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NO. 19.

NATURE.

HUMAN, SPIRITUAL, DIVINE.

[Original.]

SHADOWS.

"Coming events cast their shadows before."

Editor of the Spirit World: Dear Sir,—When I say that Mr. Courtney's letter, in your paper of the 26th inst., expressed my own views, very nearly, you will not need to be told that I have not "stumbled upon the blocks" of Swedenborgianism. Like Mr. C., I have been (with some qualifications which I now propose to notice,) a receiver of the writings of Andrew Jackson Davis. I love him, and believe he has, thus far, fulfilled a good mission to our race. I would not do him injustice for the price of my right hand.

But, still, as I consider Mr. Davis a human being, and liable to err, (if he has not done so in many things, already,) I cannot but feel some alarm in witnessing what I am reluctantly compelled to admit, is a *disposition* or a tendency, on the part of some of his friends, to yield to him honors which do not belong to a human being. Understand, I do not say that Mr. Davis, himself, has consciously designed to arrogate to himself "divine" honor, but I do say that, putting what he has affirmed of himself, together with the views and feelings some of his friends manifest towards him, we can make little else of it, than a tendency to *deification*!

Let us now take a candid retrospect of a few "events" in the history of Andrew Jackson Davis, and see to what conclusions they may have a tendency to lead us:

1. Mr. Davis commenced his clairvoyant career with *ASSUMING* a degree of knowledge approaching *OMNISCIENCE*! This was in 1843. In two years or less, after, he gave four lectures, in his "superior," or clairvoyant "condition," which were published with the following title:

"Lectures on Clairmativeness. ALL the Mysteries of Human Magnetism and Clairvoyance explained by the celebrated Jackson Davis, of Poughkeepsie. New York: Printed by Searing & Prall. 1845. 8vo. pp. 40."

Not to stop here for a remark upon the extraordinary assumption that a youth,

scarcely (at that time,) twenty-one years of age, should announce himself as able to explain "ALL the mysteries" of human nature! Let that pass.

In this book we have the following still more extraordinary announcement, which Mr. Davis makes concerning himself. It purports to have come from him while in his "superior condition"—that condition in which all his "revelations" are made:

"In this state, my previous developments are not only enlarged, but all my mental faculties are set in perfect action. *I possess the power of EXTENDING MY VISION THROUGHOUT ALL SPACE—CAN SEE THINGS PAST, PRESENT, AND TO COME. I HAVE NOW ARRIVED AT THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGE WHICH THE HUMAN MIND IS CAPABLE OF ACQUIRING.* When in the state that I now am, I AM MASTER OF THE GENERAL SCIENCES, *can speak all languages, impart instructions upon those deep and hidden things in nature which the world has not been able to solve—can name the different organs in the human system, point out their offices and functions as I have often done—tell the nature, cause, symptoms of disease, and prescribe the remedies that will effect a cure.*"

I offer no criticism on this language—it needs none. It sets forth a claim to *omniscience*! Can any other power but that of *omniscience* "extend throughout ALL SPACE, and see things, past, present, and to come?"

I admit that Mr. Davis may have said things since he uttered the above, which would imply a contradiction of this claim; and if so, this proves, from his own mouth, that he has over-estimated himself; and I beg to know, Mr. Editor, if your brains are to be knocked out for having dared to criticise the writings of one who has committed an error as great as that set forth in the above quotation from the language of Mr. Davis?

2. Some two years after the publication of his first Lectures, we find Mr. Davis publishing a large octavo volume of some seven hundred and eighty-six pages, and for the contents of which he claims "DIVINE" authority and honor, thus:

"The Principles of Nature, her Divine Revelations, and a Voice to Mankind. By and through Andrew Jackson Davis, the 'Poughkeepsie Seer' and 'Clairvoy-

ant.' New York: Published by S. S. Lyon and Wm. Fishbough. 1847."

It is true, Mr. Davis uses the word "divine" in connection with "The Principles of Nature;" but this does not obviate my objection. "The DIVINE" is in order before "Nature"—the Divine is the cause, and Nature the result. But the title of that book refers to the *work* or mental labors of Mr. Davis; and it is not injustice to his own language to apply the word "divine" to what Mr. Davis himself did. He uttered "revelations" which he calls "DIVINE." Or, if you object to this, and say that the word "divine" is applied to what Nature did, "by and through Mr. Davis," then I say again, that "Nature" does not make the "Divine," but the Divine makes or develops Nature.

3. Again, Mr. Davis has put himself on a level with Jesus Christ. In the Universalist of October 28, 1848, he published an account of a "Vision" he had some time before, in which he represents Jesus Christ as "being much perplexed, and INEFFICIENT to urgo or lead his sheep;" and so Mr. Davis goes on to represent himself as being, in some sense, Christ's "brother," who should assist Christ in "establishing order" among his flock. Put this representation with the other things I have referred to, and see what it means. I do not suppose Mr. Davis had any conscious *design* of *deifying* himself; nor am I certain that Jesus Christ had any such design. But when human beings utter such sentiments about themselves or others, I pause, and ask what the end of these things will be! I see no good use to be anticipated from deifying men. Taking a MAN from the plane of MANHOOD, where his excellencies may be *imitated*, and elevating him to *Infinite*, where he becomes an object of *worship*, is an evil, and not to be encouraged in any way.

4. Within the past year a paper has been started for the avowed purpose of advocating the *peculiar* views set forth by A. J. Davis. And every number of that paper has made an ORACLE of him. It puts his language in its imprint, as its standing motto. It promises that Mr. Davis shall be a "frequent contributor" to its columns. Nor has that paper ever hinted the first word of dissent from any thing which Mr. Davis ever uttered. It

is a *man-worshipper*. A writer in its columns for April 26, 1851, actually quotes, [and applies to A. J. Davis, the language of the Bible, which has for ages been applied, by the whole Christian world, alone to Jesus Christ, where it is said:

"He is the *chief* among ten thousands, and the one **ALTOGETHER** lovely."

So far as I know, Mr. Davis is the first and the only human being, since Christ, to whom this language was ever applied. Convince me that Mr. Davis is really what this language implies, and I will worship him, as really as I do the Divine Lord.

