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PROFESSOR ANDERSON'S  
EXPOSÉ OF  
"SPIRIT RAPPINGS,"  
BEING A SERIES OF LETTERS  
TO THE EDITORS OF THE BALTIMORE SUN.  
TOGETHER WITH  
A "WRITING MEDIUM'S" REPLY.

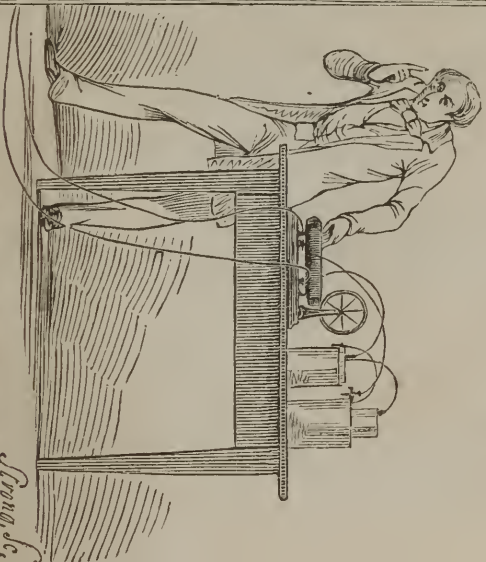
2387  
"I thank my God the Sun and Moon are both hung up so high,  
That no presumptuous hand can stretch and pull them from the Sky;  
If they were not, I have no doubt that some Reforming Ass  
Would recommend to take them down, and light the world with Gas!"

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1853.

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Strong, &c.

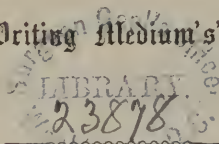


PROFESSOR ANDERSON'S  
EXPOSÉ OF  
"SPIRIT RAPPINGS,"

Being a Series of Letters  
TO THE EDITORS OF THE BALTIMORE SUN.

TOGETHER WITH

A "Writing Medium's" Reply.



"I thank my God the Sun and Moon are both hung up so high,  
That no presumptuous hand can stretch and pull them from the Sky;  
If they were not, I have no doubt that some Reforming Aes  
Would recommend to take them down, and light the world with Gas!"

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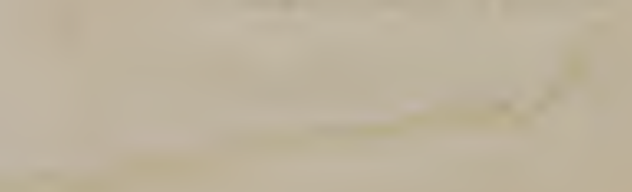
1853.

# REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1880



# PROFESSOR ANDERSON'S EXPOSÉ OF SPIRIT RAPPINGS.

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THE Renowned Wizard, Professor Anderson, having undertaken the exposure of the Spiritual Rapping Humbug and its artful practitioners, he seems determined to neglect no means for accomplishing it in the most effectual manner possible. His skill and ingenuity had well fitted him for this task. He has, therefore, in a series of letters, which he addressed to the Editors of public press, gone into the rise and progress of this delusion, laying bare the trickery by which its high-priests and priestess manage to dupe so many victims throughout the country, bringing misery and untold ruin to many by the dethronement of reason, or subjection to such unwholesome infatuation as to unfit them for all the practical duties of life. The following is the first of the series of letters.

## FIRST LETTER

From Professor Anderson, in Exposition of the Spiritual  
Rapping Humbug.

BALTIMORE, APRIL 5TH, 1853.

*To the Editors of the Baltimore Sun:* SIRs—I hope you will excuse this apology from a public character who does not *desire* notoriety, but a wish to save his fellow-creatures from the fangs of a league of imposters, who, under the cloak of spiritualism, have done so much irreparable injury throughout the Union.

Prior to my expose, it will be necessary to commence with the origin of the imposture.

The following is an account of the origin of the knockings at Rochester, from a work by Chas. W. Elliott, Esq., published by Harper Bros., of New York.

"MYSTERIOUS NOISES, which are supposed by many to be communications from the Spirit World, together with all the explanation which can as yet be given of the matter.

