRITS.

Spirits alone responsible—Mediums in the fog—Not to be relied upon—What have they revealed?—Spirit orthography—"George Washington's" spelling—Mr. Brittan correcting John Wesley's communication—A sublime production—Spirit poetry, from Franklin and Washington—Spirits forgetting how to spell their own names—Palpable forgeries—Spirit autographs—Spirit Hebrew—Translation by Professor Vail.

It was shown in the last chapter that the "writing mediums," and other leading characters of the "new philosophy," are mostly skeptics; and that the "spirit revelations" written by them (professedly by the spirits of the dead) are full of the most disgusting infidelity. Of the thirty-five or forty different books issued under these false colors, I know not of one that is not well-nigh a match for Paine's *Age of Reason*,\* and some of them even more loathsome than that horrible production. In this fact, then—the perfect harmony between the "messages" and the mediums, through whom they profess to have been given, in making war upon the Bible and the Christian religion—we have strong proof that the whole thing is a deception; that these "writing-mediums" have simply availed themselves of the "spirit" delusion to palm off their infidelity upon the public.

In the present chapter, I shall adduce further proof that, *in*

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\* Mr. Harvey's "Defense" does not profess to be a book of "dislosures."

*all cases, the pretended "spirit messages" are the productions of the "mediums" themselves.*

"SPIRIT" LITERATURE. .

1. It must be borne in mind that, upon their own showing, the mediums are in no way responsible for the ideas conveyed, or for the words or letters written by their hands. To prevent all interference on the part of the "seers," the spirits invariably paralyze their hands before they write with them.

2. In several instances, the mediums have admitted that they themselves were at a loss to determine whether these messages were dictated or written by disembodied spirits, or were the simple productions of their own brains. Mr. Harshman applied to Davis to help him to settle the question. In a letter recently written from Central America by Judge Edmonds, he admits that while here he had most distressing doubts as to the spiritual origin of his "visions," published in the *Shekinah* and elsewhere. The "spirits" themselves state that there is a great uncertainty as to the true origin of the communications.

"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.

And if the mediums themselves admit, in their sober moments, that they are not sure but *they* originated the "messages" themselves, how can they expect others to believe that foreign spirits are the real authors of these productions.

3. There is not the first idea in any one of the forty ghost-books, now before the public, that is a hair's breadth above the intellects of the mediums, respectively, by whom they have been written. They are shrewd and artful, or low and silly, just as the medium happens to be.

4. However many different "spirits" may communicate through a medium, the *style* and *general characteristics* of the messages are the same in all cases. In Harshman's book, the messages of J. V. Wilson, Benj. Franklin, George Washington, and Sir Astley Cooper, are all in the same style. The word "organism" occurs at almost every turn in each, and the composition and orthography are uniform, and horrid. Take the following as specimens:

"SPIRIT" ORTHOGRAPHY.

| <i>Mortals.</i> | <i>"Spirits."</i> | <i>Mortals.</i> | <i>"Spirits."</i> |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Spirit,         | Sperit.           | Existence,      | Existance.        |
| Essence,        | Essance.          | Control,        | Controal.         |
| Different,      | Differant.        | Erroneous,      | Arronious.        |
| Germ,           | Germe.            | Cruelty,        | Crualty.          |
| Need,           | Nead.             | Gorgeous,       | Gargeous.         |
| Influence,      | Influance.        | Horror,         | Horrow.           |
| Parents,        | Parants.          | Prevail,        | Prevale.          |
| Beauties,       | Beautys.          | Supremely,      | Supremly.         |
| Origin,         | Oragin.           | Ignorance,      | Ignorence.        |
| Capacity,       | Capasity.         | Absorb,         | Absorbe.          |
| Gone,           | Gon.              | Corresponding,  | Corrisponding.    |
| Anticipated,    | Antisipated.      | Perpetual,      | Parpetual.        |
| Pervades,       | Purvades.         | Positive,       | Positive.         |
| Greater,        | Grater.           | Practice,       | Practise.         |
| Characters,     | Charactars.       | Modeled,        | Moddled, &c.      |

This spelling, it must be remembered, is not by *ignorant* spirits, but by such men as Sir Astley Cooper and George Washington; and even "Benjamin Franklin, printer!"

The following communication was obtained of Mr. L. Bedell,

of Constantine, Mich., and is printed precisely as it came from the medium; orthography, capitals, punctuation, and all.\*

"A SPIRIT COMMUNICATION."

"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 mater to prove what we are, but stand afar off and Cry out to all others to keep away two. Now these shoud 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 on 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 to 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 Webster's Dictionary, or Saunder's Spelling Book.

The fact that, notwithstanding the mediums say they have nothing to do with the movements of the pens while the "spirits" are writing, the communications are all in the medium's style and orthography, is proof positive that *they* and *they alone* are the "spirits." An ignorant medium cannot counterfeit good spelling; and here the deceivers are caught.

In the report of the "New York Conference," Dec. 25,

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\* When we saw Mr. Bedell, he was complaining of Messrs. Partridge and Brittan for refusing to print his messages; and alleged that they were rejected because in some of them it was said that there is a hell beyond the grave, and that baptism by immersion is the only correct mode.

1852, it is said of a certain Mr. Willets of Rochester, "One fact he is unable to explain. The medium is a poor speller. His father spelled well. Yet, notwithstanding the evidence of its being from his father was undoubted, the spelling would be that of the medium." *See Telegraph*. But this one fact is the best possible evidence, under the circumstances, that the "medium," who is a poor speller, is the real "spirit" communicating.

#### CORRECTING THE SPIRITS.

5. So little confidence have the rapologists editors in the ghostly origin of these communications, that they do not scruple to alter, correct, or reject them at pleasure, when sent to them for publication. The two copies of Mr. Wesley's message through Mr. Boynton, one published in pamphlet form, and the other in the columns of the "*Telegraph*," are entirely different; and Mr. Brittan admitted to me that he made the alterations himself;\* and that he was in the habit of correcting spirit communications, when they did not come up to his standard of taste, as to what spirit messages should be. Only think of S. B. Brittan correcting the writings of the spirit of JOHN WESLEY!

Even, then, upon his own admissions, so far as corrections have been made in the so-called spirit communications published in the "*Telegraph*" and "*Shekinah*," they are messages from *Mr. Brittan*, and *not* from "the spirits."

#### SUBLIME PRODUCTIONS.

6. The following very sublime passages are taken from the "*Telegraph*," No. 6. As they passed the editorial ordeal, they have of course been corrected, if they needed it, and now fully comport with the taste of the editor.

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\* I am informed that this liberty taken with "Mr. Wesley" by "Prof. Brittan," was not very well received by Mr. Boynton, the "seer," through whom Mr. Wesley wrote; and that the two seers are now rather at arms length.

“MY NAME.

“To-day, the angels have told me that I was known in the spirit-land by the name of Love! O holy name! O blessed word! The sacred name of the All-Father himself; and therefore worthy to be my name, so I were only worthy to wear it! For like God, like man; like father, like child. God a Love, and I a Love, too. He the great Love, and I a little Love from Him! He the eternal Love of the eternal universe, and I a young Love but yesterday unfolded from His bosom! He the creating Love, and I the love created! We two thus infinitely alike in degree, and yet in nature but one, for both of us Loves!”

In another number of the same paper we have the following, that purports to have been received by Mr. Partridge, publisher of the “Telegraph,” &c.:

“I have told you that I want goin to levee 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 sorrow ways me down to earth—my sole is much deprest for all I luvud are in another sphere—The world was cold to me—My children erid 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.”

Mr. Partridge is a *matchmaker*, as well as a publisher of ghost books and papers; and “Jack Waters” used to peddle his matches in the streets of New York. Hence the remark, “I have cride matches for you many a day.” So the “spirits” help Mr. Partridge to advertise his match business in the most “spiritual” manner.

“SPIRIT” POETRY.

7. In the second number of the “Messenger” Mr. Ambler has a poem, respecting which he remarks:

“The poem in the present number, entitled ‘The Angel-Land,’ was spoken, line for line, to the inner sense of the editor, and purported to be given by Mary, Queen of Scots.”

The poem begins as follows :

“List, mortal ears, the harmonies of heaven!  
 Let earthly harps be silent and unstrung,  
 While to the enrapt sense those sounds are given,  
 Which through the spheres celestial rung,” &c.

And such a string of doggerel as Mr. A. gets off, and charges upon the poor “Queen,” we have seldom seen.

The “Mountain Cove Journal,” No. 3, contains a spirit poem, one verse of which runs thus :

“Like unto a globe  
 That floateth in the atmosphere,  
 The Orb that encompasseth creation  
 Revolveth in the glory  
 Of His throne.”

The “Messenger,” No. 4, contains a poem, entitled “The Spirit Home; written by spiritual impression,” and prefaced by the following note :

“The following lines were written on the 10th of April, 1852, by a servant girl, thirteen years of age, in the family of —, Charlestown, Mass. The fact must be stated, that the girl could neither write nor read one word previous to this occasion; and although she wrote these lines legibly under the spiritual impression, she was unable to read them when written.”

Then follows the poem :

“There is a region lovelier far  
 Than sages know, or poet's sing:  
 Brighter than summer's beauties are,  
 And softer than the tints of spring,” &c.

Now if the reader will turn to the “Psalmist”—a collection of hymns published by Gould, Lincoln, & Co., Boston, and used by the Baptist Church—they will find this hymn, No. 1174, and credited to *Tucker*.

The prose communications from B. Franklin and George Washington, through Mr. Harshman, are accompanied by portraits of their respective spirit 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."  
*Love and Wisdom*, p. 130.

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."  
*Ibid.*, p. 160.

It is somewhat remarkable that two "spirits" as different as those of Washington and Franklin should both speak of "the likeness of this portrait," as in the first lines ; 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."

# "SPIRITS" FORGETTING THEIR OWN NAMES.

8. In Mr. Post's "Voices from the Spirit World," there are several instances in which the "spirits" seem to have forgotten how to spell their own names. I will quote a few specimens, giving first their former names, as mortals, and the signatures attributed to them by Mr. Post, as "spirits:"

| <i>Mortals.</i>   | <i>"Spirits."</i>         |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Roger Sherman.    | Rodger Sherman, page 183. |
| D. Rittenhouse.   | D. Krittenhouse, " 193.   |
| Nat. Greene.      | Nat. Green, " 191.        |
| Alex. Hamilton.   | Alex. Hamiltin, " 192.    |
| Baron De Steuben. | Barron De Stuben, " 199.  |
| Cotton Mather.    | Colton Mathew, " 242.     |

Now the only rational explanation of these mistakes is, that Mr. Post, who wrote the communications, and put these names

to them, knew the names *by the ear*, but did not know how they were *spelled*. Hence the incorrect signatures, and the demonstration that Mr. Post, and not the spirits of the dead, wrote all the signatures. Surely, a man who attempts to forge another's name should be careful to ascertain how that name is spelled; as a mistake in the orthography will expose the forgery.

It is perfectly certain, that in every case where the names of deceased persons have been appended to communications, whether for publication or otherwise, it has been done by the mediums themselves. And this is what I call forgery, and of the very worst kind. It is forgery to the injury of the living and the dead; and that, too, in relation to matters of the highest possible moment. Think of those men of God who have lived and preached and written to extend the Redeemer's kingdom. By their piety, and zeal, and knowledge, and abundant labors, they have acquired an influence in the world for good; and being dead, they yet speak through their works, that live after them. But the spirit-rapping deception is started, and an infidel "medium" sits down and writes a communication, denouncing the Bible, the church of Christ, and every thing sacred, and signs it "Adam Clarke," "Edward Payson," "Roger Williams," or "John Wesley." Is not this a forgery of the worst stamp? The man who, on the day of my funeral, writes a promissory note upon the lid of my coffin, and puts my name to it, to defraud my wife and orphan children after I am gone, is a saint, in my view, compared with the man who forges a recantation of my faith in the Bible, and in Jesus Christ, the hope of my soul, and signs my name to it after I am dead. As things spiritual and eternal exceed, in importance, those that are earthly and temporal, in the same measure the forgery in the latter case is worse than the former; and the "medium" who signs the name of the honored dead to documents which they never wrote, ought to be indicted under the laws of the land, and punished as for any other forgery. It is taking a liberty with the names of others which ought not to be tolerated in a civilized country; and the pretension that their hands are "moved by the spirits," would be just as valid

an excuse for the forgery of a note against me, as for the forgery of a recantation of my religious faith. In either case it is deeply criminal, and deserves the scorn of all honest men, if not a term in the penitentiary.

“SPIRIT” AUTOGRAPHS.

As already shown in a previous chapter, the “spirits” have power to write with a simple pen or pencil, without the hand of a “medium.” In this way, it is alleged that some fifty spirits wrote their names on a piece of paper, in the room of Edward Fowler, in New York, during the night of the 22d of December, 1851. The signers were those who signed the Declaration of Independence, and a few others; and so important was this document considered, that it was copied cerographically, and published in the 9th number of the “Telegraph.” But a more bungling attempt at imitating the signatures of “the signers” can scarcely be conceived of. Whoever wrote it, and palmed it off upon the verdant “Edward” as a “spirit” production, it is a most palpable hoax; and yet it “took” both with Fowler and “Prof. Brittan;” and for a time created quite a sensation. But of late, the whole fraternity seem to be rather ashamed of it, and willing to have this “revelation” forgotten as soon as possible.

There are a few points in relation to this “mystical manuscript” that may be worthy of a passing notice:

1. The idea of seeing the spirit of Benj. Franklin with a *galvanic battery* under his arm, as described by Mr. Fowler, is extra “spiritual.” Of course the battery was constructed of *spiritual materials*, viz.: *spiritual cups*, *spiritual acid*, *spiritual platinum* and *zinc*, *spiritual wires*, &c. By this means, the spirits wrote “each for himself, by the aid of the battery.”

2. Why was this miracle kept secret so long? It occurred, according to “Edward’s” account, December 22, 1851; and yet we hear nothing of it till July 3, 1852—some six months after—when out it comes in the “Telegraph!”

3. Why was the first copy *burned*, “by order of the spirits,” and a new one written? Had the copyist made some mistake?

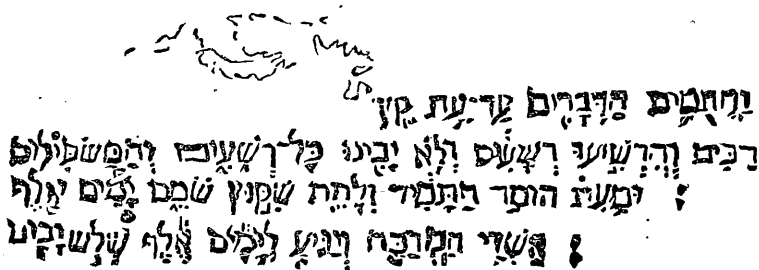
Or did he think, having copied the names once, he could, on a second trial, make them appear more like the originals?

4. Why is the name of *Taylor* omitted, while those of *Harrison*, *Polk*, *Jackson*, &c., are inserted? Could not the "spirit" find the signature of "Old Zach" anywhere to copy after?

But I will spend no more time upon this transparent imposition. Although Mr. Fowler is a brother of the phrenologists, who publish the "Supernal Theology" and other ghost-books, it is more probable that he is merely the dupe of the "New York Circle" than a wilful deceiver. His seeing Franklin, however, with his galvanic battery under his arm, is a strong symptom of incipient insanity, if not of something worse.