Let me ask, What constitutes a *sectarian* or *exclusionist*? And has not the "Spirit Messenger" shown all the distinctive characteristics of *sectarianism*? 1.—Was it not started for the purpose of advocating the views of Mr. Davis, to the exclusion of all others? 2.—It has manifested an *exclusive sectarian* spirit. Mr. Richard Walker, of Portsmouth, N. H., wrote an account of the spiritual manifestations he witnessed in the family of Mr. Sunderland; and while the Spirit Messenger published that part of the letter which lauded that paper, it left out all that was said in favor of LaRoy Sunderland! 3.—When it was first started it refused the usual courtesies of *notice* towards the Spiritual Philosopher, a *free and independent* paper, which had already entered the same field before it. 4.—The friends of the "Spirit World" are, and always have been, unfeignedly friendly to the Spirit Messenger, so that they have written for that paper while they have, at the same time, written for the "Spiritual Philosopher" and the "Spirit World." Milo A. Townsend, George E. Haskell, and W. M. Fernald, are of this number. But not so with Mr. Davis and his friends. Not one of them have ever written one word of encouragement for the paper called the Spirit World, (as far as has appeared from its columns,) till they had their eyes opened with regard to Mr. Davis's errors. 5.—Mr. W. M. Fernald, one of Mr. Davis's earliest and most devoted friends, had no sooner made known his dissent from Mr. Davis, than he was peremptorily EXCLUDED from the columns of the Spirit Messenger! And as if this were not enough, the editor publishes the *condemnatory* opinion of an apocryphal spirit, in regard to Mr. Fernald—a spirit whom Mr. Fernald had no opportunity of confronting, or testing when this opinion of him was said to be uttered! Such is the exclusive and sectarian character of the paper which is *mouth-piece* to the man whose "vision extends throughout all space." I love that paper, but I cannot shut my eyes to its imperfections.

5. Finally, consider the extreme *sensitiveness* of Mr. Davis's friends, whenever he is criticised! Their conduct seems to say, "Hands off! Do not touch him." True, William Fishbough is now no longer a receiver of some of Mr. Davis's peculiar *theological* views. Rev. T. L. Harris has given him up. Rev. W. M. Fernald has changed his views as to Mr. Davis's reliability. And all this while not one unkind word has been ut-

tered of Mr. Davis. And yet, how are these changes of views, or differences of opinion, treated by Mr. Davis and his friends? Why, Mr. Davis "very respectfully suggests, as a **PHYSICIAN**," that Mr. Fernald, his old and long-tried friend, is deranged! His *mind* is not in a healthy state. He must go and work on a farm, and avoid metaphysical investigations! Wonder if we shall see a similar note from Mr. Davis, published in the Spirit Messenger, recommending "V. C. T." who lauds him with the praise due alone to God—I say, I wonder if Mr. Davis will *hint* to this fulsome writer, "most seriously and particularly, to obtain a situation on some farm, for at least eight months" in the year?

So the editor of the Spirit Messenger finds it very convenient to suggest that the man who dissents from A. J. Davis, "mistakes a beam in his own eye for a mote in his brother's." And this correspondent (V. C. T.) of that paper (April 26th,) represents those who dissent from Mr. Davis, as "wilfully blind," preferring "darkness to light," and having "stumbled upon the blocks of Swedenborgianism."

And from the Spirit World of the 26th of April, I see that one Mr. N. H. Colson "goes it blind" for A. J. Davis. His wrath seems uncontrollable! He insists upon it, that the man who ventures to dissent from A. J. Davis, is "unjust," "ungenerous," "captious," and guilty of "descending to" an unwarrantable "attack," "misrepresentation," and "perversion"!!!

Friends of Truth! lovers of the Harmonial Philosophy! to what are we coming? I humbly conceive, that however great and good the mission may be, which Mr. Davis has fulfilled, it does not entitle him to the very high honors which some of his warm admirers seem evidently disposed to award him. O, this *sectarianism*! this *man-worship*! this looking, *exclusively*, to one man, one angel, one book, as an ORACLE, whose "*vision extends throughout all space*!" Alas, friends of universal brotherhood, have we not already had full enough of this?

C. C.

April 28, 1851.

FEAT OF A YOUNG SOMNAMBULIST.—The Fredonia Courier says: "We learn that a girl of about fifteen years of age, whose parents reside near the line between Hanover and Perrysburg, recently, during a severe cold night, got up in her sleep, and without adding to her night dress anything more than a pair of shoes, left her home, and proceeded about two and a half miles, when, in attempting to go up the steps to a house, she slipped down, and from the sensation of pain thus given, immediately awoke. Suddenly becoming conscious of her awkward situation, and entirely ignorant of the means by which she was brought there, she was at once overcome with terror, and aroused the family by her involuntary shrieks.—When taken in, she was completely chilled, or, as our informant says, "nearly frozen" with the cold. The girl had never before exhibited any somnambulistic traits or symptoms, as we learn."

[Original.]

CLAIRVOYANT IMPRESSIONS.

Editor Spirit World,—I send you the following report of some clairvoyant impressions in respect to the formation of circles for hearing responses from the spiritual world. They must stand or fall on their own merits, and pass only for what they are intrinsically worth. Mr. B., through whom they were communicated, is a recent clairvoyant.

Respectfully, yours,

C. S. MIDDLEBROOK.

Bridgeport, Ct., April 24, 1851.

"There should be two kinds of circles: First—of those who are true believers in these manifestations; no others should be admitted. The second may be composed of skeptics and earnest seekers after truth. In the first circle should be truth and love. This motto combines the qualities of heaven; and as long as we live to this motto, so long shall we receive pure impressions from the spirit land. We should endeavor to progress in our search after knowledge; and the more we progress, the more we shall have given us. There should be no suspicious eye on the medium; for the material which spirits have to work through is one of their own selection; and according as our actions are in the circle, so shall we receive our communications.

We should never cross-question a spirit. I am speaking, now, of the first circle. We should meet as brothers, that when we go into the world, they may see us, and say, "Behold how they love one another!" We should always be punctual to time; always ready to receive what the spirits will give, and not try to draw from them what they cannot give. They now try by simple means to impress us all; and the time will soon come, I am told, when greater developments shall be made known to the world. Friends should always be thankful for what they receive. If they receive but little, they should not go away with contempt in their hearts, but go away feeling that it is wisdom in the spirits to retain what they are willing to give, were it not for obstacles in the way.