"ROCHESTER, D. M. Dewey, Arcade Hall, 1850.

"Let no reader at this stage of the business, closing the work in an energetic way, exclaim, 'Humbug,' 'Delusion,' or 'Tom Foolery.' Should he do so, it would not be well with him. Stupid it may be, but what if it should be true? The labor pays.

"The house seems to have been a quiet and respectable house for aught that is stated, and there is no reason to suppose that the timber had been practised upon by *elves*, or the *good people*, who haunt the woods. A remarkable fact in its history is, that *'it was moved into on the 11th December, 1847,* by the family of Mr. John D. Fox, so the narrative relates, through which this *influx*, or *manifestation*, or *developement* has come to us. If we can believe the house, the house then received a *shock*, from which it did not soon recover, and one which is not easily explained. Let us, however, take note of the words of *another*, who took down the account from the mouth of Mrs. Fox, a venerable lady of some sixty winters, she then being at the house of Mr. Partridge in New York on the 1st of May, 1851—for by the mouths of *two witnesses*, perhaps, this thing will be established.

"'Twas in December of the year 1847, that she moved from Rochester into this hired house. Very soon they were disturbed after going to bed, by various noises, which, however, did not attract much attention, as they supposed them to be made by the rats, which do sometimes of themselves have strange doings. (It is a pity that the age and condition of the house



are not stated in either account.) They were, however, disturbed, and indeed kept awake sometime, until they began to suspect that mischievous persons might be playing tricks. Examination, however, did not show any such explanation, and they were obliged to content themselves with the rats, until after a space of nearly four months, when on the last day of March, year 1848, they determined to go to bed early, so as to get a good night's rest, in spite of all noise. But this was not permitted. The thought then struck Mrs. Fox, whose bed was in the same room with that of her two daughters, Margaretta, aged 15, and Katy, aged 12, that she would question the noise.

“ ‘Who makes the noise?’

“ ‘Is it made by any person living?’

“ ‘Is it made by any one dead?’ [Rap.]

“ ‘If any injured spirit?’ [Rap.]

“ ‘If injured by her or her family?’

“ ‘If by various other names?’

“ Getting no farther reply, she arose, somewhat excited, and called her husband, and some of the neighbors, who were yet up.

“ The two girls, so Mrs. Fox states, were not apparently as much excited as she was, but entered with some spirit into the doings of the other spirit, one of them snapping her fingers and asking the spirit to do as they did, which it did.

“ One of the neighbors followed up the injured spirit, asking when the injury was done? five raps, indicating, as they supposed, five years.

“ ‘What name did the injury?’ Rap, at the name of a man who had lived there some five years before.

“ ‘Is the body here, then?—in the cellar?’

“ A rap was heard, and they determined to dig, but somehow learned that they must *delay* it four months, and of course did so. Mrs. F. stated, that upon digging at the time mentioned, her son and two others found some pieces of bone, but whether or not those of a man, does not seem to have been ascertained.

“ The person accused by the ‘*Spirit*,’ she said, ‘was much

outraged, but took no very efficient steps to remove so questionable an accusation.' Mrs. Fox stated that she left the house, and lived with some friends, as the excitement for or against them was so considerable—but, strange to say, the sounds followed her two girls, and in the course of the summer the alphabet was revealed to the son when alone in the wonderful house. 'The son's wife also for a time,' she stated, 'was a *medium*, for such is the *title* now used, but has somehow lost the gift.'

(Signed,)

"CH. W. ELLIOTT.

"New York, May, 1851."

The above is the first heard of the *manifestations*, which have spread wide over the country. The *originators*, strange to say, are now the *leading stars* of the *knocking league*, and are admitted to be the *best performers* in their *line*—they are certainly the most successful. It is somewhat strange that ladies should continue to be the best "*Media*." The secret of this is, that there is a *natural* delicacy in asking questions of a lady, which we would be inclined to expose in the opposite sex. Hence, in a great measure, the succession of the *delusion*.

