

# SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHER.

Goodness and Truth.

VOL. I.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1850.

NO. 3.

## SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHER.

Written for the Spiritual Philosopher.

### SPIRITUALISM IN IRELAND.

About the year 1800 there lived in Coleraine, an ancient city in the North of Ireland, three highly respectable sisters, the Misses T——, who kept a boarding-school, at which young ladies, the *élite* of all the country around, received education in its varied polite and fashionable branches.

In the beginning of winter, the ladies of this establishment began to wonder and be somewhat alarmed at frequent *knockings* under the tables at which they wrought or studied, without being able to discover the cause. The unaccountable interruptions gradually increased, as, at times, the room doors of the house would instantaneously fly open, and while all the family were running about to know how it happened, the doors would as immediately close, leaving them nothing the wiser. At other times a heavy weight seemed as if rolling over the floors, shaking the apartments to their foundations; then, sometimes, there would be a crash as if the entire house were tumbling about their ears, and, when the alarm subsided, no injury was perceived. The table services would be removed and left confusedly round the room, loud laughings were heard as if in their midst or beside them—bed-clothes were at nights thrown off on to the floors, and water basins would, at other times, be emptied over the sleepers. If any of the young ladies wrote of these disturbances to their friends, a *verbatim* copy of their letters would be found, as soon as the original was sealed, on their dressing tables. — The

dishes would, imperceptibly, be removed and change places on the table before them; the bottles of wine were emptied and left so, on the cellar floor. Two of the elderly ladies agreed privately to poison a few of these, and place them in the bin, so as not to be distinguished by any but themselves. This answered no purpose; they were found next morning separated from the others and labelled "*Poison*." Doctors of all the learned professions proposed, in turns, to sit up in the house at nights. They were led through the house by such sounds as described, and as if in the next room, and when entering it, it seemed as if proceeding from the one they had left. The inhabitants volunteered to surround the house in numbers every night; all was alike ineffectual. The young ladies were, gradually, withdrawn from the school; the disturbances continued inexplicably obscure, through the winter, and ever since, and ceased not until the family had removed to another residence!

I saw the house and was told the above a few years after its occurrence by one on whose veracity I could place implicit confidence.

J. A. S.

C——, S. C., August 17, 1850.

The above comes to us from South Carolina, and accompanied, as it is, with what we suppose to be responsible names, we do not hesitate to give it a place in our column. We have another interesting article, from the same writer, for our next paper.—EDITOR.

Fossil remains on the Ohio prove that it was once covered by the sea.

Written for the Spiritual Philosopher.

### COMMUNICATION.

DEAR BROTHER,—Chance, or, my guardian angel, threw in my way, yesterday, the first number of the "*Spiritual Philosopher*," which I read with an earnest interest. To meet with such a publication, at this eventful era of the world's history, is cheering indeed. Like a fountain by the way-side, or a bubbling spring to the weary traveller on the desert waste, are its words and thoughts to the thirsting soul. The wonder is, that such a work had not been sent out on its mission long before, or that the "*Univercælum*," so pure and lofty in its character, should have been allowed to *die*, for want of support! If the "*Spiritual Philosopher*" will fill the place of the "*Univercælum*," (and why should it not?) it will live, and thousands of the best minds in the land will interest themselves in its behalf; and many, too, will give their aid and sympathy now, who did not to the "*Univercælum*," for the world has advanced somewhat, I hope, since that paper was suspended. Even though it be but one short year since then, yet, light has been shed abroad;—mind has been developed;—reason has been appealed to;—interest has been excited;—the *invisible beings* from the higher spheres have been communicating with us, and teaching us our immortal and glorious destiny; and the promise is, that we shall have, in due time, more extended and important communications, and a more convenient and elevated form of holding intercourse with these angel visitants! How interesting and important, then, that we should have a medium of communication for the residents of this lower sphere, and for any

who desire to address us from the higher spheres above.

Such thoughts as these, to the stoic, the skeptic, the utilitarian, will sound like insanity, or the dreams of ideality. Dr. Elder once said, in speaking of spiritual truths, "*These blessed things are truer than cart-wheels and cabbage-heads.*" The world will ultimately learn the great truth which was long ago uttered, that "The things which are seen are temporal—but the things which are unseen are eternal."

The "Spiritual Philosopher," I hope, will be a medium through which we shall not unfrequently hear from Fishbough, Fernald, Brittan, Baker, Ingalls, Guild, Davis, and other clear and beautiful writers, who helped to make the "Universe" what it was.

I rejoice, my brother, that you have investigated those "Mysterious Manifestations," and are fully convinced that they come from the inhabitants of the Spirit World! Your articles on those subjects are intensely interesting, and will be read with avidity by all except religious and infidel bigots. When you wrote me last winter you were "inquiring,"—the only state of mind in which any body ever found the truth. If men were inquirers, learners, instead of bigots and dogmatizers, then should we soon hear the shout of ransomed nations, and the "echo of the eternal harmonies."

Ever faithfully,

M. A. T.

New Brighton, Pa., August 6, 1850.

Written for the Spiritual Philosopher.  
**RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY.**

MR. SUNDERLAND,—Sir: Allow me, through the columns of your paper, to express a few thoughts upon the object contemplated in part by you, in establishing the "Spiritual Philosopher." If I understand your views, they are, that the world needs a reformed religion, as well as a regenerative code of morals. The latter point is well attended to by our numerous contemporaries in the reformatory world, but the former has been, and is, shamefully neglected. Cousin, the great French Philosopher, aimed at developing the religious element in accordance with Reason, and accordingly, made sad inroads upon the beaten track of superstitious faith and a religion based on assumption. With him the fat of the priest was to be tested by the talismanic touch of Reason, to be asserted to be the voice of God

in the Soul, and of course perfect. Reformers have erred, egregiously, in the matter of attacking the religious faith of the world, without offering the deprived subjects of superstition a substitute in the room of the specious errors torn from their embrace. Not so with the individual alluded to above. He supplanted false religion, by teaching a *spiritual philosophy*; by opposing, on the one hand, that religion which denied the authority and the use of Reason, and on the other, that Philosophy which abjured Religion, and plunged its votaries into the dreary gulf of Atheism. It appears to me, it is this which we need at the present day. 1st, a Religion founded upon Reason. 2dly, a Philosophy acknowledging the claims of Religion. Let Philosophy and Religion join hands in sweet embrace, for they are closely identified, the one with the other. Like twin sisters, the resemblance between them is close and striking.

A true Philosophy teaches us most emphatically the existence of God, of a Spiritual World, and of the Spirit of Man. These three points are all that Religion needs to base its most sacred duties upon. Without them, Philosophy is shorn of a great portion of its power and grandeur; for it has failed to solve the most important problems suggested to human apprehension. I would not deny that its discoveries have been great and vast, aside from spiritual affairs; but I affirm, if it has not penetrated hidden things, and revealed to us truth respecting our inner selves,—in relation to the cause of the mighty effects so magnificently exhibited on every side of us, and concerning our future destiny, it has failed to accomplish its mission.

Religion, on the other hand, without Philosophy, is superstition and blind credulity, a terrible engine in the hands of designing men, with which to crush the unfortunate masses. It loses its divinity, its nobility, and descends to a level with the tricks and fantastic feats of jugglers and mountebanks. It is a curse to the world, and one all covered with blood and the rust produced by human tears, which during past ages have fallen upon its metallic surface.

I hope your paper will not fail to distinguish between false religion, and that true and heavenly nymph who seeks to wipe from the fevered brow of suffering humanity the profuse perspiration, caused by its writhings beneath the iron yoke of ecclesiastical despotism. What we need

is, a religion of progress, one suited to the genius of the times, not an abjuration of all religion. It is this latter error which has clogged the wheels of the car of reform, and prevented its onward progress. Rationalism is needed by us; not infidelity or unbelief.

Among those engaged in the most radical reforms of the day, very few, I am sorry to say, are spiritual men. They do not harmonize with Jesus Christ in his spiritual teachings, although they do in his practical precepts. But man has a spiritual nature, as well as a moral one, and his welfare demands its development, as well as that of his moral nature.

Yours, for a Spiritual Philosophy,

C. STEARNS.

Boston, August 1, 1850.

Our correspondent should distinguish between RELIGION and THEOLOGY.—ED.

#### SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.

The following letter was addressed to Messrs. Capron & Barron, on receipt of a copy of their "History" of the "Mysterious Noises," a book that ought to be extensively circulated throughout the country:—

Having previously had only such knowledge of the "noises" as I received through the common press, I was by no means prejudiced in their favor, yet refrained from making up my mind either way until possessed of further information. Right heartily did we all sit down and read the pamphlet through aloud. And I must say that I see nothing in it incredible—nothing but what might be produced upon known principles now in operation. That we are surrounded by mental beings at all times and in all places, is a fact so easily explained that the great *mystery* is why every body don't know it. That the Omnipotent Spirit of God envelopes our minds as the atmosphere does our bodies, is a fact denied only by Atheists, whether in the Church or out. That the distance between the spirits within us and the spirits around us is only the thickness of our bodies, is a necessary conclusion from such admissions.

My first impression was that these communications were too sensuous, too material, for spiritual intercourse. But the history of it seems perfectly natural and almost necessary.

But the time will come when mental communication will be enjoyed without physical interposition.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things to explain in this matter is, how these mental beings can take upon themselves visible forms. This, it seems to me, is really understood; for what, after all, is *visible substance*, such as our bodies and all things else, are composed? It is but the combination of *invisible elements* organized by a process of nutrition and di-



gestion—a combination of invisible elements, and can be decomposed into non-visibility. Our bodies are composed of food. It is well said that food is organized from invisible elements, and it only requires a greater amount of mental power to organize directly from the elements, without the process of vegetation, digestion and assimilation.

Mind being superior to matter, and when in its true state having "dominion over," or control of the physical elements, it can produce physical phenomena at pleasure,—as in the case of Elijah of old, producing fire and water at will, and many other physical phenomena. The organization of a man's hand in old Belshazzar's time, was, no doubt, by mental beings, present though invisible, by mental action; combining the physical elements into that visible form. So with Moses and Aaron in Egypt. Jesus feeding the multitude by increasing the "loaves and fishes" is another instance—a combination of the elements without the process of vegetation or animal assimilation, and I see no reason why mental beings should not be the same now, if necessary, as there is no time to mentality—no where.

As I said before, we are surrounded by mental beings—and at all times—and the only distance between them and us is the thickness of our bodies; so that physical condition is an essential qualification to spiritual intercourse. Hence those whose physical constitutions are in such a condition that they are readily magnetized, (or are impressible,) are, for the same reason, the best mediums of communications, for they are more come-at-able or approachable by those wishing to communicate with man. But the bodies of some are so thick that their minds could scarce hear the resurrection trumpet, much less the silence of spirit talk.

There are ten thousands fathoms of dead animals' carcasses closely packed, five thousand leagues of grease, gravy, rum, toa, coffee and tobacco, and millions of miles of filth and corruption too impure to be talked of, between them and all mind. No wonder that mental beings have to move chairs, tables, &c. The wonder is that they don't move mountains and rocks, and bury the dirty, filthy, doubting wretches deep in oblivion. That is evidence enough to me that they are "good spirits."