To convince the "skeptics" of the reality of spirit communication, it is alleged that a spirit came into Edward Fowler's room in New York, one afternoon, and requested him to leave, promising to write; and that on his leaving for five minutes, the spirit wrote the following, which Mr. Fowler found upon his desk when he returned:

"SPIRIT" HEBREW.



וְהַתְּמִים הַדְּבָרִים עַד-עַתָּה  
 רַבִּים וְהַדְּשִׁיעַ רָשָׁעִים וְלֹא יָבִינוּ כָּל-רָשָׁעִים וְהַסְּתִילֹם  
 יִסְעֶה הַסֵּד הַתְּמִיד וְלִחַת שְׂקִינוֹ שָׁמַם יָבִים וְלֹא  
 : הַשֵּׁד הַקְּלֹבָה וְנִיץ לְכֹלם וְלֹא שְׁלֹשְׁדָּו

דניאל

The above is a *fac-simile* of the "message," as published in the "Telegraph" for October, 1852.

That these characters were made not by a Hebrew spirit, but by some “medium” who knew nothing about Hebrew, is certain, from the following considerations :

1. The Hebrew reads *from right to left* across the page, and, of course, is *written* in the same way ; but the flourishes over the top, running down to the letter *ו*, and also the fact that the first *blank* in the lines is on the *left*, and the last (at the bottom) on the right, show conclusively that this was written English fashion, or *from left to right*. The poor ignorant “spirit” knew no better than to copy the passages *backward*. *Quere*. As the spirits of the lower animals sometimes communicate, might not this “Hebrew” have been written by the spirit of a *lobster*? How else can we account for its being written backward? Would a spirit who could write English begin the word Washington with an *n*, and proceed backward to *o*, *t*, *g*, &c.? And yet we have demonstration upon the very face of this Hebrew, that it was written in this way.

2. This Hebrew is said to be “Daniel xii. 12, 13” (Telegraph, No. 22). But the copyist, not knowing how Hebrew read, and beginning in the wrong place, and going the wrong way, has not copied Daniel xii. 12, 13, as he no doubt intended, but has given us detached portions of the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th verses, in a way to make perfect nonsense of the whole. This blunder of the “spirit” is perfectly obvious to any one, on comparing the “message” with the original Hebrew ; but being desirous of furnishing the best possible proof that this “Hebrew,” like the autographs, is a forgery, I wrote PROF. VAIL, an eminent Hebrew scholar of the Biblical Institute, Concord, N. H., sending him a copy of the “mystical writing,” and asking him to favor me with a translation. The following is his reply :

LETTER FROM PROFESSOR VAIL.

CONCORD, October 5, 1852.

Rev. H. Mattison :

DEAR BROTHER,—Yours came to hand yesterday. I embrace the earliest leisure moment to answer your inquiries. The Hebrew you sent me, printed in the “Spiritual Telegraph,” purporting to have been written by a “spirit,” I find to be partial extracts from Daniel, twelfth

chapter—ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth verses. I will give you a strictly *verbatim* translation of these verses, italicizing those words “written by the spirit.” You will thus be able to see *what* sense, if *any*, can be made out of this Hebrew, as quoted by the spirit.

*First*, verse 9. “And he said: Go, Daniel, for these things (are) closed up, and sealed unto the time of the end.” What sense is there in these words alone, “*And sealed*,” &c.?

*Second*, verse 10. “Many will purify themselves, and become clean; and make trial of themselves; *but the wicked will do wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but the wise shall understand.*” What sense would there be in those words only that are italicized? Let us put them together:—“Many; *but the wicked will do wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but the wise.*”

*Third*, verse 11. “*And from the time of removing the continual sacrifice and of setting up the abomination that makes desolate a thousand days.*” (The last two words are left out, viz.: מֵאֶתְּרֵם יְהוֹשָׁעִים two hundred and ninety.)

*Fourth*, verse 12. “Blessed is he that waiteth and attaineth to days a thousand (and) three.” (The last three words are left out, viz.: מֵאֶתְּרֵם יְהוֹשָׁעִים hundred and thirty and five.)

I will now give the spirit's quotations altogether in one connected whole, but will leave you to make out the interpretation, or to any other who will undertake the task:

1. “*And sealed unto the time of the end, the things.* 2. *Many; but the wicked will do wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but the wise.* 3. *The time of removing the continual sacrifice and of setting up the abomination that makes desolate a thousand days.* 4. *Blessed is he that waiteth and attaineth to days a thousand (and) three!*”

This mutilation of the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth verses of Daniel is not very creditable to the “spirit,” whoever he may be! He ought to be admonished, when he undertakes to quote Scripture, that he should do it *correctly*, and not take a *part of a verse* here, a *word* there, and a *clause* from some other place! and especially when he quotes the original Hebrew, he should quote consonants, vowels, and accents all correctly arranged; in all of which points he or his printer has failed in *several instances*. I have given as fair a representation of his words as could well be done by an English translation.

I hope, dear brother, you may be successful in exposing this wicked and miserable necromancy. It is disgraceful to our times and to our people. No doubt Satan will try to keep his arts concealed from you. The whole business is unmitigated wickedness, and cannot be tolerated without sin for a moment. \* \* \* \*

Very respectfully, your brother,

STEPHEN M. VAIL.

So much for "spirit autographs," "spirit Hebrew," and spirit literature in general. If the reader is not fully satisfied, from the foregoing, that all these "messages" originate with the "mediums" themselves, or with some other persons who have an interest in keeping up the delusion, it will be vain to multiply proofs.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE "SPIRITS."

Spirit astronomy—An interview with "the Seer"—Spirit cosmogony—"Development" theory—Mr. Davis' illustrious ancestry—Spirit geology—A spirit plagiarism—New motive power—Essence of spirit discovered—New mode of education—Taking the lightning out of a lady—"Spiricity" in the lump—"Tom Paine's" philosophy—The earth self-luminous—The sun opaque—True source of "spirit" philosophy.

As has often been the case when infidelity was assuming a new form, the "spirit" movement claims to be *very philosophical*; and the title assumed by the "spirits" for their dark and ruinous system, is that of the "New Philosophy." And as the more shrewd and artful of the spiritists are constantly laboring to make the impression upon the masses that there is a profound philosophy in the system they advocate, and in the communication of the spirits, it may be well to devote a chapter to the *philosophy* of the spirits.

#### SPIRIT ASTRONOMY.

1. A. J. Davis, the present acknowledged head of the movement, claims to be a great philosopher. Some years since, while only a clairvoyant, he had a full view of the whole universe, and published a pamphlet on the Solar System. And such a tissue of nonsense, absurdities, and contradictions, upon a scientific subject, I never saw put together before or since. Mr. D. saw all the planets with rings about them, like Saturn, but the rings of Saturn were seen wrapped about him, one over another, like the different layers of an onion! I read the

pamphlet, and by request of a friend in New York, went to see Mr. Davis, in a clairvoyant state, in order to test his clairvoyance by a few questions respecting the planetary world. But the great "seer" found out the object of the visit, and though he was easily magnetized by his accomplice (Mr. Fishbough, I think), he could get no "vision;" and consequently could answer no questions. I tried to get another appointment; but although the "seer" was to have five dollars for answering a few questions, he declined any farther attempt. These facts Mr. D. virtually admitted before a large audience in Hartford, Conn.; and if he had not, they could have been proved to his face.

In Mr. D.'s astronomical revelation, in which he describes the planets so minutely, he has only the planets *then known* to most other mortals; namely, *seven* large planets and *four* Asteroids; whereas there are now known to be *eight* large planets and *twenty* Asteroids. How is this, Mr. D.? Could you see no planets beyond what were then known and described in the books? And why is not this astronomical revelation reprinted with your other works? Is it true, as has been alleged, that you and your friends have recently destroyed every copy of the pamphlet you could get hold of?

2. The "spirits" who wrote the "Disclosures from the Interior" for the "Mountain Cove Journal," are about as well posted up upon the subject of astronomy as "The Great Seer" himself. In their "Outlines of the Solar System," we read: "The number of principal [primary?] planets revolving on the plane terrestrial in the solar system, is twelve," p. 25. Again, in the "Journal," No. 12: "The twelve planets of the solar system, whereof the Earth or Hierosolyma is a member, &c." But the planets do not revolve in the same plane as the "spirits" say; nor in any "terrestrial" plane; and instead of only "twelve" planets, as the "spirits" teach, all well-informed mortals know that there are at least *twenty-eight* planets. The "spirits" are more than one hundred per cent. out of the way as to the *number* of planetary bodies; and some seven years "behind the times."



## SPIRIT-COSMOGONY.

3. But the "spirits" not only instruct us as to the *number* of the planets, but also in relation to their *origin*. The following very lucid communications are from the "Mountain Cove Journal:"

"God the Life in God the Lord in God the Holy Procedure organized the first Orb-Creation in form of appearing as one globular ovarium, which was the germ of the terrestrial universe of universes; and within the globular was the embryo of the external of the universal, impersonal creation, as one curvilinear ovarium; and within the curvilinear the germ of the external of the universal, personal or intellectual creation, in form of one vortical ovarium."

"In the beginning of the orb-formation preparatory for man-formations; vehicles of the Quickening Spirit into intellectual formations, the universal concavity, and the universal convexity were co-enfolded and encompassed in the universal zodiac, and within the concavity was the visible disclosure unto the germ of the Terrestrial."

We might quote fifty pages upon this subject, not a whit more intelligible than the above extracts; but it is unnecessary.

## DEVELOPMENT THEORY.

4. "The great seer" is a great advocate of the "development theory;" that is, that God did not *create* the different orders of plants and animals, but that they have been "developed" up from vegetables to animals, and from one class of animals to another, until *man* was at last produced. The *fish* produced a *tadpole*; the *tadpole* a *quadruped*; the *quadruped* a *baboon*; the *baboon* an *orang-outang*; the *orang-outang* a *negro*; and the *negro* a white *man*; and the ordinary white man a "SEER!"

Well done, Mr. Davis. You have traced your pedigree back through a line of illustrious negroes, orang-outangs, and monkeys, to an ichthyosaurus or an oyster. No wonder you are a "great seer," with such an ancestry as you boast.\*

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\* "In descending the scale of animation," says Smellie, "the next step [from man] brings us to the monkey tribe. Man, in many particulars, undoubtedly resembles the animals of this tribe, more es-

In vindicating his development theory, Mr. Davis gives us the following very striking philosophy :

"Flour, damped with a little water, will, in a few days, or even hours, be transformed into *moving, living, feeling* organisms. \* \* Any man can develop oats from rye ; or *oak-trees*, from a combination of chestnut, pine, and walnut. If oats are cast into the ground at the proper season, and kept mowed down during the summer and autumnal months, and allowed to remain undisturbed till the succeeding spring, the oats will completely *disappear*, and a moderate growth of *rye* will appear at the close of the following summer."—*Approaching Crisis*, p. 51.

And all this by "spiritual impressions," by the "great seer" himself ! Well, henceforth let no good housewife be alarmed, if, after she has prepared her flour for the oven, the loaves should suddenly turn into mud-turtles, and the pies into sun-fish, and move off into their respective elements. And if any of our growers of ornamental trees wish to produce the oak, and cannot well get the acorn to plant, let them take a quantity of "chestnut, pine, and walnut" chips, get them ground, make the meal up into little balls, and plant *them* ; and we have Mr. Davis' word for it, that from the balls will grow up *oak-trees* ! The farmer, also, who wants a crop of winter-rye, and has not the seed, but has plenty of *oats*, has only to sow the oats in the spring, instead of rye in the fall, and the next season the "moderate growth of *rye*" will be produced ! Verily, this is not only a "*new*," but a very *accommodating* philosophy. Wonder if it will be equally obliging in the amalgamation of existing species of animals, and the production of a new species !

In relation to the above specimen of spirit philosophy, Rev.

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pecially in his bodily structure. But even in this respect, the lowest variety of the human species does not nearly so much resemble the highest of the apes, as the latter do the majority of the quadrupeds. In short, notwithstanding the attempts of some philosophers to confound their own species with monkeys, it requires but a small share of knowledge of the anatomical structure of animals, and the general principles of natural history, to convince any one of the folly and absurdity of such speculation."—*Philosophy of Natural History*, p. 309.

*J. N. Murdock*, a talented Baptist minister, and editor of the *Christian Review*, observes :

“Is this not a wisdom which challenges the admiration and reverence of mankind? Who after reading this can doubt that Mr. Davis should be trusted when he denies the Mosaic account of the creation? He who can change flour into living creatures by the simple application of moisture and the sun, should be allowed to develop a world without the creative energy of a God! If it be so easy to make oak-trees, and to manufacture rye, why may we not make ‘a wolf, a fox, a lion,’ a man, nay a universe? The only wonder is, that Mr. Davis has not told us how these things may be done, for HE must know. At least, he can find out by going into the ‘superior state;’ and after having told us so much of what chemistry can accomplish, in the way of producing life, it is absolutely cruel in him not to find out and declare the ultimatum of its capacities in this way. And there is another matter that we hope will engage Mr. Davis’ attention. Will he not find what common and easily accessible substances can be changed into silver and gold? This, and the other discoveries which our seer is bound to enounce, would be a realization of ‘the good time coming.’ O, what visions open before us of privileges and glories more precious and more inspiring than those of the fabled golden age! There is only one little drawback in all this. We are ‘impressed distinctly to say’ that this whole theory, of which Mr. Davis has given us such a prelude in the above paragraph, is a fabrication. There is not a word of truth in it. The flour is not changed to insects, the chestnut, the pine, and the walnut, do not produce the oak, and the oats are not changed to rye. If we had a boy ten years of age who could not account for the phenomena to which Mr. Davis refers, without resorting to such a theory, we should be strongly disposed to flog him for his stupidity. We humbly submit that a man who can conceive and deliberately print such absurdities as the above paragraph contains, is entitled to no confidence whatever. Yet this is the teacher on whose authority many of our citizens have surrendered their faith in the Bible; for whose crudities they have abandoned historical Christianity! In the sacred name of reason what have they gained by the exchange? What! May God pity them and their deluded leader.”

## SPIRIT GEOLOGY.

5. In his *Approaching Crisis*, Mr. Davis informs us that Hugh Miller’s *Footprints of the Creator* is “not at all accepted by those who know any thing of practical geology. For [says

Mr. D.] it is merely a plea of a clergyman in behalf of his theological faith," p. 48.

"Now we would like to know," says Mr. Murdock, "from some better source than Mr. Davis' 'impressions,' whether such men as Sir Roderrick Murchison, Sir David Brewster, Sir Charles Lyell, Dr. Buckland, Dr. Anderson, and Dr. Hitchcock, who have all of them unqualifiedly endorsed this book, are to be put down as novices in geological science, by the unsupported assertion of a man whose highest claim to credence, as asserted by his friends, is, that he is illiterate and ignorant! Besides, we would like to know whether Mr. Davis was 'impressed' to class Mr. Miller as a 'clergyman.' We are decidedly impressed that the talented author of the 'Footprints' has never yet assumed the cloth. He has been a stone mason, and a bank clerk, and he is now the editor of a political paper in the city of Edinburgh, and a practical geologist."