I am also impressed to tell the friends that they must have no doubts, for they will not lie to them. They are liable to be mistaken sometimes; but I am impressed to say they will always make right what is wrong, if you give them time. There should be singing, and all the circle should join, as it will tend to promote harmony. Harmony should reign throughout the circle. No one should speak while another is conversing with a spirit, because they are attracted to the circle by laws of affinity. They will always tell when they have done communicating, and should not be disturbed.—Each one should call the alphabet for himself. There will be those in the circles that will receive sudden impressions; sometimes they will be impressed by those with whom they wish to communicate, and will know by the suddenness of the impression, whether it is truthful or not. I am impressed to say to the friends, that it would be well to have the questions

written; there could then be no mistake. If questions are written, they answer them just as well as if they asked them aloud, generally.

If we go according to the rules laid down for us, we shall have a foretaste of heaven here on earth, and our souls will often be bathed in the air of truth and love, and we shall ramble, in part, amid the beautiful lands of the spirit world. We shall often be impressed by our guardian spirits, for they are ever near us, giving us holy thoughts when thinking of them. All have guardian spirits present.

The spirits made sounds, at first, without tests; now they have progressed until they have given tests. Many of you have felt their touch; and the time will soon come when their own tongues shall speak, and the spirit music shall sound in your ears. We must not be too anxious to receive the high truths our minds often aspire to. It sometimes takes months for a tree to bring forth ripened fruit. So it is with spirits. They cannot, at once, give you high truths; they will give you all they can, consistently with the laws that govern them.

The world outside the circle will partake, at our expense, of the tree of good and evil. But fear not, brothers, we shall triumph—for myriads and myriads of angels are around us. They have weapons of love, while those who fight against us have nothing but the weak tongue of slander. All who persevere will partake of that sweet fruit, which has its origin in heaven, and is broken unto us hourly. Brothers, throw around you the mantle of love, and wear it wherever you go. This is the united voice of your guardians.—All love God, is a divine declaration. 'Tis the song of angels. I have done with the first circle. The second, of course, would be composed of those who would investigate, and many, who, when away from us, would laugh with scorn. To such, the spirits will not communicate; none but a truth-loving, truth-seeking heart will receive truthful communications, because without harmony, we cannot receive. If we do not give, how can we receive it? Too many from the second circle will be seeking admittance to the first, but they should not be admitted until they have been tried and known to be true.

This room is a holy spot—(pointing to a sleeping babe present)—'tis here we can all receive the inflow of truth and wisdom. The spirits of all our friends are here, and they join in one consent to give you these impressions. They come to convince us of the immortality of the soul, and to say the soul lives forever, and calmly reposes beneath the shady bowers of the spirit land. It drinks the clear crystal waters that flow from celestial fountains. They congregate here, exercising all the affection they had on earth.

Friends, could your eyes behold what I now do, you would long to be among those who are winging their way through the spirit land.

Ever endeavor to be useful, and every where you are at home.

[Original.]

COMMUNICATION.

Friend Sunderland,—I take the liberty of forwarding to you a brief account of "spiritual manifestations" in this vicinity, written by "spirits," through my daughter, Mrs. Lewis.

These manifestations commenced at my house in December last; and the first feature thereof was exhibited in raising the hand.

By this method, questions were answered and sentences spelled out, by calling the alphabet, mentally or aloud, as the enquirer chose.

As many as eighth-tenths who calmly and properly requested the intercourse of spirits in this way, felt an influence foreign to themselves, beyond the pale of human magnetism or Psychology. Some few, indeed, thus influenced, have thought, and yet think, imagination, or some hidden element of their own being, may produce it; with what reason the intelligent may judge.

The next phase was by guiding the hand to write—the arm and hand being paralyzed, and the process slow. The first communication, of eight lines, was four hours in being written, through Miss A. E. S.

The next phase was exhibited in a deaf and mute alphabet—no two mediums having the same alphabet made for them. In this way, a number of mediums had long sentences revealed to them, the letters being made as fast as easily written down.

The next phase appeared in the form of Spiritual Psychology, and the subject, or medium, was indifferent alike to the influence of all persons present; human wishes and wills could not reach them.

The fourth phase prepared the way for the more perfect manifestation of the second; and hence all who experienced its peculiarities were enabled to be fit instruments, in the hands of spirits, to transmit, by writing, their lofty sentiments.

I would not be understood to say that any medium, as yet, is a perfect instrument for spirits to use; but I mean that spirits choose their own subject, and use their own language, and write with great rapidity, through many mediums.

I might give many particulars, under the above phases, but this cannot be called for by the reflecting reader.

ADDRESS TO MANKIND.

BY A SPIRIT.

See, the spirit-band is speeding
Through the earth, far o'er the sea,
Watching o'er Earth's erring children,
Fitting them for spirits free.
See them, standing by the monarch
Decked in robes of royal state;
Hear them whispering, softly whispering,
"King! prepare thyself for fate."

"Think not of the glittering gewgaws
That bedeck thee, groveling one;
Rather raise thy thoughts now upward,
To the spirits' mighty throne—
Throne of peace and grand redemption,
Where all souls are freed from sin.
Monarch! elevate thy feelings,
Elevate the mind within."

Standing by the lowly peasant,
Speaking words of heavenly peace:
"Peasant, cease thy low repining,
Let thy confidence increase—
Confidence in Jesus' teachings,
Teaching us that spirits freed
From the sin of low desiring,
Whisper in your ears, Believe!"

Believe that we are ever with you,
Skeptics! turn ye not away,
For you surely all shall see us,
At no very distant day.
If ye shut your eyes against us,
Still the lower will ye stand
In the pure and Christ-like feeling
That pervades the spirit-land."

Ye that believe us, ever onward,
Never, never, turn ye back;
Ever shall your thoughts be upward
On the new and rising track—
Track of knowledge and of wisdom,
It shall elevate your mind,
Keep your feet on Truth's high pathway,
Where Mortality's refined. N. H.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

BY A SPIRIT.