But before this generation shall have passed away, the "great gulf" between mind and mind shall be bridged; heaven and earth shall be united; the shores of Time and the plains of Eternity shall touch together, and preliminary to the time when none shall say to his brother, "Know the Lord," but all shall know Him from the least to the greatest. The great reforms of the age are fast tending to this great end, and man is about entering upon a higher sphere of existence than he has ever, as a whole, enjoyed before; and whether these occurrences, with which you are familiar, are the real ones or not, the real ones will soon be known, and these are as likely to be the beginning as any others, and the course you have taken to give them publicity and elicit investigation is worthy of the age and worthy of the cause.

*Purity*, both physical and mental, must precede any great mental manifestation. Without it, it will soon dwindle into insignificance and folly. Less of the physical evidence and more of the mental will be better. Knowledge for the great work of profession and human elevation should be sought after—directions for the most successful and best efforts to bring humanity to glorious consummation—unity of man with man, man with angels, and all with God. If these heavenly messengers have come to visit us, let us use them for the elevation and redemption of Man. If they have not come for that purpose, they may as well stay away. But they have. They have been bending over us, and flocking around the world, peering into every crevice in the cold cast-iron heart of man, beating at the door of every mental temple for admittance, and shouting at the top of their voices to the walking corpses that stalk above ground, ever since they have left their bodies. They labor as intently now for the good of man as they did in the body, and perhaps more so, and only need access to man to guide him out of the wilderness, over the desert and up the hill-tops to the land of Redemption. So don't let us bother them about minor matters, but go right into the great work at once. That, eventually will furnish the world with the best evidence that they are from God, and will all seek to be with them, or rather, enjoy and realize their presence.

Above all things keep it from being made a *mercenary matter*. There is nothing so deadening to spirit life as venality, unless it be the denial of ever present angel spirits. Beg, dig, grub and starve, but don't traffic in angel intercourse. If the gate of heaven has been opened, don't let us have Mammon for gate-keeper.—If Franklin, or Rogers, or Swedenborg, or Gabriel have come to our aid, don't let us set them on the auction block to sell to the highest bidder.

Let us seek such information as shall enable all the race to come up and talk with them face to face, behold their glories and to be like them. Get knowledge of them with reference to the great principles of the government of God, or whether there are such principles—with reference to physiological science, or whether there is such a science—of mental science, or whether there is mental science—whether obedience to each and all of these will produce harmony of character and final unity of the race—the means to be used to bring the constitution of man to harmony with itself, with nature and with God. When there shall be but one moving motive—one great central heart—one infinite, pervading soul that fills the mighty universe, when each shall be himself, and God be all in all.

Let us try to get up to them, and not bring them down to us, lest they become wearied of our sensuality, and so leave us in our corruption. Cling to them that you may be instructed, so may the world be blest, and their mission be fulfilled.

As ever, for God and Humanity,

J. O. WATTLES.

West Point, Tippecanoe Co., Ind.,  
April 25th, 1850.

Written for the Spiritual Philosopher.

#### SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

On page 6 of the *Spiritual Philosopher*, No. 1, article "Spirit World," four answers are given to the objection "that these communications should be commenced and made to the world, through females and children, and not through men of well known integrity and intelligence." Another answer has been given us, in substance as follows:—

Females and children, as a class, are more refined and spiritual than men, hence can better associate with spirits, and are better adapted for the medium of spiritual communications. The *uneducated* can, more freely and easily, associate with spirits, because their minds are less trammelled, biassed, prejudiced by books, by error, unrealities, systems of belief, and this world's philosophy. The educated are too much abstracted by externals, superficialities, and this world's knowledge to associate with spirits and receive spiritual impressions.

So, men, as a class, are not the proper mediums of spiritual communications, because of their education, of the nature of their business and occupations, "their ends to gain," seeking and striving for fame, place, power, riches, livelihood, &c., all of which necessarily produces discord, and distracts them spiritually. Spirits can no more communicate with some females and children than they can with the hardest hearted, most discordant man.

So, on the other hand, there are a few men who are truly refined and spiritual, with whom spirits can and do communicate and associate.

Some few females and children are very much refined, very spiritual; every breath they draw is as pure and spiritual as it is possible to be in this world; they are near the spiritual world; the connecting link between their spirits and bodies may be easily disconnected; the thread that confines them to this world may be easily severed. Such persons easily, freely associate with spirits, and are the chosen mediums of communication.

We all *may* and ought to so live and think that we can associate with spirits, and receive spiritual impressions; and then the more progressed and spiritual will receive communications for the less advanced and more unfortunate.

M.

Lyndon, Vt., August 17, 1850.

*Note by the Editor.*—We recognize the above as the response of a pure and har-

monious spirit. Such spirits manifest themselves through *congenial* mediums only. But discordant spirits may manifest themselves through *discordant* human beings.

From the Sunday News.

#### "ELECTRICAL PSYCHOLOGY."

It has been often remarked, that this was a country, above all others, where every man is allowed to dub himself as "Dr." "Prof." or "discoverer." And if the "discovery" appertain to those branches of science which so far relate to the *ideal* or mental, as not to come within the purview of the *Patent Law*, why the same thing may be "*discovered*" once or twice a year, for a century, and by as many different individuals, especially if, by assuming such a "*discovery*," a few thousands of dollars can be made out of the pretension. What dust was raised in this city last winter, about a "new discovery," presented by the Rev. Theophilus Fisk, under the name of *Electro-Biology*. And, though the claims put forth by Mr. Fisk in regard to the *newness* of his so called science were refuted in the *Daily Mail*, and others of the city papers at the time, and though his assumption with regard to a "new discovery" were exposed by a vote of a large meeting in Tremont Temple, Boston, Feb. 6, 1850, and, though the evidences of the untruthfulness of the assumptions about the *newness* of what has been called "*Electrical Psychology*," "*Electro-Biology*," &c., have been often spread before the public and published in many of the newspapers throughout the country, yet persons are now lecturing "*Down East*," as well as South and West, who persist in attempting to call it by these new fangled names. Indeed, our attention has just been called to a Hartford paper, in which we find it it announced that

"*Drs. Dods and Williams, the Discoverers of Electrical Psychology and authors of its Philosophy*," are now engaged in giving lectures on this subject.

"Dr. Dods," we suppose to be the man who was once known as John Dods Bovee, but who has, recently, lectured on Mesmerism under the name of Dr. Dods. A book he has published on this subject, is dedicated to "Dr. B. B. Williams;" and in his Introduction he says:—

"Dr. Williams was my coadjutor in the discovery and perfecting of the Philosophy of this science, and in applying to it the name of *Electrical Psychology*. If

there is an individual in existence who has taken persons from a public audience, who had never been mesmerised or operated upon, and immediately controlled them in their muscular motions and mental impressions, till it was done by Dr. Williams and myself, I am ignorant of the fact. Such experiments I have never seen advertised for public exhibition, nor have I ever read them in published works."

Now let it be remembered that these claims with regard to a *new* science, were never heard of here till last winter, and there is no evidence to prove that "Drs. Dods and Williams" ever attempted any thing of the kind, farther back than 1848, or perhaps '47; though we doubt whether they made such a discovery three years ago. This would hardly allow of its being called "*new*." Well, in 1843 this same "Dr. Dods" lectured on "*mesmerism*" in this city, and during these lectures he repeatedly spoke of a work called "*The Magnet*," which he had read, and which he quoted as authority for some things he said. Well, on looking over some copies of that work, now before us, we find in the No. for Jan., 1843, that Mr. Sunderland, the editor, uses the following language:—

"It is just as easy to bring out results from persons in a waking state as from those asleep; and this I have fully and repeatedly demonstrated. — *Magnet Jan., 1843. Page 179.*

And on the cover of the same number, in his advertisement, Mr. Sunderland says, again:—

"I can cause persons of a certain temperament to obey my *will*, awake or asleep! Nay, I have known some in whom I can produce what is called the *clairvoyant* state, while they are *perfectly awake*!"

And that the experiments here referred to, seven years ago, were precisely, in their philosophy, like what are now performed under the various "*new*" names of "*Electrical Psychology*," "*Electro-Biology*," &c., was proved at the meeting in Tremont Temple, last February, by the following quotation, which we remember was read in the presence of Col. Greene, its editor, who was greeted with cheers as the paper was displayed before the audience:—

"Mr. Sunderland's claim to *originality*, as stated in his lectures, and in his published works, (*The Magnet*, 1842, and *Pathetism*, 1843,) is first, in respect to his *theory*, and secondly, in respect to his *peculiar manner of operating*. His *fascinating* strangers, in a promiscuous assembly, and without contact, and persons who had never been mesmerised previously, and this, too, while in the delivery of his lecture; and his relief of pain, and

cure of disease, (and other phenomena) induced in persons *wide awake*, and without any previous mesmerizing;—such results he has produced in the *Howard St. Tabernacle*, and *Masonic Temple*, and such as were never induced by any other person, here or elsewhere."—*Boston Post, Dec. 4, 1843.*

Further:—upon examining the work of LaRoy Sunderland, published in New York in 1843, we find that its *main design* seems to have been to disprove the *theory* of mesmerism, and to show that persons of a "*certain temperament*" could be controlled in the "*waking state*," when "*wide awake*," and that it was by no means necessary to "*mesmerize*" the patient previously. See pp. 72, 73, 88, 114, 122 and 146. Indeed, the first notices we ever saw published of Sunderland's lectures, conveyed to us this very idea. Here is one of them:—

"Mr. Sunderland informed the audience that he would induce that state of *Mental Hallucination* called '*second sight*,' on a person in the *waking condition*. And sure enough, the lady, with her eyes *wide open*, arose and stretched out her hands towards what she took to be her deceased father! And what was still more remarkable, if possible, at this instant, another lady, who sat near, and one who had never been *mesmerized at all*, gave a most piercing shriek, declaring that she also saw the spirit of her deceased sister; and it was some minutes before Mr. Sunderland succeeded in composing her mind."—*Providence Eve. Chronicle, Oct. 21, 1843.*

Now in view of the exposure of these unfounded claims in this city last winter, and the arrest of Rev. T. Fisk, last June in Hinds Co. Mississippi, for obtaining money under such false pretences, and the oft repeated "*cautions*" we have seen in the papers, the conviction is forced upon us that this is a matter which concerns the public, and upon which justice requires that a little "*more light*" should yet be shed. That Messrs. Fowler and Wells should publish "*Dr. Dods*," unfounded claims is not surprising. He doubtless paid them for doing it, and that he put a little blarney on them, the pages of the book will show. Well, "*All right*," say we. But this claim of a "*new science*," and a "*new discovery*," is not all right; and so that meeting believed, held in Tremont Temple last winter, and which adopted and published the following resolution:—

That what is called "*Electrical Psychology*," or "*Electro-Biology*," is not a *new science*, and the demand of ten dollars for teaching it, and the required pledge of secrecy are unjust and an im-



position on the public. Therefore, Resolved, as the sense of this meeting, that what is called "Electrical Psychology," or "Electro-Biology," is not new either in theory or practice, (the *Electrical* theory of life having years ago been taught by Dr. Wilson Phillip, Dr. H. H. Sherwood and others; and the use of metals for the production of Psychological results,) was long since known under the name of Perkins Tractors; and the performance of Psychological experiments, without what is called the "mesmeric process" on a number of persons at once while they were awake, having been done in this city more than six years ago by Mr. LaRoy Sanderland, as appears from the Boston Post of Dec. 4, 1843.