6. In noticing some other points in Mr. Davis' philosophy, Mr. Murdock proceeds:

"In replying to Dr. Bushnell's assertion, that the fossil remains of a perfectly vertebrated fish had been discovered in one of the lower strata of rocks, Mr. Davis says: 'I have tried to discover the location of that fish-skeleton, and I do not find such a fact in nature.' Of course not! So this fact (which Mr. D. admits is asserted by three or four authors; though instead of one fish, as he ignorantly supposes, there were hundreds), bearing so heavily on the 'development' theory of creation, is done for! To be sure, this oracle has made no specific investigations, nor examined any competent witnesses, on this point, but has simply gone into the 'superior state,' in his chamber in Hartford, and under such conditions sifted the matter thoroughly! Who will ever dare to assert the existence of such fossil, since Mr. Davis has tested its non-existence by a method so infallible! Who will have the temerity to assume that Nature has any secrets which she refuses to disclose to such a seer as Mr. Andrew Jackson Davis!"

#### ANOTHER SPIRIT PLAGIARISM.

7. Not long since, Mr. Davis issued four articles in that scurrilous paper, the *Hartford Times*, on the "*Philosophy of producing and controlling the fall of Rain.*" He professed to write them, not by his own thought 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," &c. And every few paragraphs we find: "I am impressed to write;"—"it is my impression;"—"I see;"—"my impressions now lead me to a continuation of the philosophy of *rain*," &c. 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 brain 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. Now what are the facts in the case?

Some months since, a *Mr. Daniel Vaughan*, of Covington, Ky., published a circular containing a new theory for producing rain by artificial means. This circular was distributed among the members of the "American Association for the Advancement of Science;" and afterwards published in "*Buchan's Journal of Man*." 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 in the "*Times*," setting forth Mr. Vaughan's theory as an original theory *revealed* to *himself* by the "spirits!" And the pliant editor of the "*Times*" knew no better than to publish the borrowed thunder in his paper, as a genuine revelation from Mr. Davis!

The title of Mr. Vaughan's article is—"On the Causes of Rain, and the possibility of modifying them by Art."—*Journal of Man*, for Jan. 1853, p. 20. This Mr. Davis changes to the "Philosophy of Producing and Controlling the Fall of Rain." What difference is there in the sense?

Again: Mr. Vaughan says: "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 vapor, and of different temperatures, will, when they approach and mix together, become overcharged with the moisture, and a part of it would [will ?] of necessity be precipitated in the form of rain to the earth."

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

“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,” &c.—*New York Tribune*, March 25, 1853.

And yet this same Mr. Davis succeeds in making hundreds believe that he does not get his knowledge from books, like other private students, but obtains it by intuition, or by “spiritual impression !”

But notwithstanding the liberty Mr. D. has taken with Mr. Vaughan’s theory, he endeavors to mix in a few thoughts of his own; and whenever he attempts to stand alone for a few paragraphs, he manifests the most deplorable ignorance of the first principles of Natural Science. But we leave this part of the “new philosophy” to be tested by experiment. Let Mr. D. get up his mammoth “battery” and “Leyden jar,” if he has any faith in his own “impressions,” and we guarantee abundant patronage and high prices for all the showers he can manufacture.

## NEW MOTIVE POWER.

6. The "spirits" have "impressed" Mr. Davis, that the only real motive power in existence, is the human will. Upon this revelation an intelligent editor says :

"Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie seer, has discovered that all sorts of machinery, locomotives, engines, &c., &c., can be driven by the power of the human will. He prints his paper, 'The Universal Hum,' by just looking into the office and nodding at the press. This is ahead of Hoe."

So the discovery of *Ericsson* is superseded already ; and we may soon expect to see trains of cars drawn, and ships propelled by the mere "will" of some modern "seer."

7. In speaking of the spheres, the "spirits" say "the second is above the atmosphere, about *six miles in height*."—*Supernal Theology*, p. 75. But the atmosphere is known to be from *forty-five* to *sixty* miles in height ; so that the "new philosophy" is sadly at fault as to the height of the atmosphere.

## SPIRITUAL ESSENCE DISCOVERED.

8. The "spirits" teach that *spirit* is the same as *electricity*.

"Spirit is matter sublimated. Mind is the result of spirit. Spirit is matter sublimated ; spirit, or the life principle, pervades all matter. Spirit is the life of the soul ; life is electricity ; natural life is electricity in its grosser form : spiritual life is electricity in its exceedingly refined state."—*Boynton's Unfoldings*, p. 14.

The "spirits of the sixth circle" inform us that the spirit is made of "electricity, magnetism," and "a spark of fire."—*Teacher*, pp. 24–27. In the Philadelphia History, p. 95, a spirit is asked,—“Is the spirit matter highly etherealized?” Ans. “No ; its electrical combination is all that is material.” This spirit flatly contradicts “Matthew Henry,” as cited above. But Mr. Ballou endorses Matthew Henry (*Manifestations*, pp. 11, 61, 77), so we must recognize it as a settled principle of the “new philosophy” that spirit and electricity are the same.

From this item of the spirit philosophy, the following conclusions necessarily flow :—(1.) If spirit is electricity, then spirit is matter. Who, then, are the “materialists”—they who

deny the materiality of the soul, or those who say it is composed of electricity or magnetism, and even declare openly that "spirit is matter sublimated?" (2.) If electricity and the spirit of man are the same, then a Leyden jar, well charged with electricity, ought to be able to *think and reason*. Why not? It has a "spirit" in it, and *spirits* ought to possess more or less *intelligence*. (4.) If spirit and electricity are identical, then the more electricity the more mind. If, therefore, a student is dull and tardy in his studies, and seems to be rather below par as to intellect, we can easily supply the deficiency by placing him upon an insulating stool, and charging him up with "spiricity,"\* till his hair stands out in all directions. He will then be able to manage Euclid, Greek verbs, or any thing else. A couple of Leyden jars, one each side of his head, and kept well charged, might answer the same purpose.

This splendid discovery may also be applied to *oratory*. Let the weak-minded and ignorant lecturer, for instance, speak from an insulated platform; and let some one keep the electrical machine in motion, and keep him well supplied with "spiricity" during his lecture. He will then speak with unwonted interest and power. We suggest that this philosophy be tried at once upon Messrs. Fishbough, Finney, and Ambler, if not upon Mr. Davis himself.

#### TAKING LIGHTNING OUT OF A LADY.

9. In Mr. Spear's "Messages," pp. 37-8, we have an account of his visit to a lady who had been struck by lightning. She was in great distress, and Mr. S. placed the palm of his hand opposite hers, and took the pain himself, &c. In this operation, it is said that he "took the *lightning* from its lodgings, and gave it again to nature."

Now if electricity (or lightning) and spirit are the same, we should like to know—(1.) How it was that "spirit" (electricity) could thus strike the poor woman? Is it lawful for spirit to dash against spirit after this sort? (2.) Was the lady any

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\* This is Mr. Ballou's name for the raw material.



more intellectual while she had this extra supply of spirit? (3.) How is it that the electricity *lodged* in the good lady's body? It is not wont to lodge thus in an object, unless it is insulated by non-conductors. Was she separated from the floor by glass, or some other insulator? Why was it that the "lightning" did not go out of this lady till Mr. Spear visited her, made a lightning-rod of himself, and drew it out? (4.) If Mr. S. actually "took the *lightning*" out of this lady, he took just so much of her "spirit," according to the new philosophy, for electricity and lightning are the same, and spirit is electricity. Mr. S. was taking the "spirit" out of this lady, then, instead of mere old-fashioned lightning. Really this is a splendid philosophy!

#### "SPIRICITY" IN THE LUMP.

10. Mr. Ballou goes still more profoundly into the electro-spirit theory. "Matter and spirit," says he, "exist both individuated and *unindividuated* throughout space," p. 11; *i. e.*, both matter and spirit may be found "*in the lump*," or not made up into worlds or individual souls. To designate this spirit material—not yet made up into "individuated" souls—he coins a new word, and calls it "spiricity," pp. 13, 61, &c. So, then, when a spirit is wanted for a new body, a quantity of "spiricity" is "individuated" from the mass, and becomes a separate and conscious soul. And the more "spiricity" is cut off from the original stock, the more intellect the person who receives it will have. Those who get a good supply will be wise; while those who are wanting in "spiricity" must be content to remain fools. Their only hope is in a resort to the electrical machine to splice out their intellects.

#### TOM PAINE'S PHILOSOPHY.

11. The "spirit" of Thomas Paine is extremely dubious on many philosophical points. Page 16 of "*Pilgrimage*," he says, "I doubt not my senses, but my sight." But was not his *sight* one of his *senses*? Page 22 represents the earth as a self-luminous body, like the sun. Page 209 he says, "the sun *re-*

*flects* rays of light," as if it was an opaque body; and we might go on with similar instances of false philosophy, taught by the "spirits," to any desirable extent. But the above specimens must suffice. They are sufficient to show not only that different "spirits" do not agree as to their philosophy, but that on this subject, also, the revelations of the spirits are the simple thoughts of the "mediums." And as the mediums are often ignorant, and, indeed, generally boast of their utter destitution of book knowledge, the "spirits" are made to teach some very bad philosophy. We have in this fact additional evidence that the mediums are not assisted by any superior intelligence. Their philosophy, like their theology, is just such as we should expect to originate in the mediums themselves, and nothing more.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### MISTAKES AND CONTRADICTIONS OF THE "SPIRITS."

Number of spirit spheres—Distances—Spirit homes—Intercourse just opened, and yet opened ages ago—Deceptions exposed by a rapper—Tom Paine contradicting himself—Lavalette and George Fox at odds—California mediums and election returns—Another medium in a fix—Still another ditto—Philadelphia mediums in error—Another spirit plagiarism—Books and no books in the Schools of the Spheres—"John Wesley" contradicting himself—Mr. Harvey's "spirits" all Methodists—Le Roy Sunderland done for—The Fox girls ditto.

WITH a view to showing still more conclusively that all the pretended "spirit messages" originate with the mediums themselves, and that consequently they need not be referred to any higher source; I shall now call attention to a few specimens of *mistakes* and *contradictions* on the part of the "spirits."

1. Most of them teach that there are seven spheres, rising one above another, and that the seventh circle of the seventh sphere is the highest point to which any progressive can ascend. But the authors of the "Supernal Theology" represent heaven

as beyond all the spheres. "The change from the seventh sphere to heaven is equivalent to death, and is almost as great as the change from the life on earth to the second sphere," p. 75. So, then, none are in heaven till they pass through another "death," and get beyond all the spheres.

2. In the "Mountain Cove Journal," the spirits teach that there are only four spheres surrounding our globe :

"The terrestrial earth inhabited by mortals is surrounded by, and revolves within, four essential orbs, which are the habitations of those of the human race who have departed from the corporeal form."

But in the "spirit manifestations" by Mr. Ballou, they say :

"There are seven spirit spheres or circles inferior to the heavenly," &c., page 52.

Surely the most ignorant spirit ought to know how many spheres there are in the spirit world, if there are any at all ; but here they seem to differ to the amount of nearly one half.

3. On the same page of the "Supernal Theology," we are told by the spirits that the seventh sphere commences at the distance of "four or five thousand miles from the earth ;" but the spirit of "Mrs. Franklin" informs Mr. Post ("Voices," &c., p. 122) that the "shining stars are the homes of spirits." Unless, therefore, the seventh sphere extends from within five thousand miles of our globe to the fixed stars, it must follow that there are no spirits whatever in the spheres ; as these "homes" are far beyond even the seventh sphere.

4. Part of the "spirits" teach that the intercourse between the invisible world and the earth has just been opened ; while others teach that it has been open for ages. After the writing of the spirit Hebrew in Mr. Fowler's room, B. Franklin is made to say :—"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."—"Telegraph," No. 22. In Mr. Boynton's "Unfoldings," John Wesley is made to say : "Never was more joy in the spirit world, when it was made known that a mode of communication was opened to mankind. Such a gathering to hear the joyful news—such rejoicing was

never known in the spheres," p. 10. So in one of Judge Edmond's *visions*, "Shekinah," vol. 1, p. 268, the Judge describes the inhabitants of the spheres as "rejoicing that a communication had at length been opened between the inhabitants of earth and the spirit land. \* \* \* They set up one glad shout, which rang through all space, and pointed to Dr. Franklin as him to whose practical and enlarged philosophy they were indebted for perfecting the discovery."

But the "spirits of the sixth circle," and others, as quoted, page 27, inform "the world" that they have been communicating, through the prophets and apostles, as far back as 3000 years ago, at least. So Mr. Spear ("Messages," p. 23) says: "These things are nothing new. Eighteen hundred years ago, the heavens were opened," &c. Now which shall we believe? B. Franklin, John Wesley, and Judge Edmonds, on the one hand; or the "spirits of the sixth circle," and Mr. Spear, on the other?

"Who shall decide when *spirits* disagree?" and especially when such high spirits and exalted "seers" as are concerned in the above contradictions are found at variance? How *can* we ever explain away the difficulty without impeaching the whole system?

5. After all this "rejoicing" in the "spheres, and "pointing to Dr. Franklin as the spirit who opened the intercourse between mortals and immortals," we are told by other spirits equally "advanced" that the discovery was not made by Benj. Franklin, after all.

"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."—*Supernal Theology*, p. 54.

Now this "spirit" must be right, for he had "taken about a month to make inquiries;" so that all the spirits seen by Judge Edmonds, and even Benj. Franklin himself, were mistaken.

6. The 24th number of the "Telegraph" contains a communication of nearly three columns in length, headed "Modern Inspiration at Mountain Cove," and signed "J. S. Hyatt." The substance of this long article is, that Mr. Hyatt had been among the rappers at Mountain Cove, Va.; had become convinced of their deception; and, as he alleges, defrauded by them. But as he has now left them, and Mr. Brittan is hostile to the Cove rapologists, the columns of the "Telegraph" are opened for the purpose; and Mr. Hyatt comes out with a very rich chapter of "disclosures." He shows to a demonstration that they are sadly wanting in "inspiration" at the Mountain Cove settlement.

7. On page 14 of the "Pilgrimage," Paine is made to say, "I was never more satisfied of the truth of my book"—the "Age of Reason." But as Mr. Hammond advanced with his writing, he discovered that the "Age of Reason" was against the immortality of the soul—the only truth of any importance which is allowed to remain in the creed of the spiritists. To set this matter right, he makes Paine say, "I was not without misgivings that my 'Age of Reason' sought not to gratify the mind in its hope of immortality. I said, 'When will the day come that I can make known the truth, and correct the errors of my work?'" p. 20. So the book is both "truth" and "error."

8. In Mr. Post's *Voices from the Spirit World*, page 115, George Fox is made to say: "I have not found any other part of the universe where man *commences* to live," &c. But in Mr. Harvey's *Defense*, his deceased brother Lavalette says: "I have visited every part of the earth, all the planets of the solar system, and many other worlds. They are all inhabited by responsible and immortal beings. They are in a probationary state. While creatures are in this state, they are confined to the world in which *their being commenced*," p. 55. Now which "spirit" shall we believe, "Lavalette" or "George Fox?" Mr. Post, or Mr. Harvey?

9. It is a very common thing for the apostles to be present, and communicate through mediums, as everybody knows.

St. Paul was one of the editors of a spirit-paper, published in Auburn, and it was from this same apostle that "Shadrack Barnes" received the communication from his sister "Caroline," through the Fox girls (page 141).