Those ladies did not stop at home in their peaceful village. Oh! no! They had a *special call* from *God* (?) Like the Apostles of old, they had a "mission" to perform, which was to eclipse even that of the Son of God. "Healing the sick," "casting out devils," "raising the dead," "feeding the multitude," "walking on the sea"—all the miracles of our Saviour must fall into insignificance, when compared with the *knocks* and *raps* of the F\*x\*s and F\*\*h\*s.

PROFESSOR ANDERSON.

## SECOND LETTER

From Professor Anderson on the Spirit Impostures.

BALTIMORE, APRIL 6TH, 1853.

*To the Editors of the Baltimore Sun.*—How long will an intelligent, enlightened, and generous nation suffer itself to be imposed upon by a *vile juggler*. Why do not the professors of this science tell to the world what it shall benefit by the manifestations? Why not make the system generally known? Why not publish a key to the Spirit Rapping science? If an important discovery has been made whereby mankind is to receive a benefit, and if by these communications we are to discover a new theory in life, death, and immortality—let *all* have the benefit of the discovery. This, I fear, would be asking to much of the Spirit Rapping community—it would not benefit them. If we were all as wise as they are, then “Othello’s occupation would be gone,” or (like myself) if every one knew as much as I do, I should have but a few to witness my wonders of natural magic.

The mystery of my incomprehensibilities will injure no one, as the public are perfectly aware that no imposture is intended, and special care is taken that the most weak-minded individual may not imagine that what he beholds is produced by super-human or spiritual agency. Were the Spirit Rappers to adopt my system, there would be no crime, no dupes, no victims, no humbug. The thing would go for what it was worth, and no more. Were the Spirit Rappers to publish the following Programme, we should be prepared to receive them as professionals whose influence would not be more injurious than our own.

### PROGRAMME.—IMPORTANT NOTICE.

EXTRAORDINARY DISCOVERY. ROCHESTER KNOCKINGS ILLUSTRATED.

The Misses F., (from Rochester) Witches of the 19th Cen-

tury, beg most respectfully to announce to the citizens of—that they will, for a short time only, hold their

## SOIREES DIABOLIQUES; OR, IMPENETRABLE KNOCKINGS!

AS PRACTISED BY THEM IN ROCHESTER WITH THE

## GREATEST SUCCESS!

having astonished the whole of America's most intelligent citizens by their extraordinary

## RAPPING POWERS!

This wonderful secret, which cannot be discovered by the most *intelligent*, will be illustrated by their most *splendid apparatus*, constructed for the purpose of deceiving the most *learned philosophers* of modern times. The *whole machinery* is got up by them, under their own *superintendence*, and at an *enormous expense*, defying the *greatest of Conjurers, Magicians, and Wizards*, with which this country now abounds, to discover the impenetrable secrets of the

## WITCHES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY!

During the Rapping Soirees a number of electric, acoustic, and ventriloquial

## PHENOMENA!

will be brought into action, by which the *senses* of every *beholder* will be so deceived that they will be led to believe they are in *immediate communication* with the

## WORLD OF SPIRITS!

The whole of this interesting exhibition will conclude by their commanding all the furniture and spectators in the room to dance a quadrille.

**Admission, One Dollar.**

N. B.—No *nervous, weak-minded, ignorant, or superstitious*

*person* will be admitted. It is the desire of the Misses F. not to injure the weak and superstitious, their *powers* being so extraordinary as to require the *strongest minds* to appreciate their astounding wonders.

This, Sirs, however, would not answer their purpose. Although their *system* is perfect in its way, there is not sufficient in it to make up an entertainment. Consequently their audience, or victims, are led, not to witness a *juggle*, (which it is,) but (as they suppose,) a communication with—they do not say which—“*Heaven or Hell.*” They (the Rappers) do not tell us from which they come—sufficient, *there* are the *knocks*!

If intelligent persons would take the trouble to inquire, this *juggle* would soon be exploded.

There is nothing *new* in the theory of this Spirit Rapping humbug. It is an *old imposture exhumed*, and it is a great pity that, before some people make up their minds to go crazy about what they knowingly tell us is a *new revelation*, they do not take some pains to acquaint themselves with such facts as are frequently to be found. *New humbugs* of this sort are bad enough, but *old ones, re-galvanized*, should not be tolerated outside a *lunatic asylum*.