"This is a day of progress—eternal progress; a day of mighty minds and giant intellects: a day of improvement and of spirituality, when all nations shall be gathered under one fold and one shepherd; a day of persecution, when the true believers are persecuted by the Pharisee and sectarist. But they shall all be brought to see the truth, in this world or the next. I speak with the voice of understanding, unto men, that these spiritual matters are the beginning of a new era. The human mind shall be brought up out of the depths of moral darkness, and sing aloud a song of praise to the Creator of the universe. Glory to God, in the highest; and on earth, peace and good will to men. Every creed and sect shall be banished, and glorious truth everywhere prevail.

The lion and lamb shall lie down together; the young child shall play with the serpent, and peace and harmony abound; and all tribes of the earth praise God, and bless his holy spirits who come in their ministration of love to erring mortals. We watch over you with untiring love; strive to guide you in the right, and impress God's truths upon you. Go ye on, then; preach to the world—care not for men's opinions, for the good and true will all be with you, and help to spread spiritual light in all directions. But exercise charity towards unbelievers, for they see as through a glass, darkly. They are like the man that built his house on a sandy foundation, and the winds and rains came and beat upon it, and washed it away. So spiritual truth shall beat upon their theories, and wash them off the face of the earth, and not one vestige of them shall remain. Then go on, and spirits shall help you in the great undertaking.

Good night, and God and his holy angels guard and guide your steps aright.
Your spiritual brother, C."

I am, sir, yours, for Light and Life,
THOS. J. SMITH.

Morris, Otsego, Co., N. Y., April 29, 1851.

Duty, faithfully performed, opens the mind to truth.

AN INFIDEL.

The following article is from the Boston Investigator of April 23, 1851. We give it to our readers to enable them to see how an Infidel can reason:

"For the last twenty-five years I have been entirely averse to spending my time in any disquisitions relative to existence after death. I have repudiated the whole subject and everything dependent on it, as being beyond our knowledge and beyond our means of knowing. I did not see any evidence sustaining any of the theories of the priesthood, that would be taken in any court of law for the amount of sixpence; and I have uniformly refused to have my time and attention wasted upon merely wild conjectures, or in refuting them; and I have wondered at your perseverance in tugging cannon up hill to demolish moschetoes, and I have marvelled at your patience in refuting a thousand times over and over again, that which contains no argument, data, no reason, and which refutes itself.

I am, therefore, a thorough Infidel of twenty-five years' standing, and expect always to remain so; and yet I have a few words to say in favor of investigating the new phenomena that are presenting themselves, commonly called the "Rappings." I have been favored with opportunities for investigating them, and although previously to this, insisted that it was all humbug—that there was not a particle of difference between these "spiritual manifestations" and the famous imposture of the Cock Lane ghost, yet I now take this all back, and say that I am perfectly satisfied that all the "Rappings" ARE NOT IMPOSTURES. I will not undertake to say what is the agency at work. This is entirely another matter, and one that I am still investigating; but it is not all humbug, as I supposed, and as the majority still suppose. That the priesthood uniformly denounce them as the works of the devil, &c., I take to be the greatest recommendation to us Infidels to investigate them, as likely to contain something worth our pains.

The "communications" that I have witnessed, all agree in one respect, at least; they all blow the priesthood and all their pretended knowledge about heaven, hell, God, &c., sky high—knock the whole of their schemes and all their pretensions absolutely into "cocked hats."

In the very outset of the subject, you must understand that they do not claim infallibility—they say that they have no other means of knowledge than we have, except what more development gives them—that, like us, they are progressing—therefore, if their accounts disagree, this is no proof of humbug, nor of delusion.

I see in an article from Dr. Olcott, in your paper of the 26th of March, (among other things that I was sorry to see,) a suggestion that this may be the effect of mesmeric influence of one upon another—(involuntary, perhaps.) I think this idea well worth investigating, but the conclusion that there was imposture or collusion, because one showed indignation and the other looked confused, by having the one imputed or the other

thought, is not proof. It is often impossible to distinguish between the blush of mortified innocence and that of detected guilt; there must be something more scientific than this, to constitute proof in such an extraordinary matter.

I have attended Burr's exposition lecture in New York, and paid money for it, and have listened to and read several other "expositions," but no one of them is any exposition at all. None of them afford any parallels or explanation of what I have seen at the houses of private friends, where I did not have to pay money for them.

I will not now listen to any more "expositions" that attempt to account for all these phenomena, on the score of imposition; nor will I take any amount of syllogisms, however logically they may be, as conclusive evidence, while I have the privilege of witnessing the facts themselves with my own senses. I admire the good sense and firmness of the young lady who accompanied Dr. Olcott—think she did perfectly right in persisting in her right to sit where she could investigate to the best advantage. I think that any thing short of this does not deserve the name of investigation. I suppose Mrs. Cooper does not claim infallibility, even in the clairvoyant condition, much less in the every-day state.

I think the question is fairly up now, what are these manifestations? and for one, I acknowledge myself

AN INVESTIGATOR.

P. S.—I see, by your paper, that some persons have been prosecuted for exhibiting these "manifestations," on the ground of "taking money under false pretences," &c. If I was afraid of investigation, and wished to stop it by persecution, I should be proposing that Burr be immediately arrested and brought to trial for "getting money under false pretences." He announced that he would expose and explain the "spiritual knockings," produce parallels, &c., and he did not do either.

I am disappointed in Dr. Olcott. He was precisely the one that I was looking to for philosophical explanations. I supposed him to be entirely posted up in regard to everything of the kind; but I see I have got to "investigate" for myself, as I would advise every one else to do.

ORTHODOX TESTIMONY.

When in Pittsburg, last week, I had the privilege of making the following extract from a private letter, dated December 9th, addressed to a Presbyterian gentleman of that city, from a brother Presbyterian residing in Brooklyn, N. Y.—The testimony is more valuable, coming, as it does, all the way through an orthodox channel; and though the person to whom it is addressed is skeptical in regard to the spiritual phenomena, and slow to believe even the testimony of his friend, in whom he has great confidence, yet it has awakened within him a spirit of inquiry, and a desire to know more of these new developments. M. A. T.

New Brighton, Pa., Jan., 1, 1850.