But in the *Supernal Theology*, page 95, the spirits say: "The apostles of Christ have not been at any of the circles formed in this country or on the earth. They are in heaven, except such of them as are appointed to govern the spheres, and they have not descended to superintend circles or write sermons for them." Will Mr. Brittan please reconcile these discordant spirits?

10. In the general anxiety to learn the result of the late presidential election, the "spirits" in California declared that General Scott had been elected; that Pennsylvania had given him 8500 majority, &c., while Illinois had given the largest majority for Pierce of any State in the Union. But the election returns proved all these spirit-revelations to be false.

11. The following is cut from a Western paper:

"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 steamboat!*' The rapper was too indignant to make any further revelations to that medium."

12. Another case equally in point was published in the *Northern Christian Advocate*. The writer is an intelligent minister of the gospel.

"The spirit of my grandmother told me that my brother, P. C. Ripley, died on his way to California, between Acapulco and San Francisco, on the Pacific coast, one month and nine days before this time, which was the 28th of June. He was taken from a ship, carried to the land, and there died of fever. He had \$170 with him when he died, and requested them to write to his friends. He wished that \$90 of his money

should go to A. P. Ripley, and the rest to myself. I called up the spirit of my brother, P. C. Ripley, and he testified to the same that my grandmother did.

"Now the facts in the case are these: I received intelligence from him, stating that he had got to California, and was well, and weighed ten pounds more than he ever did before in all his life. Grandmother also stated that she had been dead nineteen years, and grandfather had been dead twenty-one years. Now the fact is, they neither of them have been dead over ten years. She stated also, that the wife of my brother Willis died three months ago, in the State of Michigan. One month ago, I received a letter from him, and his wife and child sent their love to me. These are facts. Facts are stubborn things. Is it not strange, that strong-minded men, and women, too, will run after and believe such a host of fooleries? It is a perfect humbug. But I will not make any more comments upon it, but leave the facts themselves—to which I am ready to make oath, at any time—to cut their own way, by carrying conviction as they go. Let me warn all Christian people to keep aloof, and have nothing to do with the spirit-rappings.

M. W. RIPLEY.

"*Fayetteville, July 26, 1852.*"

"Not long since," says the editor of the "Daily Register," "a friend called for our spirit, and held a rapping conversation with it, but we can testify to having been in the body at the time."

13. At a circle in Philadelphia, the spirits were asked mentally—"Are these motions of the medium's hands all made by evil spirits?" "Yes!" "Can these so-called spiritual manifestations be accounted for without reference to spirits at all?" "Yes,"—and very emphatic.

"Similar developments," says the writer, "took place in sittings I had with two mediums in Worcester, Mass. The spirits made them rap with their hands. Through them both, spirits (of mortals who are now living) responded, and each one would have talked an hour—had I consented—uttering all the while what I knew to be false."—*Telegraph*, No. 12.

14. In the 34th number of the "Telegraph," we have a letter from P. B. Bristol, in which he refers to an article headed "The Formation of Circles," and says:

"It is self-evident that the spirit dictating this article knew, and could so act on the muscles of the medium, as to repeat *verbatim* an

article previously written by A. J. Davis, in "Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse." Second: a fact worthy of note is, that the spirit neglected, whether intentional or not, to give Mr. D. credit; and it may be a fact that the same or some other spirit gave the same article to Mr. D., which, however, does not to me seem at all probable. In view of many similar occurrences, and facts of a singular nature, I am led to inquire after the philosophy."

The "*philosophy*" is simply this—the "medium" copied the article from "Davis' Spiritual Intercourse," and sent it to the "Telegraph;" and Mr. Brittan the editor knew no better than to publish it as an original spirit message.

15. The "spirits" teach that they have schools in the other world, the same as in this; and that the Virgin Mary is the head manager of the children.

"Mary, the blessed mother of Jesus, in His Incarnation, is guardian maternal to all children in paradise."—*Mountain Cove Journal*, No. 6.

In the "Supernal Theology," it is said, "The brother had been writing a free hand, and telling what studies he pursued in the spirit world," p. 20. "Geology, Botany, Physiology, and other sciences, from many *books* upon each one of them, by different authors. \* \* The *books* upon these subjects are by authors unknown to us," \* \* pp. 27–8. But the spirit of young Ballou says, "I teach those younger than myself. \* \* We study to get a knowledge of all which earthly scholars do, but *not through books*," *Manifestations*, pp. 219–20. Now which is correct, the "Supernal Theology" written by spirits; or the spirit of A. A. Ballou? Do they have school-books in the spheres or not? And if they have, are they *printed* and *bound* there? And if so, have they *type foundries, presses, ink and morocco manufactories, paper-mills, and book-stores* in the spirit world?

16. *John Wesley* has spoken to us respecting his writings through two different mediums. The first is through Mr. Boynton, of Waterford, N. Y., and is as follows:

"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 forever cover them; and also, that if I could return to earth in my corporeal form again, I would teach quite another doctrine.”—*Unfoldings*, pp. 4, 6.

But 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 published works, are in all essential points the same that I now have, only my present views are much enlarged.”—*Defense*, p. 58.

How is this? Is John Wesley such a two-faced “spirit” as to recant his former theology through a Universalist medium, and reaffirm it through a Methodist medium? Or does this case show conclusively that the “spirits” are the mediums themselves, who always give messages in accordance with their own peculiar views?

15. Mr. Harvey’s medium was a professed *Methodist*. *Defense*, p. 51. Now on reading her revelations, we find them to contain the principal doctrines of the M. E. Church. In this respect they are the very opposite of all other messages I have ever seen. They talk of *conversion*, pp. 61, 63, 66; of *sin* and the *atonement*, p. 55; of *promoting the peace of churches*, p. 59; of *prayer*, p. 61; of *devils*, p. 61; of a *hell*, pp. 67, 75; of *warning sinners*, p. 67; and of the *resurrection* and *future judgment*, pp. 53, 57.

Of this medium Mr. Harvey says: “For several years she has enjoyed and professed the blessing of perfect love,” &c., p. 51. Page 61 a spirit says to her, “Be holy—be *more* holy.” Page 64 we read: “It is absolutely necessary for the medium to make the profession of holiness; if she does not she will backslide,” &c. A fine character, this, to profess holiness! But both Mr. Harvey and the medium held certain ultra-Methodistic views upon this subject; hence these peculiar

views, like those they held in common with other Methodists, are woven into the spirit messages.

Mr. Harvey was at this time a Methodist minister, and in regard to the messages through his medium he says: "The whole range of theology has been covered by the questions that I have asked, all of which have been promptly and satisfactorily answered," p. 73. All that came through this medium then, was, in the judgment of Mr. Harvey, orthodox Methodist theology. But the forty other ghost-books written through infidel mediums, are all infidel from first to last; that is, Methodist mediums put Methodist theology into the mouths of the "spirits;" and infidel mediums make the "spirits" teach infidelity. What better proof do we want that in all cases the alleged "spirit messages" originate with the mediums themselves?

16. *Le Roy Sunderland*, of Boston, was for a time one of the leading mediums in the country. To ascertain definitely whether the "spirits" actually communicated through him, a gentleman in New York sent him the following letter: we give it *verbatim, et literatim, et punctuatim*.

"respected sur I send one dollar if you please tu 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 Yorc 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, postage paid, Feb. 13, 1851. The following is Mr. Sunderland's reply:

"ELIOT-ST., BOSTON, MASS.,  $\frac{1}{2}$  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 her 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" to inform Mr. S. that "Mother Newell" was not "ellen's" own mother, &c.

The above is a fair specimen of the origin of the pretended "spirit messages." And yet it is only *one* of a *thousand instances* in which mediums have obtained communications from fictitious departed relatives, or from the spirits of the living. "Shadrack Barnes" of New York, got a long message through the Fox girls, from his sister "Clarissa," alleged to have been drowned on the steamer Erie, near Silver Creek. The sister had "jumped overboard" with "Julius Holmes," to whom she was engaged—was 23 years old, &c. But the fact was that Mr. Barnes never had any such sister; and the whole message was fabricated by the "Foxes," to supply the supposed demand.

17. A Mr. Park, of Georgia, an old bachelor of nearly sixty, was told by a distinguished medium in Providence, R. I., that he had been twice married, and was the father of *seven children*! In questioning the spirit of his sister *Sarah*, through a medium in Providence, Mr. Burr said—"Is the spirit of my sister Sarah here?" "Yes." "Do you love me as much as you

did in life?" "Yes." "Do you always know what I am doing?" "Yes." "How long have you been in the spirit world?" "Six years." And yet Mr. Burr never had any such sister.

Did space permit, and were it necessary, we could cite fifty instances in which the best "mediums" in the country have been thus caught. But it would be a waste of time to write or read them. Enough are already given to show that the messages are the productions of the mediums themselves; and that they can get just as reliable communications from the spirit of a living man, or a fictitious "spirit," as from any other.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### ASTONISHING REVELATIONS BY THE SPIRITS.

What have they revealed?—Davis' sublime philosophy—Judge Edmonds' "kitten"—Learning to write in the Spheres—Ladies most intellectual—Bloomer dresses to prevail—Ladies to pay addresses to the gentlemen—All to live without eating—"Pay the printer"—Spirit wanting gin—Spirits want money in the Spheres—Birds and other animals in the Spheres—Playing cards in the Spheres—Parties, balls, and concerts in the Spheres—A battle in the Spheres—Spirits won't serve the press—Won't operate in public—Deception and collusion.

It might naturally be supposed that if departed spirits were allowed to communicate freely with mortals, they would, in the course of thousands of messages, communicate *something* that would be of importance to the world. But instead of this, what have they revealed? What in History, Mechanics, Agriculture, Science, or Theology? What that is worthy of a moment's attention from any intelligent person? True, Mr. Davis has taught us *his* origin; and how animals can be made out of flour and water; oak-trees grown from chestnut, pine, and walnut; and rye from oats; but the more such philosophy the world has, the worse it is off. And we may challenge the whole "harmonial brotherhood," from Mr. Davis downward, to produce the first thing revealed by the "spirits," and not

known before, that is of any importance to the world. The alleged "intercourse" has now been open some five years at least; and thousands of "messages" have been received; and yet to what do they all amount? Just nothing at all. A man may wade through a thousand pages of their ghost-books, and not find a really *new* idea in the whole of them. There is no lack of old infidel objections to the Scriptures, and oft-repeated arguments against Christianity; but we have seen these before. Will not some "medium" undertake to collect and publish a statement of the *really important facts, &c.*, revealed by the "spirits?" We have had *smoke* and *chaff* enough; and we pray you, gentlemen necromancers, if the "spirits" have revealed *any thing important* to you, let us know what it is.

In the absence of any thing better, however, we shall give a few specimens of the "facts" revealed by the "spirits;" leaving every reader to judge for himself as to their importance to mankind.

One of the disclosures made to Judge Edmonds was, that when he was a boy he had either played with or killed a *kitten*—a very important revelation!

#### SPIRITS OF ANIMALS.

In another instance, the spirits of a *dog*, a *cat*, and a *horse*, came back and made some very important disclosures. Here is the account:

"Six ladies and gentlemen assembled around a usually sized mahogany table, and went through the usual form of laying on hands, &c., which shortly brought out a *rap*. By the desire and at the suggestion of a scientific gentleman, the spirit of some animal was called for. The raps gave it by the alphabet to be, in the first place, that of a pet dog. Several satisfactory answers were given relative to its name, that of its late master, time of its decease, &c. Not fully persuaded that they were dealing with the 'spirit' of a dog, one of the mediums requested that the dog would scratch upon the table, when, to the utter astonishment of all present, scratching as audible and as loud as ever came from the claw of the canine race, was heard upon the table. This was repeated several times. The next 'spirit' was that of a cat, who revealed the secret that it had been drowned while at a very tender age,

in a cistern, by a young lady who was present. The answers in this instance were correct and satisfactory.

"After this, a gentleman (who was a medium) asked if the spirit of a favorite horse was present. The raps were in the affirmative. The raps then gave the name of the horse by the alphabet, its age, the number of years it had been dead, the name of the place where it had been struck by lightning, &c."—*Boston Bee*.

Another "spiritual" interview is thus described by a writer in the "Westfield Standard" of Feb. 2, 1853.

"One evening a company of young people were getting responses from the 'spirits,' when one of their number suddenly made the inquiry, 'Is there a spirit of a *woodchuck* present? The rest of the company, alarmed at his presumption, jumped up from the table. He entreated them to be seated again, and make the trial, urging that it was possible they might detect some fallacy in the matter. Accordingly, they were re-seated, and in order to have every thing fair and square with the 'spirits,' they called on *them* again, and they responded as readily as though no *insult* had been offered. At length the spirit of '*Chucky*' was invoked, and, right glad to make the acquaintance of his superiors, he responded to the call at once by a good lusty 'tip.' Having thus established a communication with the *animal* creatures (whether dead or alive yet remains to be known), and finding *them* *equally* ready to communicate, they called upon other species of animals, and found them just as ready to help on the sport. In this manner, and by other experiments in which the 'spirits' were left out of the question; the idea of communication with the *dead* through such media was exploded in Halifax, and a more rational explanation of these phenomena established. And thus it may be exploded, in any 'circle' who are anxious and *willing* to expose its fallacy."

In Brittan and Richmond's discussion, "Telegraph," No. 41, Mr. Richmond says: "Ahies Cowles, in Austinburgh, called up the ghost of a horse—'Old Pomp'—and he *tramped* like a horse on the table."

#### SPIRITS LEARNING TO WRITE.

In Mr. Ballou's "Manifestations," p. 187, we have an account of 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. But,—

"Marcus Wilcox, knowing that 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, gentle reader, think of that! Learning to write in eternity! Think of your "spiritual" *paper*; "spiritual" *ink* and *quills*, and the "spiritual" training by a "spirit" writing-master! Really this is a hopeful system for boys who prefer to play truant instead of attending to their studies. They can play in this world, and learn to read and write in the next.

#### IMPORTANT QUESTION SETTLED.

The "spirits" have at length decided that long disputed and most vital question—whether ladies or gentlemen are the more intellectual. This disclosure was made in Philadelphia, and runs as follows: "Q. Which has the best intellect, men or women? A. Women are the more spiritual."—*History of Developments*, p. 93. This may be of some importance to the "Woman's Rights" party; for who will deny that if women are the more intellectual (a point which I shall not dispute), they ought not only to be equal to, but to have authority over the man in all things. The old scriptural idea that wives should obey their husbands must therefore be a mistake.

#### SPIRITUAL FASHIONS.

The "spirits" announce a great change about to take place in the fashions:

"And even, even the very form of the *garments*, which you now wear, —even these shall be changed; and those with which you now clothe your mortal bodies, will be looked upon, in a wiser day, with AMAZE-MENT! Hardly able will the inhabitants of your earth be to believe that such were *ever worn*. The new garments shall be beautiful, comely, easy, and pleasant to look upon."—*Murray's Messages*, p. 123.

Now for the Bloomer dress by "spiritual" authority.

## SPIRITUAL COURTSHIP.

We learn from the "Spirit Messenger," No. 8, that the present customs of society as to courtship and marriage, are to be completely reversed.