Some of the members of Mr. F.'s class thought "all" was not "right," as the following will show:—

"CAUTION.—The citizens of Salem are hereby cautioned against an imposture now being practised upon the public under the name of 'Electro-Biology.'

"The undersigned was a member of Rev. Theophilus Fisk's class in Boston, and was fully instructed by him in this so called 'New Science,' for which he paid Fisk ten dollars. He and others, however, found it to be a GROSS FRAUD, without the least claim whatever to the name of Science. It was 'shown up' by him in Boston, and the lecturer abandoned the field. (See the Boston Mail of Feb. 7.)

"As soon as circumstances permit, (of which due notice will be given,) a Lecture will be given by the undersigned, before the citizens of Salem, in which he pledges himself to show that this 'Science' is nothing more nor less than what is called 'Mesmerism,' re-vamped and re-christened. He will lay before them the whole matter, including the 'Secret manner of Operating,' as he desires to guard the public against this and similar attempts to OBTAIN MONEY BY FALSE PRETENCES.

The undersigned challenges the fullest investigation with regard to his motives, and truth of his assertions.

"GEO. P. KETTELL,

"151 Main Street, Charlestown.

"Feb. 13, 1850."

As is intimated, in the above document, Mr. Fisk abruptly left this city in a few days after the meeting which condemned him in Tremont Temple, though he had announced his design to stay here till March. And though he made his "ill health" the excuse for breaking off his lectures here, he went immediately to Salem, where he commenced lecturing again, notwithstanding his ill health. But his stay in Salem was short, for he left that place immediately on Mr. Kettell's circulating the above caution against him. And the next we hear of Mr. T. Fisk, he was arrested in Mississippi, for

doing what he had been already publicly condemned for in Boston, Mass.

A paper is now before us, containing the affidavit under which Mr. Fisk was arrested for obtaining money for teaching his assumed secret, in regard to what he called the "newly discovered science of Electro-Biology," or "Electrical Psychology," and we have heard of similar suits contemplated, if not commenced, in other places where persons have paid their *ten dollars* for what they found to be no new discovery, as was set forth by these lectures. Now in conclusion we can only say, that these oft repeated *complaints*, these *resolutions* exposing the claims as to a "new discovery," these "cautions" to the public, these "affidavits" of "FRAUD," all go to show that the public mind is conscious of a great *wrong* done to them and to science by these lectures on "Electrical Psychology," and we may rest assured that the Justice which presides at the centre of the universe, will yet bring all these claims to their true and proper level.

## PNEUMATOLOGY.

From the Hudson Washingtonian.

### THE GERMANTOWN MYSTERIES.

As an article with the above caption has recently appeared in one of the New York papers, giving a highly exaggerated and erroneous account of circumstances that have lately occurred in my family, and as many false rumors are afloat in this immediate vicinity, concerning the mysterious occurrences, I deem it but an act of justice to myself to publish a true statement of the matter, though I am aware that by so doing, the notoriety which I so much dread, must follow. Indeed the circumstances are of so strange and marvellous a character (without the aid of fiction) that many no doubt will distrust the veracity of the statement I am about to make. To such I would say, that no earthly inducement could tempt me to seek the kind of distinction which falls to the lot of those who make pretensions to spiritual communications or supernatural visitations; and the only motive that now prompts me to make this statement is the desire to suppress false reports, and to satisfy, if possible, the curiosity which has already prompted numerous persons to visit me, and many others to address me letters of inquiry.

My age is 45 years, 22 of which have been spent on a small farm in a thinly settled portion of this town. I inherited from my father a small fortune, and having always had more taste for reading than for social enjoyments, I have led a somewhat secluded life, forming few acquaintances beyond the bounds of my own neighborhood.

Nothing remarkable ever occurred to disturb the quiet of my secluded home, until within the last few months. On the 12th of last April, my wife died. About four or five weeks (as nearly as I can recollect) subsequent to that mournful event, I began to be annoyed by strange noises about my premises—sometimes about my house, at other times about my barn and other buildings. The same noises were heard by my sister, who resides with me, also by my servants and a number of other persons who came from curiosity after hearing the reports of the strange disturbances.

These noises were of so singular a character as to preclude the possibility of their being produced by rats, (as most persons were ready to conjecture before hearing them,) or, in fact, by any human agency. Sometimes myself and family would be startled at dead of night by a noise like a cannon ball rolling down a flight of stairs; sometimes a groaning would be heard, like that of a person in distress; sometimes a clattering and crushing sound, like that made by sawing wood. These noises were heard at various intervals by night and day, though no cause was ever discovered, nor was any article ever moved from its position by the unseen power, as in the case of Rev. Dr. Phelps, of Stratford. The sound most frequently heard was a *rapping*. I was at first much alarmed by these unaccountable annoyances, though, as I became accustomed to them, my fears gradually diminished.

When the mysterious sounds had continued for about a fortnight, without any apparent increase or diminution, it occurred to me to interrogate the invisible *rapper* in a manner similar to that practised at Rochester. When I did so, my questions were answered by the rappings!

After asking a number of questions, and being informed that I was conversing with a spirit, I inquired whether the forms of the departed could be made visible. The answer was, "yes." I then asked whether I could be permitted to see my wife. Again the answer was rapped, "yes." Then, said I, let her appear to me to-morrow at this hour; (it was then 6 o'clock P. M.) There were at this time two friends with me, who heard my questions and responses, and who promised to be with me again at the same hour on the day following.

During the succeeding twenty-four hours no rappings or other mysterious sounds were heard. My two friends came and seated themselves by my side in my parlor. The hour arrived; three loud raps were heard, and I felt three gentle taps upon my shoulder. I started—looked around—and there behind me stood my wife!

I had previously endeavored to nerve myself for the occasion, but I had not fully believed there would be any appearance, and I was unprepared for the object that met my gaze. Her eyes were fixed upon me—her countenance was of a death-like paleness—her arms folded, and lips tightly compressed. I looked an instant! A feeling of horror came over me and I sank to the floor in a state of

to a faint light! I soon recovered and gazed intently around me, expecting again to see the same unearthly object—but it was gone.

I asked the persons with me if they had seen it; they had not, though they had distinctly heard the three raps. This occurred on the 4th of June, and since that time none of the rappings or other strange sounds have been heard about my premises. There is no truth in, or foundation for the rumor that audible voices from unknown sources have been heard about my dwelling.

But the most fearful part of my story remains to be told. Every day, at the same hour which I so rashly summoned the form of my departed wife to my presence, I feel three taps upon my shoulder, and behind my head I behold her standing in the same attitude—with the same expression of countenance, and the same pallid, death-like hue, as at the first appearance! O, what would I not give to be freed from these most frightful visitations?

None beside myself can see her. No voice or sound is ever uttered, though I have repeatedly spoken to her. The object never remains more than a minute.—If I attempt to walk or run away, it follows; if, after feeling the taps upon my shoulder, I do not look around it is not seen, but the thought that it is there is more dreadful than to look upon it; the disappearance is like the dissolving or dispersion of a mist, growing gradually more dim and indistinct until it is gone.

I once took a powerful opiate in order to sleep past the hour of visitation, but the three taps aroused me from the profound slumber produced by the narcotic, and on opening my eyes I saw the apparition by the side of my bed; when I have shut myself in a darkened room, I have seen it as plainly as by the light of day.

It is now a little more than six weeks since the first appearance, and I no longer feel the same fear and horror, as at first, but still the thought that I am perhaps destined through life to be visited by what appears a being from the world of spirits, haunts my imagination continually, and casts a gloom over all my existence.

I have consulted physicians of the highest eminence, but all no avail; the talisman with power to dissolve the fearful spell has not yet been discovered. My medical advisers are unanimous in the opinion that there is a derangement of my nervous system, and that my visitor is entirely a creature of fancy. What a relief it would be if I could feel fully convinced that it was nothing more; they tell me to keep my mind occupied with other matters, and wholly avoid thinking of the spectre, and I endeavor to obey. In fact I have sometimes so far succeeded in keeping my attention directed to other objects, as not to be thinking of the apparition when the hour of its arrival. But it avails nothing. Whether I am at home or abroad, in solitude or in a crowd, when the hour comes the three taps are felt, and the object of my dread is behind me.

I am aware that others have been haunted in a manner somewhat similar.

A person with whom I am intimately acquainted, and whose word I cannot doubt, has assured me of his having frequently seen apparitions. In Brewster's "Letters on Natural Magic," a number of cases are mentioned, the most remarkable of which is that of Mrs. A—, though her visitor came at uncertain intervals; mine is always punctual to her hour, never varying so much as a minute. Sir Walter Scott, in his "Letters on Demonology," also narrates a number of instances of the same nature. One case is that of a man who saw a skeleton continually at his side. This horrible companion kept him in such a state of terror as to produce a rapid decline of health, and a most agonizing death.

Dr. Abercrombie also mentions similar cases, though none correspond to my own, in respect to the premonitory notice, and the regularity of the spectred appearance.

Dr. Hibbert, in his work on spectred apparitions, says, they are nothing more than the recollected images of the mind, which, in certain states of bodily indisposition have been rendered more vivid than actual impressions, or, in other words, the pictures in the mind's eye are more vivid than those in the body's eye.

I am aware, too, that recent discoveries and experiments in psychology go to show that persons may be made to believe they see objects that do not really exist. Still I am satisfied that in my own case no such agency has been used.

There is much about it that is shrouded in the deepest mystery. The following inquiries press themselves upon my mind: What has caused the strange sounds that were first heard? Who or what was it that heard my questions and answered them by rappings? How was the rapping produced? And, lastly, what is the object that so strangely visits me every day, bearing the precise image of my departed wife, and yet possessed of no material body? Can philosophy solve these questions? Some may pronounce the whole a fiction, would it were so; There is one, at least, who knows by convicting experience the fearful reality.

JAMES DUNCAN.

Germantown, Pa., July 20, 1850.

Had the above been written a few years ago, we could have easily imagined the person who wrote it, not merely hallucinated, but, perhaps, insane. As it is, the account should have been authenticated and accompanied with other, responsible names.

There is one fact stated, (supposing the account true,) which seems to indicate a state of mental hallucination. We refer to Mr. Duncan's being able to see the Form of his deceased wife, when no other persons who are present can see her at all. All the visible manifestations of Spirits at Rochester and Auburn, of which we have heard, were seen, not by one of the company merely, but by all.

We suppose it possible that the first sounds heard by Mr. Duncan may have so operated upon his nervous system as to produce, (or increase,) a state of disease which, perhaps, had before existed.—Hence, he might, probably, be cured by Pathetism, or Cold Bathing. Certain it is, that, if his mind were in a good state, he would desire and rejoice in the visible manifestations from the Spirit Sphere as most heavenly, delightful. Such is our love for Spiritual Manifestations, that we would be at almost any pains or expense to enjoy them.