"And now a word as to the spiritual light which many suppose is about to il-

luminare the world. I have only time to say that I have been with the Rochester rappers, several evenings, and witnessed strange things. But what is more wonderful still, these rappings are spreading all over this part of the Union. Innocent men, women, and children are followed by them, and wherever they appear, a third party can hold intercourse, to all appearance, with his departed friends. I have thus conversed with many of the dead, if the theory be true. Wonderful revelations are made as to the spiritual world—and the object is universally declared to be to convince men of their immortality, and to show them how they should live, and what is to be their future. An acquaintance of mine, the other evening, in conversation with what purported to be the spirit of a friend of his, who died in California, said, "Well, G., is this really you? Just rap out that old tune you used to sing in my office." It was at once done. He next asked, "Are you happy, G.?" "Yes," was replied by the alphabet. "What is your condition?" "Almost exactly like yours—only better fitted for improvement."

* * * * *

A very aged Presbyterian gentleman called, mentally, for a particular spirit, and asked him to spell out his name. It was done. C—— was spelled out. "Who was C——?" inquired his son. "My bosom friend for twenty-five years," replied the father. The old gentleman then inquired, very reverently, if the spirit of Mr. C—— would willingly answer him some questions. On receiving an affirmative answer, the following dialogue ensued:

Question—Is the Sabbath day holy?

Answer—No. All days are holy.

Q. Is it not wrong to transact secular business on the Sabbath?

A.—Relatively it is—not in itself.

Q.—Is the Bible true?

A.—It is wrongly translated, and you do not understand it.

In one of these conversations, a question was asked which required many words in reply. The alphabetic process being very tedious the spirit answered that he would Mesmerise one of the party, Mr. E. F. Mr. F. accordingly fell into a Mesmeric sleep, arose, took pen, ink, and a little book, which was made by folding a sheet of foolscap into eight leaves—shoved the slide door, and passed into a front parlor, which was entirely dark, seated himself at a table, and in seven minutes returned with six of those pages finely written over, in reply to the question, and signed with the name of the individual whose spirit purported to be in conversation with them. The reply was characterized by great force and judgment. But enough of this. If you see only what is published in the papers on this subject, you will think me wild. But, dear W., I am cool, and waiting for more light."—*Spirit Messenger*.

The last best fruit which comes to late perfection, even in the kindest soul, is tenderness toward the hard, forbearance to the unforbearing, warmth of heart toward the cold, philanthropy towards the misanthropic.

EDITORIAL.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1851.

WHAT IS IT?

What is that *agency* by which the strange phenomena called "spiritual manifestations," are produced? Is it Electricity? Clairvoyance? Mesmerism? Magnetism? Spirits in human bodies? Or is it all of these combined?

Before this question can be properly answered, we wish to know *what has been done*, and the circumstances—some of them at least. Many have erred in their attempts to account for these things, for a want of a knowledge of *all* the facts. The newspapers teem with articles in which "all the mysteries" are solved, as it were, by one stroke of the pen! Various pamphlets have been published, in which the writers are confident that they have given the only true explanation that can be given of these wonderful phenomena! But, unfortunately for them all, like the Kilkenny cats, they devour each other.

One theory will account for one phenomenon, but not for all. It is curious to witness how sanguine and confident certain writers are, that they have hit upon the solution of all the phenomena, merely because they suggest an explanation which *might* be sufficient to account for one single fact, without allowing it to be done by spirits out of the human body. The following are a part of the phenomena produced in our family, and which have been witnessed by multitudes of people; and a part of these results, if not all of them, have been testified to, publicly and privately, often, and in different localities throughout the country. Put them all together, and we affirm that they *cannot be* accounted for on any other hypothesis than that of SPIRITUAL AGENCY, exerted by spirits who have left human bodies. When, in the following account, we say that certain things were done "without human agency," we mean that no human efforts were made; and under most of the circumstances, none could be made without being instantly detected; and further, that no human being present had any *thought* of the results, often before they were developed. The human will, therefore, had nothing to do with them:

I. Sounds made in one or a half dozen places, *at once*; different sounds, made on the floor, on the table, on the chairs, on the window, on the sides of the house, and under the feet of spectators. These sounds made visible *vibrations* in articles that were not touched, at the time, by the medium or any other mortal.

II. Sounds made without the medium's knowledge. Thus, a skeptic puts his hand

under the table, and requests the angels to imitate his motions, which no human being can see. This is often done.

III. The table moved without human hands. It is upset, raised up, made to dance, and carried a distance of *fifty feet*! Chairs turned over, or made to vibrate without human agency. Articles moved, or thrown from place to place. Books and papers have been repeatedly moved in the hands, and taken out of the hands of spectators. The medium did not, and under the circumstances, could not, touch the articles when they moved.

IV. Music produced by drumming on the table or floor, and by musical *sounds* resembling an Æolian harp. Tunes have been produced in this manner, which no one in the circle knew.

V. Sounds imitating the discharge of fire arms and minute guns at sea.

VI. Sounds imitating the bass and snare drums; tunes drummed out, of which the medium had no knowledge.

VII. Writing on a slate and on paper, with a pencil; done when the paper was held in the hand of the spectator; done over and under the table. The hand-writing of deceased persons imitated, of which the medium had no knowledge at all.

VIII. The communication of *intelligence*, in regard to *time, places, and persons*, beyond the knowledge of the medium, and every other person in the circle. Our columns might be filled with accounts of facts under this head.

IX. The sense of touch. I have been taken hold of, handled, patted on my head, shaken, my clothes pulled, and touched with great force, when no human being (whose hands were not both held fast,) was near enough to me to touch me in any way. Clothing of silk or woollen forms no obstacle against these manifestations. This I have proved by actual experiment.

X. Strange noises, like the human voice; articulation of words.

XI. Strange sights, light produced in a dark room, and the appearance of human forms, seen, not by the medium only, but by skeptical spectators.

XII. Sounds *imitating* mechanics at work, such as striking with a hammer, planing, sawing, driving hoops, grooving, &c., and made on the table, when no human hands touched it.

XIII. The window has been raised without human power; doors have been moved, opened, and shut, when requested, by spirits. A table bell has been rung, and the same bell taken from a table, without hands, and wrapped in a *silk* apron. The notion about electricity vanishes before these facts.

The above are a part of the manifesta-

tions made in our family, and similar to those made in other places. Mr. Gordon has been moved wholly by spirits, so that his body has been lifted entirely from the bed and laid upon the floor. Miss Margaret Fox had a pitcher of water brought to her door, one night, entirely by spiritual hands. And we have heard of mediums taken up in their chairs, by spirits, and carried around the room. Indeed, volumes might be filled with similar details of phenomena that are now developed by the same *spiritual* agency, in various localities all over the country. And now, how are they to be accounted for?