"The female—the *negative*—as society is now based, is compelled to attract the *positive*, in order that a union may be formed; must, without an advance, win the object that is to companion her through life—an isolated rudder laying in wait for a pilot. Can woman, thus shackled by society's fetters, be reasonably expected to form a *correct* alliance—get a good pilot? So long as woman is compelled to remain the *thing* of circumstances, the wooed instead of the wooing, the sought-for instead of the seeking party, just so long there must be, of necessity, incorrect unions—or she be forever stigmatized as *old maid*! Is it not a *sin*—to say nothing of shame—that existing restraints compel woman to remain at home? \* \* \* Then pitch fashion to the dogs." \* \* \*

So, then, if there are any "old maids" hereafter, they will be found among the unmarried gentlemen. And who will say that this is not an *interesting*, if not an important disclosure?

## LIVING WITHOUT EATING.

The spirit of John Murray informs us that in a short time we are all to live without eating. "The very *food* with which you now nourish your mortal bodies, *that* will be laid aside."—*Messages*, p. 124. This must seriously affect the produce market, and is a very important revelation.

## A PRACTICAL MESSAGE.

In one instance a "spirit" exhorted a delinquent subscriber to a paper, to "pay the printer."

"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 \$1.50. The friends of the departed paid us the money without hesitation, and the joy of the relieved 'spirit' was manifested by loud raps, tipping the table, &c."—*Palmer Journal*.

So it seems the "printer" got a dollar and a half by *that* spirit revelation, which was certainly of some importance to *him*.

#### SPIRITS LIKE GIN.

On a certain occasion a spirit rapped out that he "wanted a glass of gin;" and another "spirit" informs us that John Bunyan is keeping a *tavern* somewhere on the road up through the spheres. Whether he sells "gin" or not, the spirits have not informed us; but if he does, the tippling spirit should have been referred to John Bunyan for a supply.

#### SPIRITS BORROWING MONEY.

We learn from the "Supernal Theology" that the spirits need *money* in the other world, as much as mortals do in this. The spirit wanted "a certain sum of money in bank-notes," and "said he would pay it back soon," p. 102. But what did he want of bank-bills in the spirit-world? Will they pass among the "dwellers in the spheres?" And why did he not patronize the spiritual bankers at Chicago?

#### SPIRITUAL BIRDS.

We learn from the "Supernal Theology," pages 33–35, that a spirit who lives "in Swedenborg-street" in the other world, has her "beautiful canary 'Dick'" and "Margery's little bird;" and that the spheres are filled with "humming-birds," "robin redbreasts," and other "birds of love." But why this partiality in the selection of birds? Are the canaries, and humming-birds, and robins, admitted to the spheres, and the crows and buzzards shut out? Are the latter to blame for not being "birds of love?" Are they not as the Creator made them? Why, then, are they not seen in the spheres?

But if *birds* are to be seen in the "spirit-land," why not

other animals, such as scorpions, vipers, crocodiles, &c.? And where shall we shut down the gate? But probably they will all be "spiritual" birds and reptiles, answering to Franklin's spiritual battery; so we leave "Dick" and his fellow-warblers in the spheres without further criticism.

#### SPIRITS PLAYING CARDS.

The very striking disclosure has been made that "spirits," as well as "mediums," often play cards,—even the high spirits of the "fifth sphere."

"On one occasion, a whist party was formed, and one of the four being disinclined to play, this 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."—*Supernal Theology*, p. 55.

And if departed spirits not only associate with "whist parties," but play whist with them, and "frequently play whist in the fifth sphere," card-playing must not only be a very *innocent*, but a very *holy* employment. Only think! a company of "archangels" (as the high sphere spirits are called) around a whist-table in the other world *playing cards*! What a splendid example for mortals; and how encouraging to the gamblers of our villages and cities!

#### BALLS AND PARTIES IN THE SPHERES.

The "spirits" inform us that they have frequent *parties* and *balls* in the other world, and that *dancing* is a favorite recreation in the spheres.

"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."—*Supernal Theology*, p. 53.

Again:

"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 given."—*Ibid.*, p. 98.

So we have the same high authority for *dancing* that we have for card-playing; namely, the example of the high spirits of the spheres. If the spirits of the "sixth circle" dance and give balls, it can not of course be wrong for mortals to follow their example; and as we never hear any thing of the worship of God in the "new philosophy," the legitimate inference is that Christians, who are led away by this infidel delusion, had better follow the example of the "spirits," and go to dancing and playing cards.

#### JENNY LINDS AMONG THE SPIRITS.

Another rather interesting disclosure is, that they have their Jenny Linds and Sontags in the other world as well as in this.

"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."—*Sup. Theology*, p. 98.

So they have "great singers" there as well as here; and the people rush in multitudes to hear them. Whether they have a *Barnum* there or not, to manage the finances, the "spirits" do not inform us.

#### A BATTLE IN THE SPHERES.

Since the death of the Duke of Wellington, the spirits assert that he and Napoleon have met somewhere in the spheres, and that they do not agree at all. Napoleon asserts that the battle of Waterloo was not fairly fought; while Wellington contends that the battle was won in the most scientific manner, and that he could do just so again, if he had the same army to command and the same foe to conquer. To settle the matter, it is agreed that they will wait till the few old pensioners of their respective armies that remain on earth come to the spheres; when they will call the roll, and fight the battle over again; and the results in this case shall be final.

## SPIRITS WON'T SERVE THE PRESS.

But, with all their skill in revealing mysteries, the spirits *utterly refuse to serve the press*, in furnishing news for its daily issues. *Hon. Horace Greeley* has offered \$2500 a year, I believe, to any "medium" or "spirit" who will furnish him with the daily London news every night, so that it may appear in the "Tribune" next morning. But the "spirits" decline the contract. They will follow the "Foxes" and "Fishes" all over the country, to rap and tip for the people at a dollar a head; but when any thing is proposed that would be a *test* of their pretensions, the "spirits" are off.

## SPIRITS WON'T RAP IN PUBLIC.

To the above may be added the equally significant fact that the spirits will not "rap" or "tip" in public; except where the "mediums" can make all the arrangements themselves, and take the necessary precaution to prevent detection. In January, 1853, the writer delivered two lectures on the subject, in the Broadway Tabernacle, New York. The day previous to the first lecture, the following card was inserted in the "Times," "Herald," and "Tribune."

## A WORD FOR THE SPIRITS.

*Mr. Editor*:—Since the announcement in your paper of the lectures about to be given at the Tabernacle on Spirit Communications, a gentleman who claims to represent the spirit interests of this city, has called upon the writer to know if he would allow questions to be asked and replies given during the lectures. For obvious reasons this modest request cannot be granted; but as a substitute for questions or replies to my arguments while they are being delivered, as the means of refuting them, I wish now to say, that a table and chairs will be in readiness at the close of each lecture, to the use of which the "mediums" of the city are cordially invited; and if they wish so far to demonstrate the truth of their pretensions, as to exhibit the rappings, the involuntary writing, and the moving of the table without hands, before the audience, they shall have the privilege of doing all they can in this way to refute the lectures. And I would especially invite the "spirits of the sixth circle," who have done so much of late to enlighten us through the mediumship of Mr. Ambler and others, to be present,

and explain their communications. They need not fear a large audience, though we are in the "lowersphere" or "rudimental state." We hope they will select their best mediums, and give us indubitable evidence of their presence on the occasions referred to. Prof. Brittan will please inform his invisible friends by "Spiritual Telegraph," that they may be sure to be in attendance. Very respectfully,

New York, Jan. 6, 1853.

H. MATTISON.

According to promise, a table and chairs were in readiness, and at the close of the lecture, the "mediums" were invited to come forward, and give us specimens of their skill. But no mediums came. A certain "Prof. Owen," however, who is himself a great wizard, came forward to the *pulpit* without invitation, and after informing the audience that he regarded Mr. Ambler's revelations as "of equal authority with the Bible," read the following letter from the "spirits," the original of which I still have in possession.

#### LETTER FROM THE SPIRITS.

"The spirits of the sixth circle say, through Mr. Ambler, that Mr. Ambler, being previously engaged to lecture at the Brooklyn Museum this evening, finds it impossible to be present as invited in the Herald. But he would say that the spirits of the sixth circle accept the challenge to refute the lecture this evening, and will do so in a course of lectures to be delivered through Mr. Ambler at a time not far distant, of which the public will be duly informed."

This letter was written with a pencil, and in Mr. Owen's handwriting. The lecture that Mr. Ambler was delivering in Brooklyn, was the one described on page 77. On the reading of the letter, I at once informed Mr. Owen that the "spirits" had entirely misapprehended the nature of my challenge. I was not to invite them to refute my lecture by a course of counter lectures, but to give us a few specimens of kicking tables and flying men. Some one in the gallery inquired of Mr. Owen if Mr. Ambler had any engagement for the next Friday evening (the time of my next lecture), to which he replied that he did not know, and there the "demonstration" ended.

In the advertisement of the second lecture, Jan. 14th, the invitation to the mediums was again renewed in the following

words. "The 'mediums' of the city are again invited to be present to exhibit their marvelous phenomena, otherwise the public will judge whether the 'spirits' are not afraid of gas-light, and an intelligent audience." On this occasion quite a number of mediums were present, as also Mr. Partridge, joint publisher of the "Telegraph;" but instead of the "marvelous phenomena" desired, Mr. Owen came forward with a *written argument* in defence of spirit-rapping. This the audience refused to hear, but called loudly for the "raps." No raps could be got up, however, in so public a place; and so the audience were dismissed.

The "mediums" and "professors" will operate in private, or publicly in some small building, provided they can have time to arrange the "fixings," and to take the necessary precautions to prevent detection; but without such means of safety the "spirits" absolutely refuse to attend. I have invited them out before the public, in at least ten different places; and in every case they have shrunk back from public investigation.

Now why is this? If the phenomena are the effects of some physical or philosophical cause hitherto unknown, as some suppose, why not try the experiments in public as well as in private? Is any lecturer on Natural Philosophy afraid to illustrate his theory by experiments in Electricity, Magnetism, &c.? Certainly not. And if disembodied spirits are the causes of the "raps," why should they not delight to operate publicly, and convince the "skeptics" as soon as possible?

The simple truth is (as we shall show more fully hereafter), that the whole system is based upon deception and collusion; and unless the "mediums" and "professors" can be so circumstanced as to prevent detection, they can never be induced to exhibit their wonders.

We have evidence, therefore, from the fact that nothing important has been revealed by the spirits for five long years since they began to communicate; while much that is absolutely silly and demoralizing is attributed to them; and also from the facts that the "spirits" will not serve the press at any price, nor operate in public; that the "*mediums*" and

"*professors*" are the only "spirits" concerned in the movement. To suppose for a moment that any higher intelligences are the authors of these messages, is to slander the whole spiritual world.

## HOW THE SPIRITS TELL FORTUNES.

But it is asked—"If there are no spirits who reveal any thing to the mediums, how is it that they will inform persons of so many things that they could not have known by any earthly means?" Well, how is it that any shrewd "fortune-teller" will make three-fourths of those who have faith enough in their pretensions to visit them, believe that they really have knowledge of the "past, present, and future," as they pretend? No matter how this knowledge is professedly obtained, whether by "the stars, planets, and science;" by studying the wrinkles in your hand; or by any other method. The *fact* that most who visit such characters *think* they get their "fortunes" told, is notorious. The *philosophy* of this fact probably is, (1) That such persons are strongly predisposed to believe, or very credulous; and consequently greatly color the revelation to their own self-deception. They excuse the mistakes, and magnify the few happy hits. (2) The witch or wizard generally gets some clew to the history of the customer, through a third person; or by some word dropped at the time of the interview; and by a careful study of human nature, and long practice at guessing and deception, they manage to deceive three-fourths of all who put themselves in their power.

So with the spirit-rappers;—they are as often wrong as right, even with their very convenient method of divinings by a simple "yes" or "no." They have often been known to make appointments for interviews, and then send out spies to "fish" up something respecting the parties, by the revealing of which to "convince the skeptics."

I know a case in point where a young man received a very remarkable revelation through a New York "medium;" but a friend of the medium had previously obtained all the facts from the young man's mother. In another case, a spirit

“professor” told a “medium” certain secrets, known only to himself and wife; and then took his wife to the medium to remove her “skepticism,” by the startling “disclosures” of the spirits. Hundreds of similar cases might be cited, and yet there are a class of persons in almost every community who cannot yet see that the whole thing is a deception.

So far from its having any thing extra to recommend it as a system of divination, it has even less of consistency and truthfulness than the old exploded systems of “fortune-telling.” “If these spirits have found such a mode of communication,” says the Boston Recorder, “they do great injustice to themselves and to us, by abstaining, as they invariably do, from giving us any useful information about the world of spirits. They undertake to tell about the position of deceased individuals, but they offer nothing to add to present information about the future world. All the thumpings of the last ten years have not added a particle to what was before known of the world to come. Now what is the use of all this ghostly rapping, if it is a mere clatter without sense? None but senseless spirits can be engaged in it.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### EFFECTS OF SPIRIT-RAPPING.

Frauds by the spirits—Spiritual banking—Ruin of George Doughty—Insanity—Orville Hatch—Melissa Haynes—Adaline C. Moore—Robert G. Shaw—Samuel Cole—Ninety insane rappers—Remark of Judge Roosevelt—Tendency to suicide—Bishop Peabody—Mrs. Rich—S. W. Lincoln—Murder by a medium—Suicide of Matthew Langdon.

“By their fruits ye shall know them,” said the Saviour of the false prophets; and a more legitimate and righteous test can never be applied to any system of philosophy or religion. *Truth* always blesses. Its fruits are always good. But error never produces good fruit. It always tends to misery and ruin. If, therefore, the “new philosophy” was founded in



truth, it would be sure to bless its votaries: but if, on the other hand, it is essentially false, we might well expect its effects to be disastrous. Let us look, then, for a moment at the *effects* of the spirit-rapping delusion, as developed in the history of the last five years.

FRAUDS BY THE "SPIRITS"—SPIRITUAL BANKING.

A noted operation under this head has recently been "developed" in Chicago, Ill. The following "disclosures" are from the Chicago papers:

"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 closed yesterday by the interposition of the law.

"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' counseled resistance even unto 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.'—*Chicago Journal*.

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 even-

ing, 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 & 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 \$3000, 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 line of banking.

#### RUIN OF GEORGE DOUGHTY.

Mr. George Doughty was a respectable farmer of Flushing, Long Island. Becoming interested in the "spirit-rappings," and giving himself up to the teachings of a "medium," he at length lost his balance, and was robbed by the "spirits" of nearly every thing he had on earth. The following account of this most fiendish transaction is from the "Brooklyn Daily Eagle" of Feb. 25, 1852.

"A case of insanity, produced by the influence of the spiritual-rapping delusion, has come to our knowledge, which has for the present blighted the prospects of an interesting family, and placed an exemplary member of society among the inmates of a lunatic asylum.

“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 labored, 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 endeavored 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 realize 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 have unlimited restraint, had him arrested and conveyed to the New York Lunatic Asylum, where he now remains a confirmed lunatic. A telegraphic dispatch 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."

At the time of this writing, Mr. Doughty is still confined in the asylum at Bloomington. The amiable "medium" has not yet been arrested.

#### INSANITY PRODUCED BY THE "SPIRITS."

The effects of this delusion in the production of *insanity* have been most terrible, as will appear from the following slips, cut from different papers during a few months past, and from the statistics collected from different lunatic asylums:

MR. ORVILLE HATCH, of Franklin, Conn., has become insane, he having devoted considerable attention to the subject of spirit-rappings.—*N. Y. Times*, Aug. 20, 1852.

ANOTHER VICTIM.—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*.