#### TESTIMONY FROM OPPONENTS.

The following articles are from the New York Express, a paper that has made one or more attempts to account for the phenomena here spoken of, by *fraud*. We put these and similar articles upon record in our columns, because, bye-and-bye, it will be highly gratifying to read what was said about these strange things, in the infancy of their development.

#### A MORNING WITH THE RAPPINGS.

By one of our Reporters.

I called upon the "spirits" at 9 o'clock in the morning, and soon after the room was filled with anxious inquirers for news from the "spirit land." After the company had seated themselves and become quiet, a rapping was heard under the sofa on which the three sisters were seated.—This rapping was heard at short intervals a few moments, when one of the company asked if the spirits would converse with him. No response being made, the question was asked by another, and then by a third person, until a rap was heard. When this rap was given, the person answered, asked a few questions pertaining to events within his own knowledge, which questions, he said, were answered correctly. After conversing a few minutes with him, a kind of confused rapping was heard, which the initiated pronounced a call for the alphabet; and when that was given it spelled the word "done;" and the spirit was ready for the next. Several of the party present succeeded in getting answers, telling them where they were born, how old they were, what their profession was, how many children they had, &c., &c., which those putting the questions pronounced to be correct. Not being acquainted with the interrogators, I cannot say as to that myself. A gentleman from South Carolina (an editor) seemed to be the most highly favored of the company, as the spirit conversed with him a long time. Whilst a gentleman was busily engaged conversing with the spirit, the Band of the Baltimore Greys commenced playing in the hall, and the spirit stopped the conversation and rapped in tune to the music until it was out of hearing.

There seems to be a mistaken idea with many calling upon them, that the spirits will foretell future events. This, I be-



lieve, is wrong, as they only tell what has taken place, and the state of things in the Spirit World.

Those who accuse the ladies of making the rappings, or of being accessory to the mode of producing them, will be satisfied generally, in a short time, that such is not the case, as they are heard at so many different places at the same time, and in such different sounds, also, that it would be impossible to produce them by any machinery. There does not seem to be any set time or place when they appear, as after the public interview was ended, and the ladies had gone into the public parlor, the noise was continued, sometimes under foot, and again upon the parlor door, where there could be no collusion, as both sides of it were watched. I can offer no explanation of these sounds; I believe them to be inexplicable. If any one thinks he can explain them, he had better see for himself before undertaking it. I do know that when the rapping was heard near me, I could feel a distinct jar or vibration, sometimes beneath my foot and again over it.

I will close with a word of advice to visitors. If you intend calling upon them, before going in, arrange your questions in private, and write them down, so that there may be no confusion, as much time is lost and much opportunity given for guessing the proper answers by the blundering, hesitating manner in which the questions are asked.

H.

Another correspondent sends us the following:—

*The Rochester Knockings.*—We have had our hour with the "spirits," and a very agreeable hour it was too, so entirely different from anything we had anticipated, so perfectly free from any appearance of "art or trickery," that we feel bound to confess that we stood before these innocent and artless girls overwhelmed with astonishment and utterly confounded. That we were in the presence of spirits willing to commune with us, was hard, very hard to believe. That anything but a spirit could have answered our questions so correctly, we do not believe; for instance, after going through the usual preliminaries, and finding that the spirits manifested a willingness to answer our interrogatories, we took from our pocket a card, on which were written numbers running from 60 down to 30, omitting only our correct age, and requesting them to knock when we pointed to our age, and after running over the card some three or four times, we could get no answer. We then took another card, precisely similar, with the exception that our own age was on it, and the moment we pointed to it the answer was correctly given. We then requested that when we pointed to our age again, three distinct raps should be given, and it was done. We then asked (mentally) that if they were spirits, to manifest themselves by knocking on the soles of our feet; they did so, and the feel was as palpable as would be that of a small hammer, and so loud as to be heard by all in the room. Now, is not this, to say the least of it, very strange?

Should any one doubt that what we have related is true, let them "go and do likewise," and they will witness more than they ever dreamed of, and will be ready to testify to all we have stated, and freely admit, as we now do, that they are not only astonished, but utterly confounded.

BROOKLYN.

#### "THE ROCHESTER LADIES."

The following testimony to the good character, of the ladies in Rochester who have been favored as the medium through which manifestations (believed to be truthful and good,) from the Spirit World, appeared in the New York Tribune of August 9. Mr. Greeley has done what is just in this matter, and what we expected from our knowledge of his character. Our readers, (some of them,) know, that the character of these ladies had not only been most wantonly assailed, in other papers, but a writer had implicated their honesty in numerous articles published in the Tribune, the ostensible object of which was to show, that what are called "The Spiritual Rappings," was produced by fraud and collusion. Now hear what Mr. Greeley says, upon this subject:—

#### "THE MYSTERIOUS RAPPINGS."

Mrs. Fox and her three daughters left our City, yesterday, on their return to Rochester, after a stay here of some weeks, during which they have freely subjected the mysterious influence by which they seem to be accompanied to every reasonable test, and to the keen and critical scrutiny of the hundreds who have chosen to visit them, or whom they have been invited to visit. The rooms which they occupied at the hotel have been repeatedly searched and scrutinized; they have been taken without an hour's notice into houses they had never before entered. They have been all unconsciously placed on a glass surface concealed under the carpet, in order to interrupt electric vibrations; they have been disrobed by a Committee of Ladies appointed without notice, and insisting that neither of them should leave the room until the investigation had been made, &c., &c., yet we believe no one to this moment pretends that he has detected either of them in producing or causing the "Rappings," nor do we think any of their contemners has invented a plausible theory to account for the production of these sounds, nor the singular intelligence which (certainly at times) has seemed to be manifested through them.

Some ten or twelve days since, they gave up their rooms at the hotel, and devoted the remainder of their sojourn here to visiting several families to which they had been invited by persons interested in the subject, and subjecting the singular influence to a closer and calmer examination than could be given to it at a hotel, and before casual companies of strangers,

drawn together by vague curiosity, mor<sup>e</sup> rational interest, or predetermined and invincible hostility. Our own dwelling was among those they thus visited, not merely submitting to but courting the fullest and keenest inquiry with regard to the alleged "manifestations" from the Spirit World by which they were attended. We devoted what time we could spare from our duties out of three days to this subject, and it would be the basest cowardice not to say that we are convinced beyond a doubt of their perfect integrity and good faith in the premises. Whatever may be the origin or the cause of the "Rappings," the ladies in whose presence they occur do not make them. We tested this thoroughly and to our entire satisfaction.

Their conduct and bearing is as unlike that of deceivers as possible: and we think no one acquainted with them could believe them at all capable of engaging in so daring, impious and shameful a juggle as this would be if they caused the sounds. And it is not possible that such a juggle should have been so long perpetrated in public yet escape detection. A juggler performs one feat quickly and hurries on to another; he does not devote weeks after weeks to doing the same thing over and over deliberately, in full view of hundreds who set beside or confronting him in broad day-light, not to enjoy but to detect his trick. A deceiver naturally avoids conversation on the subject of his knavery, but these ladies converse freely and fully with regard to the origin of these "Rappings" in their dwelling years ago, the various sensations they caused, the neighborhood excitement created, the progress of the developments—what they have seen, heard and experienced from first to last. If all were false, they could not fail to have involved themselves ere this in a labyrinth of blasting contradictions, as each separately gives accounts of the most astounding occurrences at this or that time. Persons foolish enough so to commit themselves without reserve or caution could not have deferred a thorough self-exposure for a single week.

Of course, a variety of opinions of so strange a matter would naturally be formed by the various persons who have visited them, and we presume those who have merely run into their room for an hour or so and listened, among a huddle of strangers, to a medley of questions—not all admitting of very profitable answers—put to certain invisible intelligences and answered by "Rappings" or singular noises on the floor, table, &c., as the alphabet was called over or otherwise, would naturally go away perhaps puzzled, probably disgusted, rarely convinced. It is hardly possible that a matter ostensibly so grave could be presented under circumstances less favorable to conviction. But of those who have enjoyed proper opportunities for a full investigation we believe that fully three fourths are convinced, as we are, that these singular sounds and seeming manifestations are not produced by Mrs. Fox and her daughters, nor by any human being connected with them.

How they are caused, and whence they proceed, are questions which open a much wider field of inquiry, with whose

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

We believe it is the intention of the ladies to shun henceforth all publicity or notoriety, so far as possible. They do not expect or wish to make gain of the “Rappings;” they have desired to vindicate their own characters from the gross imputations so freely cast upon them; believing that effected, they hope to be permitted hereafter to live in that seclusion which befits their sex, their station, and their wishes. We trust they may be permitted to do so.

H. G.

**INTERESTING TO DOCTORS.**—Dr. Cormack exhibited to the Anatomical Society of Edinburgh, March 8, 1843, two specimens of the larvae of the *Blaps Mortuaria*, (Churchyard Beetles) which had been discharged by a patient of Dr. Scott, of Musselburgh, whom he had lately seen. [L. & E. M. J. Med. Sc. April, 1843.]—Dr. Gilli, of Turin, records in the *Giornale Delle Scienze Mediche di Torino*, March, 1842, a case in which a child eighteen months old voided 510 lumbrici in eight days! Some of the worms were alive, others dead, and most of them six inches long. Only a very few of them were vomited. The child recovered.

**DIED OF JOY.**—When the pardon of Governor Monton was announced to one of the convicts in the Penitentiary at Baton Rouge, on Monday evening, March 3, 1845, he dropped dead, it is supposed, in consequence of the sudden sensation of joy produced by that delightful information.

Earth is eaten as bread in several parts of the world. Near Moscow, a hill furnishes earth of this description, which will ferment when mixed with flour.

Insects are found in slate, and flies and ants in amber.

## SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHER.

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER 7, 1850.

### SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

#### HISTORICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

A subject so vast, so intensely interesting, so important, and of which we all know so very little, may be said to demand a minuteness of detail, and that diligence and patience in its investigation, which was never bestowed, perhaps, on any other. How many questions, of thrilling interest, crowd upon the mind for an answer the moment we admit the bare possibility of communications to our external senses from the spirits of our “departed friends?” Nay, we must now speak of them, not as “departed,” in reality, but as known to be ever present with us. The consciousness I have, often, while writing about them, that they are present and read all I say, puts a new life-current into my thoughts, and brings around me a world of intelligences, which makes a heaven on earth, indeed.

Having, now, had such DEMONSTRATIONS made by Spirits to each of my external senses as I could not have believed possible, even had they not been made to me; and, knowing as I do, that multitudes are now looking to the columns of this paper for all that information upon this subject which will enable them to form a correct opinion in the premises, I must proceed to the detail of facts, and then leave each one to judge for himself. My readers, of course, are entitled to my opinions, and, if I give these, I must describe the process by which I was led to form them. So, I go back, and bring up the different parts of this subject, and put them where we can examine them together. One-sided views are always imperfect.