1. Our daughters who are mediums are not, and never were, Clairvoyants. So they cannot be accounted for by Clairvoyance.

2. I am not often present at the sittings. And if I were present, I could not move the table fifty feet, by Pathetism.

3. It is not done by Magnetism. This I have proved by actual experiment. I have now, by my side, one of the most powerful magnets ever made in this city, sufficient to raise seventy-five pounds or more. I have tried it with the knowledge of the medium and without her knowledge, without the least perceptible effect. I tried it in the dark, and the medium could not see its luminosity, so much accounted of by Baron Richenbach. I asked the angels if *they could see* any luminosity proceeding from the magnet, and they said "there was none to be seen."

4. It is not done by Galvanism or Electricity: Mr. Daniel Davis, the far-famed magnetic and electrical instrument maker, of this city, assisted me in a series of experiments which put this question about electricity, forever at rest. He brought to my office an electrometer, so sensitive to the presence of electricity, that the gold leaf would move upon the friction of a hair. That is, by slightly passing a piece of sealing wax over the hair, and applying it to the electrometer, the gold leaf would move. Indeed, Mr. Davis truly remarked, that the machine was so nicely constructed, that "electricity, next to nothing," would move it!

Well, now, the medium, our daughter, was completely *isolated*, and during this time she touched the machine, while the *sounds* and motions were made, as usual, but not the slightest movement could be detected in the gold leaf of the electrometer! And these experiments I have varied, enough to satisfy myself that the *power* by which these phenomena are produced, is not Galvanism or Electricity, in any of their varied forms now known.

5. It is not *human*—it is not something which emanates from the human system by

the will, or without consciousness. True it is, that there is *something* in the *living* human body, which spirits are dependent upon for certain things they do. That something may be called "the sphere," for the want of a better term. See Spirit World of March 8, 1851, page 75. The numerous, and we may say conclusive experiments performed by Baron Richenbach, *prove* that the exhalations from the human body do not *act* upon physical substances; "meeting with solid bodies it bends around them, and follows their surface,"—pages 36, 226. No such emanations could move a heavy table fifty feet.

If we suppose that the human *spirit* within the living body, gives out what Swedenborg calls its "sphere," then we can see how it may be that spirits out of the external body, can, by coming within this "sphere" of certain mortals, use that as a *medium* for reaching the grosser forms of matter, which are contained in electricity and the common atmosphere.

No objections ever made from experiments with the knee or toe joints—none with the human will over susceptible subjects—none which have received what purported to be answers from *animals*, can weigh a feather when viewed in the presence of *all* the phenomena above described. The fact that answers *may* come from the spiritual world, when questions are addressed to devils, cats, dogs, horses, or donkeys, proves more in respect to the *state* of mind in *mortals* who thus trifle with solemn realities, than it does against the theory of *spiritual* communications. It is admitted that a mortal may approach the spiritual world, in such a state of mind, as to bring back upon himself such manifestations as will confirm him in his *love* of the *false*. Such are the retributive laws of the Infinite, by which the inhabitants of heaven and earth are governed.

Here, then, we rest. After all the attention we have been able to give on this subject, and enjoying advantages which have not, perhaps, fallen to the lot of many other mortals, we come to the following conclusions:

1. That the phenomena we have described, and which are occurring under our immediate inspection, daily, are produced by spirits who have passed from this world.

2. That these spiritual manifestations demonstrate, first, man's conscious existence in another sphere, after death; and secondly, that man's condition, after death, corresponds with his love, or life before death. Just as sure as we admit these manifestations to be from the spiritual world, we must infer what that world is, to each, from the concurrent testimonies which are given from the whole. Hence, we prefer to dispense with all *theories*, all dog-

matism, from one man or one angel; we choose to hear what that world will teach of itself.

CLAIRVOYANTS.—The opinion we have expressed on clairvoyance has been formed by an experience of many years. The friends of truth should remember that there are *two spiritual* spheres. While in the external human body, we are in the first spiritual sphere; that is, as to our interiors, we are in the first. Here our spirits are in human bodies, and act through nervous systems.

But, by death, the spirit passes into the second sphere, or spiritual world, where it gravitates to its centre, or to the society of its *love*.

Now, we know that the great majority of persons called clairvoyants, when they enter a state of trance, and suppose themselves in communication with angels, never pass out of the first sphere, in their perceptions. True, they may be influenced by spirits, but they are still in the first sphere; and what they utter as coming from the spiritual world, does not come from any sphere higher than that in which they live. What they utter in a state of trance may be good and true, but we should not give it the authority, so to speak, of angels, when there is not sufficient evidence to prove that it did not originate in the first sphere, or brains of the clairvoyant.

We receive numerous reports of this kind. Were our paper large enough, we should have no objection against publishing the most of them; though we could not give them to our readers as coming "from the spiritual world," because there is no evidence that they originated in any sphere above the first, in which all human spirits live.

JAMES V. WILSON.—Those who have read Mr. Davis's "Great Harmonia," and his recent "Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse," will remember the account he gives of communications he had from what purported to be the spirit of James Victor Wilson. Those communications are beautiful and lovely. Happy, indeed, should we be to hold converse with a spirit so attracting as that one surely was.

In our present number will be found a letter, giving some communications purporting to come from the same spirit. That these answers may have come from him, is rendered the more probable from the fact that they were given in the presence of his earthly relatives.

Now, if we compare what Mr. Davis says in his "Great Harmonia," page 180, and also in his "Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse," page 155, with the thirteenth question and answer in this letter, it will

be seen, we think, that there is some apparent discrepancy. In one case, Wilson is represented as saying there are "just six" spheres or grand circles; and in another he is represented as saying there were "seven." This discrepancy may arise from a want of a settled understanding among us mortals as to the use of the terms "spheres," "circles," "degrees," &c.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Bennett did not ask the spirit, in this case, to reconcile his denial of *all* "antagonisms" in the spiritual world, with the manifest and admitted antagonisms that are ever and anon developed in the communications that are made from that world. Do not effects always resemble the cause which produces them? The communications that are made from what purports to be "the circle of apostles and prophets," at Auburn, are as different from those made by James V. Wilson, as darkness is from light.