ANOTHER VICTIM.—Miss Melissa Haynes, of Cincinnati, was sent to the Lunatic Department of the Commercial Hospital, a few days ago. The "Times" there says the true cause of 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*.

Last autumn, a woman was brought from the country to one of our hospitals in a state of insanity, from the 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, de-throned.—*Ibid.*

ROBERT G. SHAW, known everywhere as one of the most wealthy and influential merchants of Boston, the Fitchburg "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 \$1000 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*, Feb. 10, 1853.

A VICTIM OF "SPIRITUAL RAPPINGS."—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" mania, 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*.

The superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane in Indianapolis, Ind., 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 neighborhood. 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 for recovery."—*Report for 1852.*

**THE 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, Phil., Feb. 28, 1853.*

#### STATISTICS FROM INSANE ASYLUMS.

But we must not stop to describe individual cases. It is enough to know that hundreds have lost their reason and been ruined by this delusion. I have been at some pains to ascertain the number of inmates treated in the different insane asylums in the country during the year 1852, who lost their reason by "spirit-rapping;" and the returns thus far, in answer to my inquiries, are as follows :

|                                                      |     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| State Asylum, Utica, N. Y., .....                    | 17* |
| Retreat, Hartford, Conn., .....                      | 1   |
| Asylum, Somerville, Mass., admitted, .....           | 5   |
| "        "        "    Refused for want of room, ... | 3   |
| "    Columbus, Ohio, .....                           | 30  |
| "        "        "    Not admitted, .....           | 10  |
| "    Worcester, Mass., .....                         | 6   |
| "    Indianapolis, Ind., .....                       | 18  |
| <hr/>                                                |     |
| Total, .....                                         | 90  |

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\* This was the number up to January 1, 1853. But at this writing, there are several more. "We learn," says the "Albany Register," "that from Monday, the 21st ult. [Feb.], until Friday, the 25th ult. (five days), seventeen new patients were admitted into this institution

Here we have returns from only six of the institutions, and yet the number thus far reported amounts to ninety of our fellow-beings, bereft of reason by this terrible scourge. But the number made insane by spirit-rapping throughout the whole country is far greater than this. In reply to a note of inquiry, the superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane in Philadelphia says: "There have been several individuals here whose disease was connected with that delusion—a belief in which seems to be itself one form of mental derangement." While in Hartford recently I was shown a young man in the Retreat, who, on being spoken to about the "spirits," pointed out the window and exclaimed, "There is the spirit of my grandfather. Don't you see it? There it is, out there on the limb of that tree!" Poor fellow! It was pitiful to see the wreck of a youthful intellect—but the satanic deception had accomplished its work, and landed its victim in the asylum.

The statistics, as given above, are either from private letters received from superintendents, or from the printed reports of the several institutions. Now, as only a small portion of the insane of the country ever go to any asylum, and yet we *know* of nearly one hundred who have either been treated in, or have applied for admission into asylums during the past year, whose insanity has been caused by the spirit-rapping movement, it is a fair presumption that at least *five hundred persons* have been bereft of reason, by this one cause, during the last five years. How many families broken up, children bereft of fathers or mothers, earthly prospects obscured, and hopes blighted forever! And all for what? That a set of vagabond "mediums" may fill their coffers at the expense of their well-meaning, but too credulous fellow-beings, and a company of infidel editors and ghost-book writers may flood the land with their ruinous publications.

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—a greater number than ever before admitted in so brief a space of time. There is no doubt but this increase is owing, in a great measure, to the unhealthy state of excitement caused by the spiritual humbugs of the day."

Of the spirit-rapping inmates at Indianapolis, the superintendent remarks :

"A new cause of insanity has within a recent period been developed, and by reference to the table of alleged causes, it will be seen that no less than eighteen have been added to the number of our inmates, during the year, from the so-called 'spiritual rappings.' \* \*

"Of the eighteen cases of insanity alleged to have been caused by 'spiritual rappings,' thirteen were men, and five women. The form of insanity when admitted, was that of raving mania in fifteen, characterized by loud and incoherent vociferations. In two, it was deep melancholy, and in one, imbecility, approaching to *dementia*. In all except three, the minds of the unfortunate subjects of this modern delusion, were in complete ruins, there being left scarcely one vestige of rational thought, or ability to reason. \* \*

"Their profession of religion was as follows: Methodists, three; Christian Church, two; infidels, two; Mormon, one; Swedenborgian, one; Baptist, one; making no profession of religion, eight."

Such are the effects of this terrible scourge upon the intellects of its deluded votaries. Its tendency is only to ruin. And when shall the plague be stayed? When will the people see that they are closing their eyes to the strongest possible evidence of collusion and trickery; and being defrauded of religion, self-respect, property, and reason?

In summing up his remarks on the case of Mr. Doughty, *Judge Roosevelt* remarked: "If things go on at this rate, we shall have to enlarge our lunatic asylums, and establish a bedlam wherever there is a rapping circle announced."

But forgery, robbery, and insanity are not the worst accompaniments of this delusion. In its train have followed *suicide and murder!* The whole system is red with the blood of our fellow-men.

#### TENDENCY TO SUICIDE.

In the last Report of the Ohio Lunatic Asylum, the Superintendent observes :

"CAUSES OF INSANITY.—Among these, nothing is more worthy of notice than the large and rapidly increasing number of cases caused by the present popular delusion, 'Spirit-Rappings.' In these the suicidal



tendency is especially prominent, while the constant resting of the thoughts upon the scenes of an imaginary world, renders it the more difficult to attract attention to those of the real. Such cases, though recent, have proved more unfavorable than any others of the same class."

The fearful tendency here spoken of has, in many instances, resulted in premature death.

#### CASES OF SELF-DESTRUCTION.

"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 neighborhood, as to completely unbalance his mind. \* \* \* The case of Mr. Peabody is but one of a long list of the insane, or partially such, caused by modern rappings and spiritualism as taught and practiced by the Fishes, Foxes, Finneys, Davises, and their followers."—*Cleveland (O.) Herald*.

"A Mrs. Rich, of Kirtland, was taken suddenly, in what appeared to be a fit, about four o'clock on the morning of Feb. 18. Her family supposed her to be in a mesmeric trance, and consulted a couple of the 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 Feb. 23, when she died."—*Geauga (O.) Republic*.

"A poor fellow in Malone, Franklin county, N. Y., 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 inst., at 4 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."—*N. Y. Times*.

The name of this person, as we learn from the *Malone Jeffersonian*, is S. W. Lincoln.

A lady in Livingston Co., N. Y., sat up and read the "*Telegraph*" till late at night, and then went out and pitched headforemost into a well, and was taken out dead.

A man in Barre, Mass., was instructed by the "spirits" to

take the life of his wife and children; and, but for the timely interposition of others, would have accomplished his purpose.

#### MURDER BY A MEDIUM.

*Almira Bezely*, a rapping medium, of Providence, R. I., predicted the death of her infant brother by the rappings; and then bought arsenic and gave him, and took his life. On being arrested, she confessed the crime, and the causes which led to its commission.

On her trial for 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 practiced, in regard to these rappings."—*Providence Journal*, Oct. 22, 1851.

"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 at about the time predicted."—*Ibid.*

"I do not think she could have committed this crime without this influence [that of spirit-rapping]. I suppose the deception and fraud practiced had weakened her moral principle, and prepared the way to crime."—*Ibid.*

And what more can we expect of persons who will break down all conscience, and give themselves up to rob their fellow-beings by a most blasphemous deception? Why should they not resort to almost any crime that will help to establish their fame as "mediums," or conceal their abominations?

#### SUICIDE OF MATTHEW LANGDON.

*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 taken before the coroner's jury, and published in the *New York Times* of Jan 8, 1853, will show the real cause of this melancholy 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 1 and 2 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 reading 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-av. \* \* 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 Bellvue 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 rendered 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 media. We also recommend the Grand Jury to take measures for the suppression of circle meetings at the houses named in the testimony."

A righteous verdict, only it does not go far enough. Not only should the Grand Jury "take measures to suppress the circles"—those slaughter-houses of men and women—but they should suppress the *papers* by which, in connection with the circles, this man was led to take his own life. If it be right to suppress obscene books and prints, because their influence is

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\* Mrs. Fish is since married; and is now known in the "spiritual circles" as Mrs. Brown.

pernicious, why not suppress the papers and ghost-books that are robbing the people of their money ; filling our asylums with the insane ; driving many into murder and suicide ; and scattering "firebrands, arrows, and death" wherever they go. If there was ever a case in which the law of the land should be brought to bear upon pernicious publications, this is one.

But the stereotyped reply of the rappers to the argument founded upon the *effects* of their teaching is, that the Christian religion has often produced the same results ; and, therefore, if we condemn the rapping delusion, we must condemn Christianity also.

But it is not true that *Christianity* has ever produced any such results. There have been cases in which *error*, under the name of religion, has produced insanity (as was the case with the Millerite excitement a few years since), but the *truth* has no such effect. In one instance, a person became deranged from the apprehension that her soul was irrecoverably lost ; but that was an *error* which unbalanced her mind. Christianity never taught her that her soul was beyond the reach of mercy ; and as error respecting departed spirits tends to ruin, so all other error tends in the same direction. But truth always tranquilizes, blesses, saves. I do not believe the first instance has ever been known where a belief of the TRUTH, as revealed in the Gospel, has led to the ruin of a human intellect, much less to murder and suicide. But it is not so with spirit-rapping. Its effects are *evil*, and *only evil*, and that continually. And as "a good tree cannot bear evil fruit," we want no better evidence that the whole system is a device of the devil, to carry on his opposition to Christ ; to deceive even some of his followers ; and to ruin souls for whom Christ died.

The necromancers have another sophism by which they labor to deceive. "These communications," say they to the Christian, "are doing great good. They have convinced many infidels of the truth of an immortal existence," &c. Here we have another fling at Divine Revelation. *That* affords no sufficient evidence of immortality. But a few "raps," produced by some slip-shod "medium," at a dollar a head to the spectators, are

sufficient proof of immortality. They are “convinced,” and are no longer “skeptics!” But what are they? Do they now believe the *Bible*? Have they sought the mercy of God through the merits of Christ? Are they now men of prayer? No, indeed. They are the same profane Sabbath-breaking infidels they were before. They have been “convinced” and “converted;” but the *conviction* wrought in their minds was that the spirit-deception would be a fine thing to seize upon to disseminate infidelity; and their *conversion* has been from the old *form* of infidelity to the new form, called “spiritualism.” And this is the great good effected by spirit-rapping.

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Such are the fruits of the “new philosophy;” and if it be of God, then must He have ceased to be gracious, and resolved to send darkness, blight, and desolation upon the heritage of man.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### CAUSES OF ALLEGED SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

Sophistry of the rappers—Rapping in a school-room with the toes—Discovery by the Buffalo physicians—Detection of the Fox girls—Rapping with the feet or ankles—Wiseacres deceived by a young girl—Medium tables with machinery—Disclosure at Hartford—Statement of Mr. Pack—Confession and affidavit of Mr. Beardslee—Experience of Mr. Burr—Physical demonstration—Moving of tables.

IN the light of the facts revealed in the preceding chapters, we are now prepared to answer the question,—*If there are no invisible intelligences concerned in the production of the rappings and other phenomena, by what are they produced?*

### FALLACIOUS REASONING OF THE RAPPERS.

In connection with this question will be found the great fallacy of the rappers. They constantly assume that if we cannot tell *how* the raps are produced, we are bound to admit *their* explanation; and to admit that they are produced by disembodied

spirits. But suppose Anderson, or Heller, or Blitz were to take similar ground in regard to their tricks, and say, "These effects are produced by the inhabitants of the moon; and if you don't believe it, tell us *how* they *are* produced?" Cannot any one see that the argument is just as good in one case as in the other? Suppose there *were* raps and movement of tables, for which we were unable to account, would it follow that they were produced by departed spirits? Our ignorance of the *true* cause of a phenomenon, is no reason why we should refer it to a *false* one; for I may be sure that a certain thing is *not* the cause of an effect, though I may be unable to tell what *is* the cause.

The logic of the rappers is something like this: A murder has been committed; I do not know who committed the murder, *therefore* it was S. B. Brittan! I do not know how the raps are made, *therefore* they must be made by departed spirits. And yet by the use of this transparent sophism, the rappers have convinced scores of their "impressible" dupes that the raps are made by "spirits."

Even, then, on the supposition that the cause of the rappings, &c., was a profound mystery, it affords not the slightest ground for the belief that they are produced by spirits. Other causes may exist and elude detection, as is proved by the operations of every juggler in the land; and the assumption that we must refer the rappings to departed spirits, because every person cannot detect the cause, is sheer sophistry.

But conclusive as this view of the subject is to every rational mind, there is no difficulty whatever in pointing out the causes of all the phenomena that have ever taken place in connection with the mediums.

#### CAUSE OF THE RAPPINGS.

The "rappings," as they are called, are produced in a great variety of ways, but *always by the mediums*, or by some one in league with them. The rapping mediums are generally ladies, because their dresses and sex enable them the better to conceal the deception.

On one occasion, as we learn from the *Boston Traveller*, a young miss, in one of the grammar-schools in that city, suddenly began to rap and write as a medium. She declared that she was impelled to write, and could not help the rappings; but as soon as the teacher proposed to expel her from the school if she did not desist, she ceased to be a "medium." There was no difficulty then in controlling the "spirits."

*Rev. H. O. Sheldon*, of Berea, O., spent some time in investigating the subject; and the mediums that he detected rapped by snapping their toes. I met Mr. Sheldon at the house of a Presbyterian clergyman, at Leroy, N. Y., about a year since, and he not only told, but *showed* us precisely how the toe-rappers get up their messages. He could rap beautifully with his toes, sitting or standing; and had he not told us beforehand how it was done, we might not have suspected the true method.

#### DISCOVERY BY THE BUFFALO PHYSICIANS.

When the "Fox Girls" first started off with their speculation, they visited Buffalo, N. Y. 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 their account of the interview :

#### DETECTION OF THE FOX GIRLS.

"The invitation thus proposed was accepted by those to whom it was addressed ; and on the following evening, by appointment, the examination took place. After a short delay, the two Rochester females being seated on a sofa, the knockings commenced, and were continued for some time in loud tones and rapid succession. The "spirits" were then asked whether they would manifest themselves during the sitting and respond to interrogatories. A series of *raps* followed, which were interpreted into a reply in the affirmative. The two females were then seated upon two chairs placed near together, their heels resting on cushions, their lower limbs extended, with the toes elevated, and the feet separated from each other. The object in this experiment was to secure a position in which the ligaments of the knee-joint should be made tense, and no opportunity offered to make pressure with the foot. We were pretty well satisfied that the displacement of the bones requisite for the sounds could not be effected unless a fulcrum were obtained by resting one foot upon the other, or on some resisting body.

"The company, seated in a semicircle, quietly waited for the "*manifestations*" for more than half an hour, but the "spirits," generally so noisy, were now dumb. The position of the younger sister was then



changed to a sitting posture, with the lower limbs extended on the sofa; the elder sister sitting, in the customary way, at the other extremity of the sofa. The "spirits" did not choose to signify their presence under these circumstances, although repeatedly requested so to do. The latter experiment went to confirm the belief that the younger sister alone produces the *rappings*. These experiments were continued until the females themselves admitted that it was useless to continue them longer at that time, with any expectation of *manifestations* being made.