#### HARMONIOUS SPIRITS.

1. The Fox family, including Mrs. Fish, we have already described, but as they have been the medium through which the largest number of what are believed to be truthful and good manifestations from the Spirit World have been made, it is proper, here, to bring them more distinctly before our readers, especially, if we may thus exhibit, in their case, those circumstances which conspire to render these manifestations desirable. Though the parents of this family had been members of the Methodist E. Church, neither they, or either of the three sisters,

were *sectarian*; certainly, in no sense, that would render them objectionable to any other sect, on this account. They were uncommitted in theology, untaught in philosophy; harmonious and pleasant in their dispositions, pure and truthful in spirit; unsophisticated, unsuspecting, easy in their manners, generous and kind. I saw them in the city of New York, in June, and since, at their home in Rochester, (August 15, 1850,) where I had what I suppose to have been some of the most satisfactory MANIFESTATIONS, perhaps, ever given to one person in the external world. The particulars shall be described hereafter. Our object, now, is, to give such a consecutive view of these spiritual manifestations, taken together, as a whole, as will enable one to form a correct judgment of the Laws which govern the Spirit World. Hence, we invite particular attention to those features of the subject which seem to be of special importance:—

**Note 1.**—That all the responses, or most, that have been received through these sisters, have been from what purported to be the “guardian spirits” of the persons who make the inquiry. They have been the medium of but few, if any, responses, purporting to come from spirits, that were not personally known to them, or to those who made the application.

**Note 2.**—That no persons, in a friendly, truthful state of mind, have ever asked for responses through the Fox family, at a proper time, who have not received them. Hence, no spirits, purporting to be “apostles” or “devils,” ever respond through them. Or, if at any time curiosity or error should lead any inquirer to ask for a response from some spirit who had not been previously known, in the body, answers, of some kind, may have been received; but, no account is made of them. They are suffered to pass for what the parties may think they are worth.

#### PERVERTED MEDIUMS.

2. When I first consulted the Fox family in New York, (June 14, 1850,) I received numerous responses from those I had known in the body, and whom I believed to be good and true. Having been members of my family, they promised that, within four weeks, they would respond to me, in Boston, through a lady who had been my patient for the last seven years, one in whom I had the fullest confidence. This lady I had very much assisted by Pathetism, and not only so, she



had been intronned by me into the Spirit World, six years before, whence she had had responses from her friends and from mine; notices of them were published at the time, of which the following is one:—

"Last evening, one of the experiments was most beautiful, and of thrilling interest: it was an actual illustration of that mental condition denominated apparitions, or the sight of departed spirits! The subject on whom it was performed was in the *normal or waking state*, and the reality with which she seemed to see and converse with the deceased wife of the late Rev. Mr. Parker, of this city, while she passed up and down the aisles of the hall, seemed to hold the audience completely spell-bound for some considerable time."—*Providence Gazette*, December 7, 1844.

*Note 1.*—That, after having had responses from the Spirit Sphere, through that lady for six years, or more, they should now be suddenly interrupted! Before the expiration of the four weeks, my patient was *interfered* with and taken to New York, by a person, who not only manifested a *disposition* to get the *entire control* over her, but a little ambition to *priority* in the business of the "Spiritual Knockings," as the announcement made in the Boston Evening Journal of July 8, will show:—

"Mr. ———, the well known and successful Lecturer on Pathetism and Biology, recently visited New York—got the rappings—returned to Boston—and has had them here—which were the *first indications of the kind which had been observed in this city*, and, that Mr. ——— would soon take rooms in some convenient situation, and give some further exhibitions of this curious phenomena."

*Note 2.*—When I went to see this lady, at the end of four weeks, I found her mind so much *perverted*, that I could get no responses at all from the Spirit World! Another sitting was agreed upon for the next Friday, and, when I went to see her at the appointed hour, lo! she had left the city, again, with the "well known" gentleman above referred to.

*Note 3.*—I attach no blame to that lady. Nor will I blame her father, who told me he had a prospect of making more money out of the "Spiritual Knockings" than he thought I would be willing to give them! I now know what I did not before. The spirits of my children will not respond to me, through a *perverted* medium; nor through any medium, when I should thereby be deceived, with regard to the *peculiar state* of that mind through which the response is given. [Dear children! Precious cherubs! For your

FIDELITY to your father, he blesses you now, and will bless you forever!]

#### CONCORDANT SPIRITS.

3. Of Mrs. Sarah A. Tamlin, Auburn, N. Y., we have not before spoken. She is about 34, of a nervous sanguine temperament; has a well balanced mind, and a kind, generous disposition. Her health is not good. She had been a Methodist, but that sect, characteristic of its tendencies, on her refusing to renounce her connection with Pathetism, expelled her from their fellowship. And it is scarcely necessary to say, perhaps, that Mrs. Tamlin has been far more happy and useful, since her expulsion from the Church, than ever could have been affirmed of her before.

Mrs. T. has been favored with responses from the Spirit World for some two years, and they correspond very much, in their character, with those of the Fox family. I had no sooner seated myself by her side, than the Spirits commenced those sounds which, to me, are so agreeable, proving as they do to my mind, the existence of the Spirit World! Nearly all the Spirits that I had ever known, in the body, responded, freely, in her presence; and told me why they refused to respond, as above stated, and that I must never expect them to respond to me through a *perverted medium*. *Note*, here I asked, in the presence of Mrs. Tamlin, for the spirits of "apostles," and for those spirits who made such manifestations at Stratford, and found that *perverted spirits could not respond through mediums that are good and truthful*.

#### DISCORDANT SPIRITS.

4. Mrs. D. D. T. Benedict, of Auburn, N. Y., has become somewhat noted for the responses which have been made through her, from the Spirit World, not only because she has been most unjustly accused, (by a writer in the N. Y. Tribune,) of collusion, but, also, because a pamphlet has been published, purporting to have come from the *Spirits* of the "Apostles," containing "Expositions of the Prophetic Scriptures of the New Testament," all of which were made through her; and made to a company of *Millerites, Methodists and Universalists*, or, at least, to a number of persons who were, or had been, imbued with the sectarian notions advocated by these different sects, with whom they had been associated. And, it is well known, that persons of a certain class, who visit Mrs. Benedict, can get responses from the

"Apostles," "Indian Chiefs," "Swendenborg," "Lorenzo Dow," "Washington," or almost any other spirit of *Antiquity*, of whom no one, now in this world, ever had any personal knowledge. And Mrs. Benedict has been accustomed to *believe* that when a spirit responded through her, whether purporting to be one of the "Apostles," or "George Washington," it was the identical personality which it *purported* to be. Neither she, nor most of those who have visited her for responses, ever demanded *tests* as to the *identity* or *personality* of the different spirits, as far as we know, till we did so, a few weeks ago.

When I called on Mr. and Mrs. Benedict, I was received and treated with courtesy and kindness. They both contradicted, in the most positive terms, the reports which had been made of them in the New York Tribune, (by Mr. J. S. G.) and gave me every facility for satisfying myself as to the reality of the spiritual noises made in her presence. That she does have responses from the Spirit World I have not the shadow of a doubt. I had barely become seated by her side, when the "raps" were commenced, quite loud, near my feet.

*Note 1.*—In the presence of Mrs. Benedict I could get responses from spirits purporting to be those of "James Madison," "St. Luke," "St. Paul," but not one response from any spirit whom I knew.

*Note 2.*—That responses were *proffered* to me through Mrs. Benedict, from spirits whom I did not know, without my calling for them.

*Note 3.*—That when I asked these spirits purporting to be "James Madison," and "St. Luke," to give me some evidence of their *identity*, they were *silent*! And, when I challenged them to submit to a reasonable test, they *declined*!

*Note 4.*—I could get no response, of any kind, through Mrs. Benedict, from any spirit whom I knew!

#### STRATFORD, CT.

5. Though I visited the family of the Rev. Dr. Phelps, on my way to Rochester, N. Y., before I saw Mrs. B., I have reserved the reference to it for this place in my account, because it will require a more extended description than can be given here.

We suppose the recent manifestations in Stratford, Ct., the most extraordinary of any thing of the kind ever witnessed, in any age or part of the world; and, believing, as we do, that the *design* in these

manifestations is not correctly understood, either by Dr. Phelps, himself, or any others whose opinions we have seen, we must take time to do the subject ample justice. But, for the present the reader will please, *Note 1.*—That responses were made to me, by spirits, at Mr. Phelps's, without my calling for them; spirits whom I did not know, one of whom purported to be a "devil."

*Note 2.*—That though manifestations from the Spirit World have now been continued in Mr. Phelps's family for some six months, yet he has never had any response from any relative whom he had, personally, know in this world.

*Note 3.*—I could get no response at Mr. Phelps's house, from any spirit whom I knew

#### IRREGULAR SPIRITS.

6. So we must call these, and other mediums through whom responses have been made, as we doubt not, from the Spirit World. One in A—— had responses limited to a few peculiar manifestations. But it was found that certain objections could be urged against her integrity. Yet, she had responses till she left the place, which she did suddenly. We were told of another who has had many responses, of a light and trifling nature, corresponding precisely with her disposition. The lesson which is to be learned from these facts, is important, and will suggest itself, at once to every reflecting mind

#### EDITORIAL "RAPs."

Having had some seven years' experience as a conductor of a public journal, of course, the editor of the Spiritual Philosopher must be allowed to feel more or less sensitive under the "raps," "knocks," or whatever else they may be, which his paper has recently called forth. Some of them are "raps" sympathetic, some are anti-pathetic, and a few apathetic. We quote some made of the first No., which was scarcely sufficient for one to expend any very hard or severe "rap" upon; but it drew forth nearly one hundred, from as many different papers, that have fallen under our notice.

#### SYMPATHETIC RAPs.

Read the prospectus of this interesting paper, (Spiritual Philosopher,) and if any one will not agree that Mr. Sunderland does not offer a full consideration for the amount of subscription, we will admit that

the *Intelligencer* is not a valuable paper.—*Arkansas Intelligencer*, June 22.

We are perfectly willing to be instructed by "spirits" or anything else. Mr. Sunderland is a gentleman of ability, and quite liberal in his religious or spiritual views, and will, no doubt, make an interesting publication.—*Boston Investigator*, July 31.

From the well-known talents and abilities of the editor, we may expect a valuable and interesting periodical.—*New York Pathfinder*, June 27.

We feel safe in saying that the publication will be of value to those who are interested in the class of curious facts brought to light by Mr. Sunderland and others.—*Essex Co. Freeman*, July 31.

Its matter is unexceptionable.—*Daily Mercury*, Bangor, July 30.

We have no doubt, from the well-known talents of the editor, and his high attainments, the future numbers will be alike interesting.—*New Bedford Standard*, July 29.

The Spiritual Philosopher bears evidence of ability and deep research. We wish the publisher every success, to which so valuable a publication so justly entitles him.—*Jersey City Sentinel*, July 31.

It is a very interesting and valuable journal, and will, doubtless, when properly known, be very popular with the community at large.—*Advertiser*, Manheim, Pa., Aug. 1.

It is a neat affair, and well-edited.—*Bath*, (Me.) *Mirror*, Aug. 3.

The editorials are written in a clear, unbiased tone, showing a mind disposed to investigate, and not to set down everything which does not come within the comprehension of man, as a humbug, and unworthy of attention. We like it well, and hope it will throw some light upon the strange phenomena, at present causing so much excitement throughout the country.—*Derby Journal*, Conn., Aug. 2.

The paper has the merits of a good literary style, and a candid examination of its subjects. There is no dogmatism or rant, or silly enthusiasm in its pages; and, if any one wishes to read on the subjects of which it treats, we believe they cannot find a more satisfactory work than the Spiritual Philosopher.—*East Boston Ledger*, Aug. 3.