"UNKNOWN TONGUE."—We have noticed an increasing disposition, among clairvoyants who imagine themselves intruded to the spiritual world, to use unknown language, or new words, which neither they themselves, or any other person, knows the meaning of.

It seems to us that this habit is a bad one. We do not suppose that any communication could come from superior intelligence, and be conveyed in terms which those could not understand, to whom it was made. We cannot admit that the Deity ever did make so-called "revelations" in an unknown tongue. If the language be not understood, there is no revelation, except mere *sounds* may be so called.

The fact that different clairvoyants may have used similar unknown words, proves nothing in favor of their use. If they get them from spirits, they must be of a very *low* order, so low that it cannot be of much benefit to communicate with them, in any way.

Suppose you were to attend church, and hear the minister constantly uttering gibberish. Would you not consider him unworthy of much notice? Certainly; you would not look up to him as a teacher, except you were to be taught the use of *unmeaning* words.

UNDERSTAND!—We are constantly reminded of a *use* for this term. Not only in many things we witness from day to day, developed, as we believe, from the spiritual world, but in reference to letters of inquiry reaching us, ever and anon, from all points of the compass, in regard to matter that has appeared in our paper. Many, very many, questions are asked, which we have minutely and fully answered in preceding numbers of this paper.

CORRESPONDENTS.—Our esteemed friend, Dr. C. T. Whippo, misunderstands us.—We did not speak of the “great mass of the people.” We referred to our readers.—The “names of responsible persons” we have published already. See Spirit World of February 1, 1851. Horace Greeley has gone to Europe. Shall be happy to hear from you, and will publish any FACTS, new or old, which promise to subserve the cause in which we are engaged. As to “Theories,” we have not yet got one for our correspondents to receive or reject!

“Mr. Davis Criticized,” by Dr. J. A. Gridley. As we remarked last week, we deprecate controversy. We do not seek it, and would avoid it, if possible. But Dr. Gridley complains that he has been shut out from another paper. We do not see how we can consistently close our columns against him, or any one else, who writes on an important subject, and in kind and respectful terms. He shall be heard as soon as we can find space for him.

“AUTHORITY.”—Whose words are these,

“Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself; thou shalt give it to the stranger that is within thy gate, and sell it to an ALIEN that HE MAY EAT IT; for thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God.”—Deut. 14: 21.

Were a spirit or an angel to “spell out” a doctrine like the above, what holy horror would be excited in a certain class of minds we could name.

CHEAP POSTAGE.—The Post Master General has decided that under the new postage law, which takes place on the first of July, weekly papers ONLY are entitled to circulation free of postage, in the county where published, and that the office of publication is the starting place and county lines.

Hence, subscribers to the Spirit World, in Boston and Suffolk county, may receive their papers through the Post Office, free of postage.

THE TRUE GOD.—We shall commence the publication of two articles from the pen of Mr. W. M. Fernald, soon, on “The True God,” which will redeem the promise made in his behalf, a few weeks ago.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Wright's Corner, N. Y., April 29, 1851.

LaRoy Sunderland,—You have, no doubt, read the accounts given by A. J. Davis, of two interviews he thinks he had with James Victor Wilson, since his decease. He was a very extraordinary young man, and had, at the early age of seventeen, written a work in defence of Universalism, which was published in 1846. I had the pleasure, on the 22d and 23d inst., at Rochester, N. Y., of interviews with the spirit of this excellent

young man. His uncle, Henry C. Wilson, of Lockport, N. Y., was present, and called for him. Tests were instituted by his uncle, which satisfied him of Victor's presence. Mrs. Fish, of the Fox family, was present as the medium. I was permitted to put the following questions, among others, to this intelligent spirit, and received the answers as here given to them:

1. Are you at liberty to communicate your knowledge of the spirit world? *Ans.*—“Some things.” [Spelled out.]

2. Are there any antagonisms in the spirit world? “None.”

3. Are there spirits in the spirit world that never will, or ever can advance to a state of purity and happiness? “There are none.”

4. Do different spirits from the human race, when they enter the spirit world, take different degrees or conditions, according to the laws of spiritual affinity? “Yes.”

5. Is spiritual affinity regulated by the development and cultivation of the intellectual and moral faculties? “Yes.” And the advancement in knowledge, goodness, and purity of each individual while in the body? “Yes.”

6. Do you find, now, that the doctrines you entertained, while in the body, were correct? “Mainly so. But I was happily surprised to find myself transported to such a glorious society. You spoke of discord in the spirit world: Each society is classed by itself, and perfect harmony reigns there.”

7. Do you make these sounds yourself, and by your own efforts, or do you employ another spirit? “When you are in the presence of my dear friends, I am able to answer myself, direct.”

8. Will you tell us how these sounds are made? “Through the medium of electricity. The sounds you hear are echoes from the spirit world.”

9. Do you derive the knowledge of the answers from the knowledge and memory of our minds at the time of the answer? “No.”

10. Is it necessary, in order that responses be made to questions, that the questioner sit so as to have the magnetic exhalations of the questioner come in contact with the same exhalations from the person of the medium? “I will explain. In order to get information from one city to another, by telegraph, the wires must be in perfect order. And people frequently disturb the spiritual telegraph by too frequently disturbing the mental state of the medium.”

11. What is the object of these manifestations? “To revolutionize the world, reform society, and convince skeptics of the immortality of the soul.”

12. Have you learned how many spheres there are in the spirit world? “Seven spheres—three degrees, or classes, in each sphere.”

13. To what sphere do you belong? “Fifth, and third degree.”

14. Do spirits from the human race come into the immediate presence of God, when they enter the spirit world? “They do not. They enter the sphere next to this, and progress onward in goodness and knowledge.”

15. Is there such a thing known in the spirit world, as a general judgment day? “There is not.”

16. Are the spirits from this sphere now in Hades, and not yet entered upon their final condition? “They are not.”

17. How do spirits converse in the spirit world? “They understand, and exchange thoughts, but make no sound.”

18. Is it in the power of spirits to communicate with us vocally, as we talk with each other?—(“Yes”)—without assuming the natural organs of speech, the same as when they were in the body? “No.”

19. Do spirits from the human world know the motives which prompt men to action, before the actions are performed? “Not often. They understand the minds of men, but don't see the cause, ahead.”