"In resuming the usual position on the sofa, the feet resting on the floor, *knockings* very soon began to be heard. It was then suggested that some other experiment be made. This was assented to, notwithstanding the first was, in our minds, amply conclusive. The experiment selected was, that the knees of the two females should be firmly grasped, with the hands so applied that any lateral movement of the bones would be perceptible to the touch. The pressure was made through the dress. It was not expected to prevent the sounds, but to ascertain if they proceeded from the knee-joint. It is obvious that this experiment was necessarily far less demonstrative, to an observer, than the first, because if the bones were distinctly felt to move, the only evidence of this fact would be the testimony of those whose hands were in contact with them. The hands were kept in apposition for several minutes at a time, and the experiment repeated frequently, for the course of an hour or more, with negative results: that is to say, there were plenty of *raps* when the knees were not held, and none when the hands were applied save once, as the pressure was intentionally somewhat relaxed (Dr. Lee being the holder), two or three faint, single *raps* were heard, and Dr. Lee immediately averred that the motion of the bone was plainly perceptible to him. The experiment of seizing the knees as quickly as possible, when the knockings first commenced, was tried several times, but always with the effect of putting an immediate *quietus* upon the *manifestations*. \* \* \* The conclusion seemed clear that the *Rochester knockings* emanate from the knee-joint.

"Since the exposition was published, we have heard of several cases in which movements of the bones, entering into other articulations, are produced by muscular effort, giving rise to sounds. We have heard of a person who can develop knockings from the ankle, of several who can produce noises with the joints of the toes and fingers, of one who can render loudly audible the shoulder, and another the hip-joint. We have also heard of two additional cases in which sounds are produced by the knee-joint."

This was, no doubt, the manner in which the sounds were first produced by the "Fox Girls." Whether they "rap" in

the same way now or not, is known only to themselves, and those interested in the speculation.

The phenomena of raps appearing to come from different parts of the room, are produced by the rappers precisely as similar phenomena are produced by the ventriloquist, viz., by first directing *attention* to the place, and then adapting the sounds to the place, distance, &c.

#### RAPPINGS WITH THE FEET.

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."—*Providence Journal*, Oct. 23, 1851.

Mr. S. B. Holliday testified :

"I asked her if she had practiced deception. She replied that the rappings were an imposition, and that so far as she had any thing to do, 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."—*Ibid.*

*Mrs. Remington* testified : "While the rappings were going on, I saw the bodice 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."—*Ibid.*

*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

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\* Speaking of this case, an intelligent physician of Providence, to whom I wrote for information, says, "I have known of several cases of the same kind in this State, that I have detected; and those, too, the best 'mediums' that could be found."

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."

## WISEACRES DECEIVED.

An attempt was made to prove that the rappings were not caused by Miss Bezely (as she solemnly affirmed), but by some foreign agency. It was too much for the rappers to be shown up as so very green. But the testimony upon that point only shows how easy it is for some persons, who *think* they are very shrewd, to be deceived.

*Silas Moore* testified that, "Correct answers were given to questions which alluded to facts not within Almira's knowledge." *John Allen* stated several circumstances, from which he concluded, "that the rappings were not produced by Almira." He said, "I am a believer in the rappings. \* \* Do not consider them a deception." *Stephen Weeks* had "witnessed manifestations which could not have been produced by Almira's agency." *Edward R. Mitchel* "was present at the rappings. \* \* Thinks they were not a deception." *Harriet Allen* had "witnessed manifestations which could not be produced by Almira. Mr. Bezely told me he had seen a spirit, and it was like a *mouse*, and run across his table when Almira was not present." *Lucy Monroe* "attended the rappings, and one evening watched Almira closely, and did not detect her in any deception."

Now if this girl could rap thus long with her feet without detection, and deceive so many persons, why may not other and more experienced mediums do the same thing?

## MEDIUM TABLES—RAPPING BY MACHINERY.

In other instances, the mysterious sounds are produced by delicate machinery concealed in the table, around which the mediums sit. Some time since, I was told by a friend that *Mr. Hiram Pack*, a respectable manufacturer of cabinet furniture,

No. 488 Pearl-street, New York, had made two or three of these tables. When in Hartford, Ct., a few weeks afterward, a gentleman called me aside after one of my lectures, and informed me that application had been made to a friend of his, a cabinet-maker of that city, to make such a table, on condition that he would take a solemn oath never to divulge the secret ; this his friend refused to do, and consequently did not get the order.

From these circumstances, I was led to believe that one method of making the “ raps ” was by machinery concealed in the table. To ascertain the facts in the case, I called upon *Mr. Pack*, in Pearl-street, to know if he had ever made any such tables. With a frankness that is much to his credit, and which proves him to have been no accomplice in the deception, *Mr. Pack* gave me the following facts, which are published by his consent and approbation :

STATEMENT OF MR. PACK.

“ 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,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch 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, Mar. 25, 1853.* ”

Mr. Pack gave us the names of the persons for whom these tables were made, and of the person who put in and arranged the machinery; and the time may come when it may be necessary to give these names to the public. For the present, however, we forbear to expose them.

The above method of producing the rappings is probably the one employed by Heller, when he causes the raps to be heard upon a board hung up by two cords in the middle of the room. The machinery is concealed in the board, and is worked by a galvanic battery in another room, through wires that are twisted into the cords by which the board is suspended. A circuit is thus formed, and the machinery worked at pleasure by a person who can hear the "medium," and operate accordingly.

#### CONFESSION OF ANOTHER MEDIUM.

The following affidavit is from Mr. Burr's pamphlet:

"BRIDGEPORT, *Feb. 4, 1851.*

"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 answers 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."

"FAIRFIELD COUNTY, BRIDGEPORT, CONN., 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 Peace."

#### OBSERVATIONS OF REV. MR. NOYES.

Rev. Eli Noyes, in a letter to Mr. C. C. 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."

#### EXPERIENCE OF THE MESSRS. BURRS.

MR. C. CHAUNCEY BURR, and his brother, HEMAN BURR, Esq., have given considerable attention to the detection and exposure of mediums. In their exposé, entitled, "*Knocks for the Knockings*," they say :

"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 rapism, and were what they regarded 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 rapism 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."

The experience of Mr. C. C. Burr with the rappers has probably been more extended than that of any other man in America, and yet such is his testimony in regard to their unmitigated deceptions.

Mr. Burr is editor of a daily paper in this city. He is unimpeached and unimpeachable, and is willing, at any time, to testify that in all cases where mediums ventured to practice in his presence (and they were many), he detected them in deception. And if certain visionary people are resolved, after a thousand mediums have been detected in all parts of the country, to shut their eyes to the light, stultify their common sense, and spend their time running after "mediums," and talking about their wonderful doings, it is useless to try to convince them of their folly. They are monomaniacs already; and a few months will land many of them in the Lunatic Asylum.

#### PHYSICAL DEMONSTRATIONS.

It was shown on page thirteen and elsewhere, that certain remarkable movements of ponderable bodies have occurred, such as the movement of tables without hands, the flight of persons through the air, &c. In one instance a spirit was seen flying over the Washington Parade Ground in this city, with a child in his arms. Mr. Charles Partridge, joint-editor of the *Telegraph*, stated before a large audience in Williamsburg, at the close of one of my lectures, that he carried a full-grown man across a room seventy feet long, and back again, upon the tips of his fingers—Mr. P. walking on tiptoe, and the man over his head on his fingers' ends. In another case it is asserted that a large tumor was removed from the person of a lady by a spirit-surgeon, &c.

Now, if we are disposed to *admit* that the alleged spiritual phenomena have occurred, and then attempt to account for them on philosophical principles, we must not select the movement of tables merely, but take *all* the phenomena. One part is just as well authenticated as the other. It is somewhat remarkable, however, that writers who have attempted to give us

the philosophy of these miracles, have confined themselves almost exclusively to the movement of tables. But why not explain *all* the phenomena if any? Is there a doubt as to the *truth* of some of the statements? Do the spiritists fabricate *part* of the phenomena? What confidence, then, can be placed in them as to any of their feats?

#### HAVE THE PHENOMENA OCCURRED?

For my own part I must, for the present, occupy very different ground from that taken by several writers, whose works have just been published. If I understand them, they *admit* the alleged phenomena of spiritism, and yet they do not attempt to explain the more astonishing feats of the "spirits;" from which it may be inferred that they meant to admit *only part* of the phenomena. But with all the light I have been able to gather from books, mediums, periodicals, and eye-witnesses, I can admit *no superhuman or extraordinary manifestations*. That tables have been moved in a mysterious manner, I have no doubt; and that in all such cases they have been moved by human hands or feet I as firmly believe.

When I first entered upon this investigation, I thought there might be some new principle in philosophy—some undeveloped law of nature by which a table might be magnetized, and made to move without muscular force; but as I have gone on in my inquiries, my faith has grown less and less, till it is all gone, if I ever had any. It is no difficult thing to move tables, and perform other feats, in a way to deceive the most cautious observer, especially if a little excited. In the case of *Almira Bezely* there were plenty of physical demonstrations, which were regarded as altogether beyond her ability to produce; and yet she confessed that *she was the only "spirit" concerned* in their production. On her trial, *Cælia Bezely* testified:

"A snuff-box was mysteriously removed at one time, and professedly by spirits. No one understood how it was done. Almira has since confessed how it was done. \* \* \* The rappings said the 'spirits' carried it off."



*Silas Moore* testified: "I went to Mr. Bezely's during the rappings; saw things which could not have been caused by Almira. Among other things, Almira said to the spirits, 'Won't you hold the table down?' Turner took hold of the table, and said it was very heavy. I took hold of it and found it four times as heavy as I expected." And yet, on his cross-examination, Mr. Moore says, "I had not tried to lift the table before; I won't say positively that she did not touch the table with her feet."—*Prov. Jour.*, Oct. 23, 1851.

Here it is seen that Miss B. could deceive her customers just as well as to the "*physical demonstrations*," as in reference to the "*raps*." And if *she* could thus easily deceive her patrons, why may not *other* and *older* mediums deceive theirs?

Whatever candid and reliable persons may have seen, or *think* they have seen, I can find no sufficient evidence that any new force whatever has, in any case, been brought to bear upon tables, or any other furniture. Their motions are always the work of the mediums, whether we catch them at it or not. But if others see fit to admit the existence of a new principle in philosophy, which they can not find out, I shall not quarrel with them, but shall leave them to discover the new motor at their leisure. For myself, I never look for *causes*, in such cases, till I have good evidence that the *effects* have been produced. When those philosophers and others, who differ from me, get at the new motor, and get the laws governing it well defined, they will please inform me, and I will most cheerfully acknowledge that I have been "slow of heart to believe."

#### MOVEMENT OF TABLES—WEST WINSTEAD.

While at West Winstead, Conn., in January, 1853, Rev. Mr. Woodruff and myself were informed by a gentleman, that tables had several times been magnetized in a room over his store, and that if we would call at three o'clock, P. M., that day, he would show us the phenomenon. Accordingly we called. There were a number of rappers present, among the rest, Mr. Brittan's friend, Mr. Turner. We first sat down around the table all together, the Rev. Mr. W., the rappers, and myself. After waiting some fifteen to thirty minutes without any re-

sult, I proposed that we "skeptics" would retire and give up the table to the "believers." We did so. I took my position where I could watch every movement. Pretty soon, the table began to tip ; but I saw how the requisite force was applied, and accused the parties on the spot of moving the table by physical force. This they did not deny. "That, I suppose, is the way it is," said one of the believers, "when we all *will* for the table to move, we *involuntarily* [?] apply a little muscular force." Rev. Mr. Woodruff will confirm this statement ; and also that I made the same statement in public that evening, and called upon the spiritists who were present at the "circle" and also at the lecture, to correct me if I had misstated the facts. But, anxious as Mr. Turner was to contradict me on other points, neither he nor any other man opened his mouth.

#### DETECTION IN HARTFORD.

A scientific gentleman at Hartford informed me, while there, that he had detected a circle in that city moving a table or stand by physical force, in such a manner as to make it appear very mysterious. He not only detected the cheat, but produced the same phenomena in their presence himself ; and I saw him make a light stand tip and whirl about most beautifully, with only the ends of his fingers upon it.

#### EXPOSURE AT BURLINGTON.

At Burlington, Vt., every effort was made to induce the "mediums" to appear in public, either for rappings or "physical demonstrations," but all to no purpose. At the close of the second lecture, however, I was told that if I would go to a certain cabinet-shop in the vicinity, I should see a table moved by the "spirits." Accordingly some half a dozen ministers and myself accompanied the man who invited us. There were also present perhaps twenty others, many of whom were believers.

On arriving at the shop, we found a very light table lid, with a single support in the center, and with castors at the

bottom, perhaps five inches from the center, so that the slightest force would tip the table over, or make it revolve on the castors.

We placed ourselves about the table as directed. The first thing I wished to settle was, whether I could move the table while some sixteen hands were upon it, and no one see that I moved it. Very soon the table began to revolve. I yielded with others at first; but soon began to resist the supposed "spirit." Feeling the resistance, he at once changed the direction of the table, and it began to move the other way. I then took it into my own hands altogether, *willing* it to go this way and that; and asking others to will it in the same way; and it always obeyed our wills, *because* I always moved it as I willed it to go; and no one could detect me. I then informed the "circle" that thus far I had been the chief moving "spirit," and that I had now shown that if there was one deceiver in a circle, he could hoax all the rest, and they not detect him.

I then asked one after another to leave the table, and kept perfectly "passive" myself, till I detected the very man who made the table, and invited me to see it "revolve," moving it with his own strength, by his hands laid on the top of my own. I told him and the spectators at once that I had discovered the "spirit," and was ready to make oath to the fact; whereupon, Mr. — simply replied, that if it was so, he was not conscious of it; and so the matter was left for that night.

The next morning I called again, and found the believers assembled as the evening before; but after having waited about an hour, with no new results (except that several who had been duped seemed to concede the point, and were much more soft and pleasant than they were the night before, while I was publicly exposing the deception), I left. The humbug was fairly unveiled, and I think must have died in Burlington from that hour.

For the truth of the above statements I refer to Revs. Dodgson and Witherspoon of Burlington; Rev. Mr. Stillman, of Shelburne; and other Methodist ministers of the Burlington district, who were present.

## A CHALLENGE TO THE "SPIRITS."

While Mr. Burr was in Providence exposing the rappers, he published the following in the Daily Post of that city:

"WILL THE SPIRITS MOVE THE TABLE?—Having in every instance detected the *physical* cause of the various manifestations called spiritual rappings, whenever I have been allowed the privilege of making a thorough examination, and still hearing of most marvelous accounts of various articles of furniture being moved without any possible known physical cause, I have deposited fifty dollars in the hands of Clement Webster, Esq., which shall be given to any medium who will produce in my presence *any form* of such manifestations, for which I cannot detect a *known physical cause*. The examination shall take place in some parlor in which the medium is a stranger, and a committee of gentlemen of candor, known to the whole community, shall be selected from the learned professions of this city, to decide upon the results of the investigation.

HEMAN BURR."

"Monday, March 3d."

"And although," says Mr. Burr, "nearly every medium in the city was rapping for money, at the charge of fifty cents a head, not one dare accept the challenge."

What better proof do we want that they were a set of deceivers, like all the rest of the "mediums," and dared not submit to any such test, from a consciousness of their guilt.