In this day of *wonders* it may be well to state that *old wooden tables* were known to be *electrical* nearly a century ago. Upon the 145th page of the British Annual Register, of 1760, will be found the following, viz.:

Oct. 12.—“In a letter from Paris we are informed of a singular discovery said to have been made there by one Father Ammersin. He pretends to have found out that wood of every kind becomes highly electrical when deprived of all its moisture and kept perfectly dry. His method of making the experiment is to put a piece of wood in a warm oven or chimney, where a constant fire is kept, and to let it remain there until it is quite dry—after which, in order to prevent its acquiring fresh moisture, he boils it in wax or some kind of drying oil, or otherwise coats it over carefully with a strong coat of varnish. A wood-

en cylinder thus prepared, and suffered to grow cold, it is said will yield, on being rubbed, a greater quantity of electric fire than even an ordinary glass globe of the same diameter."

The Rappers have taken advantage of this scientific phenomenon, which is nothing more than *their mode* of moving the "*Spiritual tables*," of which so much has been said, and so many astonished at the *trick* of the learned Father.

As I proceed I will advance the evidence of other parties, who, at the outset, pronounced the whole an *imposture*! The first will be the evidence of a *relative* of the *inventors*, which will show that the originators had *planned* the *imposture* from the commencement, and had carried it out as such. Mrs. Norman Culver's evidence, I have no doubt, was correct on the outset, but HER EXPOSE caused the inventors to seek a *new Theory, which they found*, and which has answered their purpose *more effectually*. You can judge of Mrs. Culver's evidence, which is as follows :

"I am, by marriage, a connection of the Fox Girls. *Their* brother married *my* husband's sister. The girls have been a great deal at my house, and, for about two years, I was a very sincere believer in the *Rappings*, but *some things* which I saw when I was visiting the girls at Rochester made me suspect that they were deceiving. I resolved to satisfy myself in some way—and some time afterwards I made a proposition to Catherine to assist her in producing the manifestations. I had a cousin visiting me from Michigan, who was going to consult the "*Spirit*," and I told Catherine that, if they intended going to Detroit, it would be a great thing for *them* to convince *him*. I also told her that, if I could do anything to help her, I would do it cheerfully—that I should probably be able to answer all the questions he would ask, and I would do it if she would show me how to make the raps. She said that, as *Margaretta* was absent, she wanted *somebody* to *help* her, and that if I would become a *medium*, she would explain it all to me. She said that when my cousin consulted the *Spirits*, I must sit next to her, and touch her arm when the right letter was called. I did



so, and was able to answer nearly all the questions correctly. After I had helped her in this way a few times, she revealed to me the secret. The *Raps* are produced with the toes. All the toes are used. After nearly a week's practice, with Catherine showing me how, I could produce them perfectly myself.

"At first it was very hard work to do it. Catherine told me to warm my feet, or put them in warm water, and it would then be easier work to rap. She said that she sometimes had to warm her feet three or four times during the course of an evening. I found that heating my feet did enable me to rap a great deal easier. I have sometimes produced a hundred and fifty raps in succession. I can rap with all the toes on both feet—it is most difficult to rap with the great toe. Catherine told me how to manage to answer the questions. She said it was generally easy enough to answer right, if the one who asked the questions called the alphabet. She said the reason why she asked people to write down several names on paper, and then point to them till the spirit rapped at the right one, was to give them a chance to watch the countenance and motions of the person, and that in that way they could nearly always guess right. She also explained how they held down and moved tables. (Mrs. Culver here gave some illustrations of the tricks.) She told me that all I should have to do to make raps heard on the table, would be to put my foot on the bottom of the table when I rapped, and that when I wished to make the raps sound distant on the wall, I must make them louder, and direct my own eyes earnestly to the spot where I wished them to be heard. She said if I could put my foot to the *bottom* of the door, the *raps* would be heard on the *top* of the door.