It is edited by LaRoy Sunderland, a man every way capable of conducting such a journal; and its discussions will, evidently, from the number before us, be very popular.—*Kent*, (R. I.) *Co. Atlas*, Aug. 3.

It is well printed and tastefully got up.—*Clarion*, (Shouhegan, Me.) Aug. 7.

Taken altogether, it is a very neat and well-arranged affair.—*Mt. Holly*, N. J. *Herald*, Aug. 1.

It realizes our expectations. From what we knew of Mr. Sunderland, through his writings, we looked for nothing less

than what he has given in the columns of the Philosopher.—*Home Journal*, Deckertown, N. Y., Aug. 3.

He who cannot find in this paper something to attract and interest him, must be engrossed in the body, and dead to spiritual concerns.—*Advertiser*, Hingham, Mass., Aug. 9.

It is edited with great ability, and presents, altogether, a neat and handsome appearance.—*Watchman*, Norristown, Pa., Aug. 7.

It is very interesting.—*The Map*, Schuylkill-Haven, Pa., Aug. 7.

If there be a man in the community capable of diving into the mysterious depths of mental influence and sympathy, Sunderland is the one.—*Eagle*, Pittsfield, Mass., Aug. 2.

We wish the editor success in his undertaking. The work is novel and interesting.—*Sentinel*, Clearspring, Md., Aug. 3.

The number before us is well executed, and contains many well-written articles.—*Democrat*, Carbondale, Pa., Aug. 2.

We have long been wishing for a periodical of this kind.—*N. Y. Pathfinder*, Aug. 15.

In the Philosopher, we perceive a spirit of earnestness, truthfulness and simplicity, which indicate that its editor knows that he is not in dark error, and that he is determined to follow where truth leads the way.—*Sentinel*, Eastport, Me., Aug. 13.

The title indicates a work of deep scientific research, and, we have no doubt, it will prove highly interesting.—*Intelligencer*, (Greensburg,) Aug. 16.

Judging from the first number, and from the acknowledged ability of the editor, we do not doubt but that it will be a very interesting, and perhaps we may venture to say, a very instructive paper. Mr. Sunderland is not the man to believe in everything; he has great powers of analysis, and is very quick generally to detect, and as quick to expose, humbuggery. His lectures on Pathetism have been attended by many thousands—probably by millions—and have won more converts to his theory, than the mere twaddle of a thousand ranters on the new science could have done; because they have explained, in a sensible manner, the cause producing the results which all have witnessed, and because the public have had confidence in Mr. S. as above deception in anything.—*Providence*, (R. I.) *Post*, Aug. 2.

It is not bigoted, but views with candor all things that in any way pertain to that state to which we are all hastening, and yet know so little of. We recommend it to all. Let there be more light on the subject, and the more mediums through which it flows the better.—*Lake Superior Journal*, Aug. 24.

It is a handsome and interesting paper.—*Clarion*, Glenn's Falls, N. Y., Aug. 27.



It is an excellent publication of our old friend.—*Democrat, Butler, Pa., Aug. 24.*

We have had the pleasure of examining the first number of the *Spiritual Philosopher*. It is a neatly executed sheet of 16 pages. LaRoy Sunderland is a name well known to the American people. He is a Philosopher of the modern school, and an interesting writer. We believe the *Spiritual Philosopher* is intended to inculcate the same system of philosophy as the *Univercolum*. We hope the *Spiritual Philosopher* may find a hearty patronage.—*Kane Co. Demo., St. Charles, Ill.*

Thus for the sympathetic "raps." Now for the

#### RAPS, ANTI-PATHETIC.

It is a paper we would hardly be likely to read, and published at Boston, that headquarters of all humbugs.—*New Jersey Union, Aug. 1.*

Mr. Sunderland is doubtless quite equal to the task he has undertaken, and as the fools are not all dead yet, he will find plenty of patient hearers.—*Democrat, Reading, Pa., Aug. 3.*

The editor is an insane man or a scoundrel.—*Gardiner, (Me.), Transcript.*

We have received, also, a "rap" "pecuniary," from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, and the Cayuga Chief, Auburn. Each of these editors speak as if they thought the *Spiritual Philosopher* was benefitted by an exchange, precisely as ordinary political or religious papers are. And hence, for the Philosopher to request papers with whom it exchanges, to publish its prospectus, is unjust! Will the "Chief" tell us what possible benefit he thinks it would be to the *Spiritual Philosopher* to exchange with one or one thousand papers, in not one of which the Philosopher could find an article suitable for its own columns? As, therefore, it is not benefitted by an exchange, as other papers are, it asks the publication of its prospectus, or some other notice as an equivalent. Is this unreasonable?

**AN ORGAN.**—The "knocking girls" have at last obtained that position before the community that they require a special organ devoted to their affairs, and "spiritual" affairs in general. The paper is published at Boston, edited by LaRoy Sunderland, and is called "The Spiritual Philosopher."

The above was sent us by a friend in Western New York, where it was published, but without naming the paper from which it was taken.

The *Spiritual Philosopher* is not an "Organ" of any one man, or woman, nor of any one sect or party, either in Medicine, Philosophy, or Religion. To us, no

one mind is an oracle. Were our paper sectarian, it would receive patronage from multitudes who now withhold it.

**THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.**—While on our Western Tour, two numbers of this paper reached our office. We have never seen the Prospectus. It is published weekly at Springfield, Mass., by Rev. P. A. Ambler, and Apollus Munn. Eight pages, 8vo., beautifully printed, at \$2 per year. It is filled with such matter as we love to read.

**DREAMING.**—A correspondent in Columbia, S. C., wishes information on the subject of Dreaming. He is referred to the Editor's work on Pathetism, Boston Edition, 1847, p. 33, 87.

An English paper, (the Manchester Guardian,) mentions the case of a young man named Pixton, who dreamed three several nights that he had been drowned in the River Rollin. In joke, he directed his family as to the disposal of his effects in case his dreams should be fulfilled.—He went to bathe in that river a few days afterwards, swam about some time, dived into a deep part, and did not reappear. An hour and a half elapsed before his body was recovered.

The dream of this young man may have been the occasion of his death; that is, he may have become *fascinated*, so to speak, with the idea, so as to lose his self-control, and thus he perished. So the young lady, at Niagara Falls, was *fascinated* on looking over the precipice; and, losing her self-control, she fell and was dashed to pieces on the rocks below.

Always, when persons become fascinated with a sense of danger, in this way, they should be Pathetised, and thus the spell may be broken, their minds directed another way, or imbued with the thoughts of other subjects, till they are relieved from the mischievous hallucination.

**THE SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHER!**—To its Friends!—Has it occurred to you, that this paper cannot depend on the multitude for its support? The mass of the human race are in a state of infancy in respect to the Spirit World. They do not, they cannot appreciate the importance of a paper like this. It must, therefore, for a time, depend on the few. Will those who know what its object is, take hold immediately and extend its circulation? Will it not do good? Were it

truly *sectarian* in its character, who comparatively easy it might be to enlist bigotry and superstition in its patronage? It might then boast of its twenty "thousand subscribers," not one of which, perhaps, would be much wiser or better for having read it.

A club of twelve may easily be formed; and to such the paper will be supplied for \$15 per year. Or, for \$25, it will be put for only one dollar per year. Suppose you order some specimen numbers, (which will be sent gratis,) and forthwith commence the work of forming a club? Or, if subscriptions for 1 vol. (six months,) be preferred, see terms on the last page. Will you do it?

#### THE PNEUMATOLOGIST.

We have received the 4th, 5th and 6th numbers of this periodical, published and edited by Rev. J. Litch, Philadelphia, at \$1.00 per year. Its name, *Spiritualist*, implies its design, to treat on matters that tend to prove the conscious, unending existence of all men, after death. Its editor we have known for many years, as an honest, kind-hearted man. He is a "Millerite," or Second Adventist, and lives, moves, and has his being in the old, dark theology of a "stiff-necked and hard-hearted people," who lived some three thousand years ago; and he pleads earnestly for the ancient notions of the devil and demons. We discovered long ago, that many theologians of the present age, believe as much in the "devil," (and some of them more,) than they do in the Infinite God; and their feelings will, often, be as much wounded in hearing anything said against their notions of the devil, as they would be to hear the same remarks made about the great Father of all!

We suspect one object in commencing the *Pneumatologist*, was to counteract the influence of another monthly paper, published in Philadelphia, by Rev. George Storrs, called the "Bible Examiner." Mr. Storrs wishes to show that a part of the human family, and possibly the greater part, are not to have an eternal, conscious existence after death; and he "examines" the Bible for the purpose of making out this view from that book. Alas! what "devils," what "hell-fire," what "wrath," what "vengeance," what "torments eternal," what beauties, what contradictions, have been drawn from the Bible!

## THOMAS HOOD.

BY F. W. SHELTON.

In the catalogue of the recent dead, many will look back with affectionate regret upon the name of Thomas Hood. It would be ungrateful not to remember an author who has done so much to captivate our silent hours, and, from the very ills of his own life to inculcate the lessons of cheerfulness and love. When with the continual corruscations of his wit there came also the melancholy token that it hovered over decay, and in the midst of sympathetic smiles the light went out, the tears which followed him vindicated, in his last hour, that he had equal power over both. In some of his latest poetical compositions he may be said to have woven a proper garland for his own grave, and the interest of those who watched his departure, even from this distance over the water, is well represented in those exquisite lines written in the death chamber of a young woman. Thomas Hood is no more. The periodical visitings of his welcome face shall never come again to enhance the pleasures of the winter fireside; and alas! the legacy of his winnowed works, rich as it is, testifies rather what he might have been. There was the inherent power to do better things when the occasion should be granted. No man could hold the rank of a professed humorist—which, if force must be applied, is for the most part a melancholy calling—and so well adhere to the legitimate. Not that he always did or could, under such circumstances; for a compulsory smile will exaggerate itself into something broader; and his best compositions are not the ones which have been the most industriously spread before us. Yet his wit was nearly perennial. In the absence, too, of any grand epic or laborious rhyme, we are prepared to assert that he was a true poet; we mean in the application of the broadest sense. For it is a degraded sense which transfers the title from the original of some grand idea to the mere mechanic of a regular structure. Give but the power to express, and the conception may take what forms you will, yet it shall be called a poem. It may have the shape of an epic or be written in lowliest prose; be carved in marble, painted on the canvass, touch the heart with the simplicity of a ballad, or with the inwoven harmony of deeper schools. The title is deserved, whether the work be small and unique, of

complicated and of grand proportion; Gray's Elegy or Paradise Lost.