21. Is the true character of all human spirits, as they enter the spirit world, at once perceived by the inhabitants of that world? “All spirits are not capable of understanding the character of different spirits, as there are different degrees of intelligences in the spirit world.”

22. Is the true and real character of every human being more the result of the peculiar mental and moral constitution, as developed in the natural organism of each individual, than all other circumstances? “Yes,” “Yes,” “Yes,” by several different spirits.

I have deemed the above of sufficient importance to send you a copy, as points are embraced in the questions and their answers, now much discussed.

Truly yours, J. H. BENNETT.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SCIENCE, EDUCATION, HEALTH.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Mr. Sunderland,—I transcribe a few more passages from my “Common Place Book,” for your instructive paper. They consist, mostly, of those kinds of thoughts that in thinking minds take root and grow. Yours, respectfully, J. G. D.

“In another life it is very manifestly perceived what is alive, and what is not alive; truth which is not alive is instantly perceived as somewhat material, shaggy, and shut up: good which is not alive is perceived as somewhat woody, bony, and stony; but truth and good vivified by the Lord are open, vital, full of what is spiritual and celestial.”—Swedenborg.

“Science is of such a nature, that it desires nothing more than to obtrude itself into things celestial, and to explore them; but this is contrary to order, for thus it violates things celestial. Order itself is that the celestial, by means of the spiritual, should insert itself into the rational, and thus into the scientific, and adapt each to itself; and unless this order is observed, it is impossible to obtain wisdom.”—*ib.*

“A man who is in some light of truth, and yet in evil of life becomes like a chimney-sweeper, sticking close to a black chimney, who, when he raises his eyes upwards, sees the sky beyond the smoke, and when he looks down-

wards, he sees the fire from which the smoke arises."—*ib.*

"The wisdom of the angels consists solely in this, that they see and comprehend the things they think."—*ib.*

"The thing that is uttered from the inmost parts of a man's soul, differs altogether from what is uttered by the outer part. The outer is of the day, under the empire of mode; the outer passes away, in swift endless changes; the inmost is the same yesterday, to-day and forever."—*Carlyle.*

"It is Nature's highest reward to a true simple great soul, that he gets thus to be part of herself. Such a man's works, whatsoever he with utmost conscious exertion and forethought shall accomplish, grow up withal unconsciously, from the unknown deeps in him:—as the oak-tree grows from the earth's bosom, as the mountains and waters shape themselves; with a symmetry grounded in Nature's own laws, conformable to all Truth whatsoever."—*ib.*

"Wonderful it is to see how the Ideal or Soul, place it in what ugliest Body you may, will irradiate said Body with its own nobleness; will gradually, incessantly would, modify, new form or re-form said ugliest Body, and make it at last beautiful, and to a certain degree divine!"—*ib.*

"Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a Life-purpose he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by ignoble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river there, it runs and flows; draining off the sour festering water, gradually from the root of the remotest grass-blade; making, instead of a pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow, with its clear flowing stream."—*ib.*

"Every man, within that inconsiderable figure of his, contains a whole spirit-kingdom and Reflex of the All; and though to the eye but some six standard feet in size, reaches downwards and upwards, unsurveyable, fading into the regions of Immensity and Eternity."—*ib.*

"The History of Literature, especially for the last two centuries, is our proper Church History; the other Church, during that time, having more and more decayed from its old functions and influence, and ceased to have a history. . . . Life, mankind's Life, ever from its unfathomable fountains, rolls wondrous on, another though the same; in Literature, too, the seeing eye will distinguish Apostles of the Gentiles, Proto and Deuteromartyrs; still less will the Simon Magus, or Apollonius with the golden thigh, be wanting. But all now is on an infinitely wider scale; the elements of it all swim far scattered, and still only striving towards union; whereby, indeed, it happens that to the most, under this new figure, they are unrecognisable."—*ib.*

"It is the Night of the World, and still long till it be Day: we wander amid the glimmer of smoking ruins, and the Sun and the Stars of Heaven are as if blotted out for a season; and two immeasurable Phantoms, *Hypocrisy* and *Atheism*, with the *Gowle*, *Sensuality*, stalk abroad over the Earth, and call it theirs: well at ease

are the sleepers for whom Existence is a shallow Dream."—*ib.*

"The man of impassioned imagination [or inspired insight] is vital in every part. The primitive spiritual energy at the centre of his personality permeates, as with warm life-blood, the whole of his being, vivifying, connecting, fusing into unity, all his faculties, so that his thought comes from him as an act, and is endowed with a penetrating and animating as well as enlightening power.

"The man of understanding, so called, simply perceives the forms of things and their relations; the man of impassioned imagination perceiving forms and divining spirit, conceives the life of things and their relations. The antithesis runs through the whole realm of thought and fact. The man of understanding, when he rises out of sensations, simply reaches abstractions; and in the abstract there is no life. Ideas and principles belong as much to the concrete, to substantial existence, as the facts of sensation; the law of gravitation is a reality no less than the planet of Jupiter."—*E. P. Whipple.*

"No education deserves the name, unless it develops thought,—unless it pierces down to the mysterious spiritual principle of mind, and starts that into activity and growth. There, all education, intellectual, moral, religious, begins; for morality, religion, intelligence, have all one foundation in vital thought; that is, in thought which conceives all objects with which it deals, whether temporal or eternal, visible or invisible, as living realities, not as barren propositions. Here is the vital principle of all growth in learning, in virtue, in intelligence, in holiness."—*ib.*

"Sand, and salt, and a mass of iron, is easier to bear than a man without understanding. As timber girt and bound together in a building cannot be loosed with shaking, so the heart that is established by advised counsel shall fear at no time."

"A man's attire, and excessive laughter, and gait, show what he is."

"A fool lifteth up his voice with laughter; but a wise man doth scarce smile a little."

"The heart of fools is in their mouth, but the mouth of the wise is in their heart."

"The heart of the foolish is like a cart wheel; and his thoughts are like a rolling axle-tree."

"The pipe and the psaltery make sweet melody; but a pleasant tongue is above them both."—*Ecclesiasticus.*

TRUTH.

"Truth hath a forehead free,
And in the tower of her integrity
Sits an unvanquished virgin."

—*Robert Davenport, Old English Poet.*

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