## REPORT OF A COMMITTEE.

The following Report of a Committee appointed to investigate the causes of the so-called spiritual phenomena, was published in the Brooklyn Daily Advertiser, of March 10, 1853:

"SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS—TO THE PUBLIC.—We, the undersigned, appointed by the audience at Stuyvesant Institute, on Tuesday evening, at Professors Barnes and Owens' lectures, to examine the Spiritual Manifestations privately, which they were exhibiting publicly, did, on this day at 3 o'clock, P. M., proceed to the private rooms of Professor Barnes, at Hungerford's Hotel, and there tested the truthfulness of sundry experiments represented to be by the agency of spirits, and after mature deliberation, make the following report:

"*First.* That the physical force in moving, sliding, and tipping tables, was nothing more than mechanical.

"*Second.* That the testing experiment promised in relation to spiritual force, physically, was refused.

"*Third.* That the mental responses were in no instance correct.

"*Fourth.* That from the undue degree of mental excitement on the part of the mediums, in the exhibition of what is purported to be Spiritual Manifestations, conditions of the nervous system abnormally occurred, which must in the nature of things, if persisted in, produce a lamentable relation between their minds and bodies; and that nothing whatever was done but what we, who are not mediums, can and did perform by voluntary force.

"That we look upon these Spiritual Manifestations as being fraught with mental and physical influences which cannot be attended with the least good to the human race, but on the contrary, must cause the most direful results upon many of those who may follow this delusion, and give themselves up as agents for its promulgation.

"B. BROWN WILLIAMS, No. 506 Broadway,  
JAS. K. MAGIE, 149 Carll-st., Brooklyn,  
SAMUEL M. WOOD, 252 Broadway,  
JOHN B. BROWN, 277 Fulton-st., Brooklyn,

"Committee."

#### DR. REESE—ANOTHER CHALLENGE.

In the February number of Dr. Reese's *Medical Gazette*, he thus speaks of the rappers:

"They have gone on from one imposture to another, from rapping and alphabets when these become stale, to bell-ringing, table-moving, singing, dancing, writing, discerning spirits, healing diseases, revealing truths and denouncing errors in religion, morals, science, and philosophy, and all professedly from the ghosts of the departed. And the public press has done, and is still doing much to perpetuate the iniquity, by recording as facts the most absurd of these stories."

After alleging that in all cases where tables are moved, they are moved by the mediums themselves, the doctor adds:

"If anybody alleges the contrary, we have a small table in our office on which we write, and we offer one hundred dollars to any ghost or medium, from this world or the other, who will move it an inch in daylight by any supernatural, spiritual, magnetic, or electrical influence, which shall be invisible and intangible to our own optics; and they may sit around it for a month." \* \*

But do the spirits attempt to move the doctor's table? No,

indeed! And why not? Simply because Dr. Reese's office is a bad place to carry on the fraud, and Dr. Reese is the wrong man to be gulled by their impositions.

#### CHALLENGE TO MR. PARTRIDGE.

In the month of March, 1851, Mr. Heman Burr sent the following note to Mr. Partridge, then secretary of a circle in this city:

"MR. CHARLES PARTRIDGE:

"In order to have an opportunity of examining the medium concerning whom you write such miraculous things, I will deposit in the hands of an impartial committee the sum of fifty dollars, which shall be paid over to you whenever the medium will produce, in my presence, any manifestation for which I can not detect a physical cause and trick. Or, I will write and seal up a series of questions, and if the medium, or the spirits, will answer *one* of them correctly, I will pay the same amount, which shall be disposed of by you, for the benefit of the medium, or for the spread of Rapsism, or for any object of charity which you may please to name. The committee shall be mutually agreed upon; and the investigation shall take place in some parlor where the medium is a stranger, between the hours of ten A.M. and three P.M. You will perceive that I do not offer to *bet* this amount, but I offer it as a free donation to any object worthy of your charity. If the medium can stand the tests by which I have detected nearly fifty other mediums, she will vindicate the cause of Rapsism, convince many people who now honestly believe the whole pretense is an imposition, and contribute something to some worthy cause of charity. If she is detected in producing the manifestations by tricks of art, many honest people may have their eyes opened to the fact that they have been deceived and deluded. Truth and justice is my object.

"HEMAN BURR.

"*New York, March 16th, 1851.*"

This proposition to test the powers of Mr. Partridge's "mediums" was never answered, only as the Rappers replied orally here and there, "*The spirits won't be challenged;*" "*the spirits won't allow themselves to be doubted;*" "*the spirits have no anxiety to convince skeptics,*" &c. What a miserable subterfuge for any sensible man to hide under! Why not confess the truth as it really is,—“My ‘mediums’ are hoaxing their thou-

sands at a *a dollar a head*, and I have no disposition to spoil a profitable business?"

#### MONEY ASPECTS OF SPIRITISM.

The two great motive powers of the spirit humbug are CUPIDITY and INFIDELITY. The latter has already been exhibited, and the former stands out prominently in all their operations. The "Fox family" (now Mrs. Brown and Margaretta Fox) live in a fine house in Twenty-sixth-street in this city, and are getting rich at the expense of their deluded visitors. Partridge and Brittan seem to have an interest in the concern, and puff it lustily in the "Telegraph," by publishing the miracles that occur there. So flourishing is Mrs. Brown's business, that a writer in the 38th number of the "Telegraph" says, "It is impossible for her to give that attention to all that they and the subject demand." Further on the same writer says, "Some of the best mediums have been actually bought up and appropriated to private use, thus burying their talent in the love of self," &c. But who are those "best mediums" that have been "bought up?" Has Mrs. Brown been bought up in this way by Partridge and Brittan? From the interest manifested in her establishment, it seems most probable that they are part owners in the concern.

#### SPIRITS ADVERTISING.

It is somewhat amusing to see how adroitly the writing mediums manage to advertise their books in the name of the "spirits." Mr. Harshman's spirits are careful to speak of his "future work," p. 42; the "spirits" in Philadelphia speak of "the next volume, the publication of which is had in anticipation, which is designed to contain a higher order of communications," p. 95; and Mr. Ambler's spirits say that "from time to time other works of greater value and importance than this will be written with his hand and published to the world," p. 16. Mr. Hammond says, p. 9, "The spirits propose to write another volume, and when it is written, it will be published;" and on page 259, the "spirits" say, "when this me-

dium shall wait for us, &c., I will write another book." These extracts show that the "spirits" are very anxious that the dupes of the imposition shall be ready for the new ghost-books, as soon as they appear.

"MEDIUMS WANTED."

The following advertisement recently appeared in the *Telegraph* :

"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."

Take also the following, from different papers in this city :

"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; for spiritual investigations \$1."—*Tribune*, Feb. 3, 1853.

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

"H. BURKHART."

"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*, Feb. 15.



Speaking of a convention of rappers, held in Boston, in Dec., 1852, a writer in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, who was present, says :

"These folks seem to want money, and so one of them gets up in the convention and says, '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 last-named lady is a Mrs. Metler, of Hartford, whose advertisement stands out so prominently in all the spirit papers. She will look through you, discover your disease, and prescribe, for \$5 ; or for \$10, if you are absent and will send her a *lock of your hair and the MONEY*. ' And so with a score of other "clairvoyants."

#### A SPIRIT MEDICINE.

A certain Dr. Underhill, of Ohio, communicates to the *Cleveland Plaindealer*, a "remarkable discovery." It is in substance that in the town of Pine Grove, Warren county, Pa., has been discovered a new "fountain of health," called *Aqua Petra Vitæ*, or the "rock-water of life." The doctor informs his readers that it was discovered "by direction of spirits," and belongs to John Chase and Wm. Brittingham. He gives the *modus operandi* of the discovery—the proprietors boring in a certain place a certain number of feet, &c.

The "gist" of the discovery is contained in the following paragraph :

"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."

It is to be hoped that Messrs. Partridge and Brittan will order a supply at once, to be prescribed by the "spiritualists"

of this region. How very kind the "spirits" are to their mediums, to furnish them with so many extraordinary facilities for *making money!*

We have now before us a full view of the whole matter—its origin, progress, character, and terrible effects. And such a system of fraud and deception—such a deep-laid plot for striking a heavy blow at revealed religion—such a blending of every species and shade of infidelity—such unblushing hypocrisy, falsehood, and detraction as are resorted to to keep up the delusion, were, perhaps, never before witnessed. And it is evidently the design of the infidel editors and book-makers, and the money-making mediums, to keep agitating, by every means in their power, whatever may be the consequences. It is a question, therefore, for every reader to decide what course he ought to pursue in regard to this terrible scourge.



## CONCLUSION.

THAT the reader is by this time fully satisfied of the fraudulent and infidel character of the spirit-rapping movement, I have no doubt. And you may be not only *willing* but *anxious* to do all in your power to stay the plague; and may be even now asking yourself, "what shall I do?" Allow me, then, as one who has seen the working of the system, and knows the persons engaged in it, and the means by which they live and carry forward their work of death, to offer a few suggestions. And first,

### KEEP AWAY FROM THE "MEDIUMS."

*Keep away from all their circles and lectures.* By going to them you give your *money* and *influence* to sustain a systematic onset upon the BIBLE, the *Christian Religion*, the *Sabbath*, the *Christian Ministry*, the *Government of your Country*, the *Marriage Institution*; and every thing else that the wise and good of all ages have regarded as sacred. "Avoid the very appearance of evil." "Let not your good be evil spoken of."

Keep away, and keep your children away. One of their chosen schemes is to awaken curiosity, and then cry "*investigate*;" and if you will only attend their circles at a dollar a visit, for the purpose of "*investigating*," their end is accomplished. They have your money, and your *example* to induce others to go and pay *their* money.

The following excellent remarks are from the *Christian Intelligencer* :

"For those already involved in it we fear there is no recovery. Experience teaches that usually in such cases there is no change save from bad to worse. The mind becomes unsettled, its power of discrimination is weakened and blunted, and it loses the capacity of rendering a reason or weighing an objection. Sometimes sovereign grace interposes and snatches the victims as brands from the burning, but for the most part these dupes of a strong delusion become more and more deeply involved in error, until in another world the shades of eternal night settle around them.

"But while little or nothing can be done in the way of cure, much may be effected in the way of prevention, and this by the application of one simple scriptural rule. We have it in the words of Paul (Ephes. v. 11), "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." If the Christians and professed believers in the Bible, who abound in this land, were to keep steadily aloof from all these mystery-mongers, and to refuse to seek or to heed any spirit but the Spirit of God authentically revealed and confirmed, the number of dupes would be rapidly diminished. It is the countenance given by a few persons of high character and general information which entice multitudes of lesser note into the vortex of error.

"It is, therefore, the imperative duty of all, and especially of God's people, to frown upon these proceedings, to refuse to attend, under any pretext, on a 'medium' or a 'circle,' and to warn others against such a course, as not only foolish, but sinful and dangerous. There is no need of arguing the question. These 'spiritual' disclosures are inconsistent with the great and final disclosures contained in the word of God, and no man can consistently hold both. The point, therefore, is decided *in limine*. Nothing can be gained by listening to these people 'that have a familiar spirit,' but much, very much may be lost. Even a mere curiosity which treads on hazardous ground and sets a bad example to others, is not innocent, and should be checked. In short, there is but one rule for these and all other errorists, however specious, and that is the emphatic injunction already quoted: '*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*'"

## THE GHOST-BOOKS AND PAPERS.

*Beware of their books and papers.* Keep them from your family—out of your house. “The poison of asps is under their tongue.” A single paper may ruin a child into whose hands it might fall. You may have ghost-books offered to you, and tracts and papers sent you gratuitously; but beware! If you are solicited to take a paper, look closely and see that it is not one of the rapper papers. If you must read one or the other, you had better read Tom Paine’s “Age of Reason” than any spirit paper I know of. It is less insinuating and sophistical, and would be less likely to ruin the soul forever.

## A WORD TO MINISTERS.

If you are a *minister*, and this delusion is talked of among your people, or in the community where you labor, *warn them* of the sword coming! Is it not your *duty* to do it? You may think it too low for your notice; but is any *sin*, any *deception*, or *phase of infidelity* too low to be exposed, if it ruin souls for whom Christ died? Here is an open war upon the Bible and the Christian religion, and shall the watchmen on the walls of Zion remain silent and unmoved?

You may think the best way to cure error is to let it alone. This was not the method of the prophets, nor of Christ or his apostles. Neither has it been the method pursued by those who have done most for the cause of God in past ages. And besides, many of us were asked at our ordination, “Will you be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word?” &c.; to which we answered, “I will, the Lord being my helper.” And shall we now prove recreant to our trust, break our vows, and adopt the sickly policy of correcting error by letting it alone? God forbid! Let the trumpet be blown in Zion. Let the churches know the character of this “spirit” movement before it gets into their midst. It is far easier to keep the tares out of the field by a timely warning, than to root them up once they are fairly sown. May the Lord help his MINISTERS to acquit

themselves like men, and to unveil this specious infidel delusion to the gaze and scorn of all good men.

## THE PRESS.

I would earnestly intreat the *periodical press* throughout the country, to join us in our efforts to stay this moral pestilence. From week to week your exchanges have brought you the tidings of its ravages in all parts of the land. You have generally set your faces against it. But can you not do *more* by refusing to publish any of their pretended revelations, or to describe their alleged miracles? Will not the *secular* as well as the *religious* press give us your powerful influence, as you have generally done, in favor of the *Bible* and the faith of the gospel? We look to you with confidence, and trust that you will not cease to denounce the instigators and managers of this diabolical plot, till there shall not be a necromancer to move his tongue in all our borders.

## A WORD TO MEDIUMS.

It is not improbable that this work will be read by some who have been seduced into this wicked movement, and have little by little consented to take part in the circles, till at length they have become "*mediums*." Let me entreat such to forsake the circles at once, and visit them no more. Up to this point you may not have been aware of the character of the movement, and consequently are comparatively innocent; but now you cannot plead ignorance. To go a step further is openly to countenance and encourage the avowed enemies of Christ, and to sin against God and your own soul. If you profess religion, let me entreat you, by the love of Christ, to cut loose from this deadly movement. Your *character* is at stake; your *reason* in jeopardy; and your *soul* in imminent peril! It is not yet too late to retrieve what you have lost.

O my brother! my sister! burn up those ghost-books and papers; forsake the "circles," and betake yourself to the blessed BIBLE, the social religious meeting, and the people of God. *Here* is your only safety. And remember, you are now

faithfully warned ! If you pass on, decline in piety, become an infidel, die in sin, perhaps become insane or commit suicide, and go to hell at last, your blood is upon your own head. Merciful God ! should these lines be read by any “medium,” male or female, young or old, in city or country, *apply* and *enforce* the warning ‘Thyself, by the sacred influence of Thy Holy Spirit, that they may return from their error to THEE, the only living and true God, before it is too late forever !

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I have now done with the exposé, and have only to request that the reader, if he owns this volume, will hand it to his neighbor, and let it be read from house to house. Especially send it to those *Christians*, if you know any such, who are half disposed to believe there is something in the pretended “manifestations,” and that perhaps the spirits of the dead are actually communicating with this world. Send such the book to read. By so doing you may help to stay the plague, arrest the spread of infidelity, and save immortal souls for whom Christ died. And “*let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*”

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NOW UNTO HIM THAT DIED FOR US, AND ROSE AGAIN—THE ONLY WISE GOD OUR SAVIOUR—TO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH THOUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN.

THE END.