Hood has several times within a few years, been called great; a phrase used not inconsiderately nor in vain, though in a sense quite aside from the common. He had *humanity* which might be considered a first requisite. The finest fancies are not so much from the contact of intellect as the congeniality of *hearts*. Love is always the best creator. Though the bleak vista convey to it no image, it fashions for itself a new heaven and a new earth. Hood's genius began to open and develop itself in the warmth of an affectionate nature. It was all the cherishing which he received. He was not a "spoiled child." His hardy flowers struggled upward through the snows. The object of his noblest developments were the sufferings of the needy. If his song ever became fervent, or his reputation sure, it was when he depicted wretchedness in such guise that luxury must blush for shame. A man must first have a *heart* to be a true poet. Like the Chourineur, in Sue's Romance, he is prepared for the exercise of his faculties, and his first offerings will be given to the benefactor who assured him of the fact. It is the secret of Wordsworth's slow and glorious triumph, that he considered nothing mean, nothing contemptible, if it were linked with humanity. What lies at the bottom of the reputation of that distinguished poet who wrote Nicholas Nickleby? These men have known how to estimate the unnoticed tear at a costly value, even as the representative of a weight of grief. With a sympathy which drew him in like manner into communion with his fellow-men, Hood's inventive genius began to work. His mind was already full of images and combinations. It was of the nature of a spring, which giving cannot impoverish, but adds a fiercer zest and a peculiar favor. To be forced or pre-determined is death to most men's efforts; for inspiration comes rarely, and rises out of junctures which are occasional, and cannot be contrived of a man's providence. But out of the ever-present occasion he snatched his hints with marvellous quickness. Every individual point of time was good as an era. Such an one can with difficulty be hackneyed. He could write for his bread and his genius not be discouraged. Its very bread was the want of it. This quickness of conception and abundance is a mark of genius; as a tropical voluptuousness bears

witness to the fuller presence of the sun. It was one of the bitternesses of Hood's dying, to be conscious of all the wealth and apparatus of his mind. If utterance were merely a relief from oppression there was a pang in being utterly precluded. But one may also mourn over the noble thoughts to which he never can give a bold and palpable being. To be full of the lights and tints of a noble picture, and never be able to throw a shadow on the canvass; to be eloquent of heart, yet dumb, and attuned to a sweet accord in every sympathy; to look for the last time on the beautiful universe of God, these fragments of the imagination are in effect *ruins*. That which has not yet been, is mourned over as that which has been lost.

The writings of this author bear witness to a great invention. No man ever said so many "good things;" which being by his parentage, resemblance and affection, might in all propriety be entitled "Hood's Own." Others have been employed a life time in collecting the sayings of many which have not equalled the diversified exuberance of one. His works literally sparkle all over like frost-work in the sun. Nor is the general splendor greater than the beauty of the individual gems. Some, it is true, have an inferior or false light, but serve to set off those of an undisputed value. His thoughts were, like Horace's, curiously happy; and their curiosity consisted in their being the *ipsa verba* correspondent with the idea. The thought itself being fetched from a far distance, as if by a charm, the solemn-called for, overjoyed word left its place in the vocabulary, and hastened to a happy union. The right elements must have been present, for the contagion of happiness spread. The broad tokens of approbation were too immediate to be other than the spontaneous tribute of intrinsic worth. You could not bear the good tidings to pass away with the subsidence of the first smile, but caused them to reappear, and pass in review, as a boy permits sweet morsels to linger and loiter on his tongue. "Hood's Own" were not for an Areopagite judgment, to be held off and scrutinized with a calm, inplacable mind, and pronounced upon in due season. Your judge leaped the barrier of all principles; the statement and the verdict went together. No more difference than between the hit and the flash. It is to deny wit or pathos with slow arguments, if smiles and tears



have broke out already in advance. It is a mistake to suppose that the greater part of Hood's merit consists in verbal quibbles and happiness of that nature. These served his turn; never *he* theirs. What came in his way he levelled at with a keen eye, but he did not thrash the bushes.

Hood made puns, but puns did not make Hood. Indeed he redeemed this art, the history of which, with those who have acquired infamy by it, might fill a new paper in the next edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Cicero set forth some bad pretensions. Horace could not prostitute the Latin language to anything so *infra dig.* Ovid's attempt, as he set forward to the town of Tomi, was so bad that it is good, and so good that it evanesces in utterance, and cannot now be told. Nero began by amusing himself in this way, and at last became hardened to what bloods work! It is said that a subject of Queen Zenobia was charged with perpetrating a thing of this kind, and she consulted her prime minister, Longinus, who deemed him worthy of death. This is nearly the history of the art down to *Quid rides*. Then it took a new start, and by force of that very sneer set every body riding it (some few *de-riding*) as a hobby. Then the great Dr. Johnson, by a single burst of dogmatism, overwhelmed it with contempt. A few stragglers kept up the succession; the Prince, Beau Brummel, and his surrounding wits, brought to light a few novelties, and the last Apollo, Canning, in this way sometimes relaxed his brow. The Latin *punio* and English *punish* are similarly derived; and another *Punicum bellum* we hope the world will never again witness. A mere verbal pun, like the above, is the baldest invention; it only lies in the coincidence of sound. A better kind is that which arises out of a coincidence in thought or comparison. Hood's worst perpetrations (if any can be called even bad) are but the wayside talk by which he beguiles the time until he conducts you to something beautiful. Mark his words in that somewhat melancholy "Inaugural" written in his last illness, wherein he recommends a cheerful philosophy—"How else could I have converted a serious illness into a comic well-ness? By what other agency could I have transported myself, as a cockney would say, from *Dullage* to *Grinage*! It was far from a practical joke to be laid up in ordinary in a foreign land, under

the care of physicians quite as much abroad as myself with the case. Indeed, the shades of the gloaming were stealing over my prospect; but I resolved that, like the sun, so long as my day lasted I would look on the bright side of every thing. The raven croaked, but I persuaded myself that it was the nightingale. There was the smell of the mould, but I remembered that it nourished the violets." And what says he of his own person? "The very fingers, so aristocratically slender, that now hold the pen, hint plainly of the *ills* that flesh is heir to. My coats have become great-coats, my pantaloons are turned into trowsers, and by a worse bargain than Peter Schlemihl's, I seem to have retained my shadow and sold my substance. In short, as happens to prematurely old port wine, I am of a bad color, with very little body."

... "But the best fence against care is a 'Ha! ha!' Let your 'lungs crow like a chanticleer,' and as like a *game-cock* as possible. Smiles are tolerated by the very pinks of politeness: and a laugh is but the full-blown flower of which a smile is the bud."

Grotesqueness, for the most part, is looked on by a Janus-face; outward plaudits are in proportion to inward silence and contempt. But here are trifles which lead you not to turn away from the harlequin, but to come up and grasp the hand of the *man*. What the cynic would sneer at is the irrepressible freshness of a heart glad as a child, who leaps and laughs on his way to those hard tasks which he will presently turn into a pleasure. Better is the luxury which bears trimming, than the beggary which cannot be supplied. The great Shakespeare, when he has accomplished the triumph of some of his noblest parts, sports through a variety of scenes with a careless assurance, as if he had the right. We say that the *beautiful* is expressed by the general action as well as by the set phrase. True genius shows in this way the symptoms of its perpetual youth.

Thus much may be said of the "Comic Annual," and those many "good things," trifles which are not trifles, since they arise out of and are sure to reach the kindly heart. We put stress on something besides this. Our author has wrought out some creations of small bulk but of grand conception. We speak of them as fraught with the same expression as the "Dying Gladiator" at Rome. He has represented the people, as one body,

in the throes of that suffering which has so long racked the frame, the big muscle of English labor swelled to the utmost extension, a picture of gigantic agony. We have not the work at hand, nor have we seen it for a year; but carry a distinct impression of its energy, with scarce the remembrance of a word. We know that it was the picture of a man, a something gaunt and terrible in the boldness of outline, asserting in sepulchral monotone a right to live by virtue of hard labor, betwixt "the day-light and dark." To conceive a clear image of man's distress is to put one in another's stead, and to follow afar off the grandest example on record. The poor cannot speak; or could he, there would be nothing so convincing as the coldness of his hearth-side and the silent eloquence of his despair. That would present only an instance; but the poet can embody a universal suffering, and excite an active pity over the whole realm. The majesty of art is proudly vindicated, and no theme has grander elements than the convulsive struggling of the poor. If all who have a reputation to gain in literature would do as much for this class as Thomas Hood! His very smiles are nothing but the light of Heaven beautifully shining through his tears. There is no antagonism; dew and sunshine sparkle together on the same leaf. It is the union of nature. A beam shed on a globe reflects a little world of gorgeous scenery, and a heart must be brim-full to mirror the more perfect images of joy. Does not Hood's "Song of the Shirt," with his other writings illustrate this? Can one chirrup like the grasshopper, to which Anacreon has written his Ode, without being similarly fed? We find that the realms of mirth and pathos are for the most part ruled over by the same potentates. He who could go into so fantastic a discourse upon "buttons," indited Le Fevre's tender story, and that Tale of a Prisoner, of which the burden is: "Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still Slavery, thou art a bitter draught: and though thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account."

An "Ode to Melancholy" is before us, which, had the author written nothing else, would have entitled him to the name of poet. It is a master piece of artful contrivance, whereby rhyme and rhythm are so arranged, by an inflection of exquisite melody, as to accord with the fitful changing, sighs and whimpering, of a

half sick heart. The rise and falling are beautiful as a wind-harp's: the vibrations of the dying note almost impalpably fine. Rather we might compare the effect of it to a day in April. First a gleam of sunshine driven away by hurrying clouds; then a short gusty sobbing, with a few rain drops; then a wrestling of opposite winds and eddying of the dry leaves; and, without any great violence, fickle and changeful throughout:

"Oh, clasp me, sweet, whilst thou art mine,  
And do not take my tears amiss;  
For tears must flow to wash away  
A thought that shows so stern as this!  
Forgive, if somehow I forget  
In wo to come, the present bliss;  
As frightened Prosperine let fall  
Her flowers at the sight of Dis,  
Even so the dark and bright will kiss,  
The sunniest things throw sternest shade,  
And there even a happiness  
That makes the heart afraid.

"Now let us with a spell invoke  
The full-orbed moon to grieve our eyes;  
Not bright, not bright, but with a cloud  
Lapped all about her, let her rise  
All pale and dim, as if from rest  
The ghost of the late buried sun  
Had crept into the skies.  
The moon! She is the source of sighs,  
The very face to make us sad;  
If but to think in other times  
The same calm quiet look she had:  
As if the world held nothing base,  
Of vile and mean, of fierce and bad;  
The same fair light that shone in streams,  
The fairy lamp that charmed the lad;  
For so it is with spent delights,  
She taunts men's brains and makes them mad.

"All things are touched with melancholy,  
Born of the secret soul's mistrust,  
To feel her fair ethereal wings  
Weighed down with vile degraded dust;  
Even the bright extremes of joy  
Bring in conclusions of disgust,  
Like the sweet blossoms of the May,  
Whose fragrance ends in must.  
Oh, give her then her tribute just,  
Her sighs and tears and musings holy!  
There is no music in the life  
That sounds with idiot laughter solely;  
There's not a string attuned to mirth,  
But has its chords of melancholy."

Much as our author has written, he has perhaps suggested more, and so fulfilled the idea which we had conceived of a high creative faculty. There is no end of the lights and reflections of a true work; with the first inspiration breathed into it, there was the inherent principle of a new life. Everything grand in art is a conception begotten from something previously grand. If we see bridges, battlements, and gorgeous scenery among

the accidental coals of a winter's hearth, each according to his degree of fancy, what a temple of beauty may be built, like magic, by intenser scrutiny into the fires of genius! That is after all a dead work which does not so expand the mind of the beholder as to carry it somewhat beyond the circumference of itself. In how small a compass may be clasped the works of Shakspeare; yet how illimitably does he carry us beyond the sphere to which his scenes are restricted! What "spirits" does he conjure from the "vasty deep!" Every great man is his debtor; and this forms part of immortality. The parent lives in his latest progeny.

In conclusion, we believe that the writings of Hood are not doomed to perish; they are too nearly allied to the spirit of that humanity which he loved. We may say of him, in his own words at the grave of "Elia:"—"However much of him has departed, there is still more of him that cannot die; for as long as humanity endures, and man holds fellowship with man, his spirit will still be extant." We will add that he has left behind him a name transcending even that of a poet: "THE FRIEND OF THE POOR."

#### WRITING BY SPIRITS.

The Rev. Dr. Phelps informed me that about one hundred communications had been made, in characters and writing, since March 10, 1850, in his house, purporting to come from spirits. The cap, pants and handkerchief of one of the family, had been written on, in characters. These I copied, and, having had them engraved, shall present them to my readers in a future number of the *Spiritual Philosopher*. I saw one paper at Dr. Phelps's, not quite as wide, but longer than a sheet of foolscap, covered with characters in perpendicular lines. Some were in Hebrew, and the most of the characters appeared like Arabic. They were well made, and looked as if written with a pen and ink. A smaller paper, covered with Hebrew and similar characters, was written with ink, as the family saw it when it fell from the air, and Mrs. P. noticed that the ink was not dry, and she pointed out to me one of the letters which blotted a little by her touching before it was dry.

I have now before me, three pieces of paper, badly written upon, which Mr. Phelps and family assured me were thrown down from the air in their house, by those invisible agents. One is signed "H. P.

Devil," and the other by a man's name who is dead, but who was previously known to the family. And Mr. P. showed me letters, covering one page of letter paper, which had been thrown down from the air by the same invisible hand, but which were signed with the names of orthodox clergymen living in Philadelphia. These letters are somewhat curious and funny.

I saw another specimen of writing by a spirit, in Auburn, N. Y. Mrs. G. B. Bennett showed me a slip of paper, written on by the spirit of her mother, and thrown down by her side in such a manner as left no room to doubt but that it was from the invisible spirit of her mother. Indeed, it was in her mother's handwriting, and bore her signature, as she formerly wrote it when in the external body, and contained an error in the orthography peculiar to her previous method of spelling! I have far more evidence to prove to my own mind, that that slip of paper shown me by Mrs. Bennett, was really written upon by the spirit of her mother, than I have to prove that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by St. Paul.

Dr. Wellington, (associated with Dr. Shew, in the water-cure, New York,) showed me two pieces of paper, written on, as he believes, by spirits, without human hands. And I admit, that if what the Dr. stated to me, as to the manner in which they were first presented to human knowledge be true, why they must have been written by spirits.

As to the way, the manner, or means, I know nothing. But, that I have seen writings, letters, and characters which were written, without human hands, I as firmly believe as that I am now myself engaged in writing, and that my mind is in a state suitable for judging accurately of what I see and hear. The time was, when I could not have believed what I here state, as possible; but I am older to-day than I was a year ago.

"THE KNOCKINGS."—The "Lynn" correspondent of the Boston Daily Mail, tells something of a story about what he did not see nor hear, in Auburn, N. Y. Well, if he was to reside there fifty years longer he might still describe many things which he, the said Mr. "J." never saw nor heard.

Despair finds no resting place in a brave heart.



## WISE'S BALLOON.

Perhaps no man in this country has become more celebrated, as an aeronaut, than Mr. John Wise, of Lancaster, Pa. We have known him, by reputation, for years. He was, formerly, remarkable for his feats, performed in a state of spontaneous somnambulism, and an account of which, he wrote for publication in the *Magnet*. We should be happy to hear from Mr. Wise, often, and hope he will consider himself specially called upon, to write for our columns, on any subject, to which he thinks himself capable of doing the most justice.

From the Lancaster Intelligencer.

In order to satisfy the numerous inquiries, made in regard to the Balloon Hercules, on Saturday last, I deem it not obtrusive to address to you the following lines on the subject. In the first place, however, permit me to say, that the Balloon realized the fullest expectations of the company of gentlemen, for whom I constructed it, as well as my own. The apparatus for inflation, being on a new plan, also proved itself far superior to the old method. This, I presume, is substantiated by the observations, and satisfaction expressed, by the two thousand spectators, who visited the arena on that day. The topical ascents, which were so doubtfully viewed, and descanted upon by nine-tenths of the community, ever since it was announced that they would be attempted, also proved, to the utmost satisfaction of every one present, that they can be made with as much safety, as can a pleasure-trip in an omnibus to Kreider's spring. And, what is of still more importance than the mere ride, is the magnificence of the view, in looking at God's creation from an isolated spot, and the entire absence of griddiness in any individual when so situated.

I had the pleasure of piloting up 25 persons, to a height of from 300 to 600 feet, of which number, six were ladies, and I was highly amused in watching the effect produced upon them. A most intense degree of admiration was expressive in every countenance, and some gave vent to declamation over the scene and its grandeur. One young gentleman exclaimed, "there, there is my father's house," pointing to a habitation some five or six miles from the city. A city gentleman espied his garden and fountain beneath him, and while viewing it with admiration, he hailed some members of his family standing in his yard—when lo, and behold! his liege lady recognized his voice, as he conversed with me, and then such salutations and gratulations as followed between them, were really amusing—he wishing to have her up along with him, just as strongly as she wished him to be down in the solid chamber from where she viewed him suspended between heaven and earth. After several car loads, from four to five each time, made these topical ascents, there ensued a perfect mania to go up. Gentlemen were offering

premiums to those in advance for their chances. Ladies suspected the proprietors of a want of gallantry, for not giving them a preference, inasmuch as they had led the van in mounting the atmosphere, and little boys and girls were filled with lamentations at being rejected passengers—only such as were accompanied by their parents, were permitted to go up. The grappling-iron, ballast, and valve-rope, were all the while in readiness, in case something might have happened to require their use, and each party was accompanied by myself, when so desired.—Mr. J. J. Keller, one of the proprietors, accompanied others, and they were perfectly safe under his charge; Mr. Spangler, Editor of the *Gazette*, pioneered a party; and Mr. S. D. Laird, from the southern section of the county, another.

After these experiments had gone on for an hour and a half, I noticed a storm approaching from the west, making its track directly for the Balloon. This was a magnificent sight, but looked threatening. I immediately stated to the proprietors that it was my opinion the Balloon would be wrecked under the storm, if not permitted to go free in the air. Although a number of topical passengers had engaged and paid for their ascents, Mr. Brubaker immediately refunded them their passage money, and put the Hercules under my discretionary power.

Seeing that no time was to be lost, I handed into the car my wife, son, and Miss Denton, my niece, and called on Mr. E. W. Rauch, who was to accompany us, who was immediately at his post, and in five minutes' time, all was ready. By this time, the storm was close upon us, but no danger could yet have possibly resulted to our bark from its effects, and the car was already clear of the ground, when a portion of the audience threw themselves upon their reserved rights, contending, that, as the final ascent was not to come off until 4, P. M., and it was now only 2, and many wanted their chance at a topical ascent, while some protested most loudly against ladies going up in a storm, not thinking at the time that ladies can raise storms themselves. By the way, mine had told me, that very day, she would raise one about my ears, if I did not take her along in the voyage through the "ether blue!" In the delay and confusion of the Hercules pulling up, and the gravity of a sympathetic audience pulling down, garnished with an occasional flash of electricity and peals of thunder, the storm was upon us; my lady passengers were then handed out. I got out myself—the audience in part made for shelter—the Hercules began to plunge and chafe like a maddened steed trammelled in harness—excited men held on to the car, some were inside it, when another heavy squall rent her in twain, and she fell a shapeless wreck upon the ground; but, I trust, for only a brief period, when she is to be regenerated. Pardon me for calling a Hercules, she. Balloons, like ships, are feminine genders.

Some persons think it was well that the final ascent was not made, from the fact that the Balloon exploded under the storm. This is an erroneous notion. A Balloon free in the air, if properly and

mathematically constructed, has all its load regularly distributed over its whole surface, and is in no danger of bursting after having stood the inflation. But in the case of a Balloon being restrained near the earth, every squall of wind produces an irregular strain, and in the case of the Hercules, the net-work was drawn into one side of her nearly two feet before she gave way. Even this would not have happened, could she have been moored close to the ground by the net-work.

Yours, &c.,

JOHN WISE.

## THE INVESTIGATOR AND SPIRITS.

An article appears in the *Investigator* from "Observer," on the "Spiritual Knockings," written in candor, and containing a number of legitimate inferences drawn from false premises. Mr. Sunderland, whose account of a recent visit to Stratford, Ct., is quoted, does not believe in the common notion as to the immateriality of spirit. He believes in no intelligences that have not material spiritual bodies. Again, it should be known, that as a general fact, believers in the common notions about the immateriality of spirits, have no faith in the "spiritual manifestations" spoken of.

The *Spiritual Philosopher* does not advocate the idea that *something* or substance can come from nothing. The inferences of Observer, therefore, do not touch the real issue.

"AN ACCOUNT of a Late Conversation with the Dead. And how the following Strange Events came into writing, and came to be printed. Boston: Printed by Nathaniel Coverly, Jr. 1807."

A friend has laid a pamphlet on our table with the above title. It purports to give an account of an interview which Mrs. Thankful Alexander, of Winchester, N. H., had with the spirit of her deceased husband, Aug. 3, 1807. He died Dec. 16, 1806. But some months before his death, the family heard "strange noises" in different parts of his house, which ceased on his being told, by an audible voice, (supposed to be from the Spirit World,) that he would not live the year out.

He told his wife, as she affirms, that the spirit, after death, existed in "human shape," two of the human sensations being lost, viz.: "taste and smell." The account is interesting, especially in view of its antiquity, though there are many things said to have been taught by the spirit, (as transmigration,) which are manifestly erroneous and not to be believed.

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE "CHRISTIAN REFORMER."—At the commencement of the present year I enlarged my Magazine, and hoped to be able to continue it through the year. This I should have done, if all who then took it had continued it, but great numbers discontinued it, and but few forwarded the pay for the new volume; so that, after incurring a debt of about \$60.00 for printing it, I deemed it my duty to cease its publication for the present. This debt I have not yet, with my utmost efforts, been able to liquidate, only in part; about three fourths of it is still due the printer.

You will recollect, that at the commencement of the second volume, I offered to send it free to those who preferred not paying, to the performance of that act. Accordingly a large number of sterling Anti-Slavery people did not pay anything for that year. As the sum due is only 50 cents, I have ventured to ask these friends to alter their minds, and prefer paying that very small amount, as unless they do a worthy mechanic will suffer, as well as myself. I have incurred other debts, which have to be paid; but all I ask is the 50 cents due from each delinquent, that I may pay my printer, as not to be able to do so causes me a great deal of suffering. If, sir, you will forward me \$1.00, you shall receive the "Spiritual Philosopher" for six months, which will be in reality paying nothing for the Christian Reformer, but I will receive it as a full equivalent. Direct  
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