"Catharine told me that when the committee held their *ankles* in Rochester, the Dutch servant girl rapped with her knuckles under the floor, from the cellar. The girl was instructed to rap whenever she heard *their* voices calling the *spirits*. Catharine also showed me how they made the sounds of sawing and planing boards. (The whole trick was explained to us.) When I was at Rochester, last January, Marga-

retta told me that when people insisted on seeing her feet and toes, she could produce a few raps with her knees and ankles.

"Elizabeth Fish, (Mrs. Fish's daughter) who now lives with her father, was the first one who produced these raps. She accidentally discovered the way to make them, by playing with her toes against the foot-board while in bed. Catharine told me that the reason why Elizabeth went west to live with her father, was because she was too *conscientious* to become a medium. The whole secret was revealed to me, with the understanding that I should practice as a medium when the girls were away. Catharine said that, whenever I practiced, I better have my little girl with me, and make folks believe that she was the medium, for, she said, "They would never suspect so young a child of any tricks." After I had obtained the whole secret, I plainly told Catharine that my only object was to find out how these tricks were done, and that I should never go any farther in this *imposition*. She was very much frightened, and said she believed I meant to tell of it, and expose them; and if I did, she would swear it was a lie. She was so nervous and excited, that I had to sleep with her that night. When she was instructing me how to be a medium, she told me how frightened they used to get, in New York, for fear somebody would detect them, and gave me the whole history of all the tricks they played upon the people there. She said that once Margaretta spoke aloud, and that the whole party believed it was a spirit."

(Signed,)

Mrs. NORMAN CULVER.

#### CERTIFICATE.

"We hereby certify that Mrs. Culver is one of the most reputable and intelligent ladies in the town of Arcadia. We were present when she made the disclosures. We had heard the same from her before, and we cheerfully bear testimony that there cannot be the slightest doubt of the truth of the whole statement.

(Signed,)

C. G. POMEROY, M. D.,  
REV. D. S. CHASE."



## THIRD LETTER

From Professor Anderson on the Spirit Rappings.

BALTIMORE, APRIL 7TH, 1853.

*To the Editors of the Baltimore Sun:* SIRS—The professional Spirit Rappers go about in gangs of eight or ten, with a well-trained “medium.” The business of these parties, *male* or *female*, is—prior to the commencement of their operations—to *worm* out the secrets of every family of note in every city they visit. A regular book is kept, (alphabetically) with the names of such families or members thereof. Each individual who visits the “medium” places his or her name in a book of registry, previous to the interview. The former register is looked over, the name is at once recognized, together with every event that has occurred in the family. *All is known:* The deaths which have taken place—who have been lately married, or who are about to be married—who has left the country, and wither they are gone; in short, the whole is known, and invariably arranged with great precision, tact, and system. They also find out those persons (who abound in every city) who are always ready to run after any new “ism” or “scism,” and who become, sooner or later, either their victims or else *confederates*.

There is another class of Confederates; he or she is in the room with the medium. The visitor supposes this confederate to be a visitor like himself. Now this is one of the most *essential* and *important* parts of the *imposture* to render it successful—as, for example: The visitor has asked certain questions; he hears the *raps*, which are not satisfactory; in fact, the communication is *incorrect*. The confederate then addresses the visitor thus: “It is very strange; I asked a number of questions a few minutes ago, and *all* to my astonishment were answered correctly!” The confederate then says that he will again try,

and, that the visitor may have no doubt, he says to him : "I will ask a number of questions, which I will first communicate to you,—question and answer." The confederate then communicates all to the visitor, and then they address the *medium*. The communication is made with the *Spirit World*. *Every question is correctly answered!* The visitor is astonished at the correctness of the answers—as they are *verbatim* what he was told by the confederate during their conversation. The confederate continues in conversation with the visitor (*poor victim!*) until he has drawn from him question and answer of all he intended to ask the *medium*. A short time elapses, during which the whole is communicated to the medium, who is now prepared to answer all his questions without mistake, and the visitor is then induced by the *generous confederate* to try the medium once more. He does so. There is no mistake this time.—Every question is answered correctly. Oh! most wonderful! he exclaims. He is quite satisfied, and, bewildered and astonished, he goes home and tells his friends and relatives of the *wonderful raps* and *mediums*. They also must have their *dollar's* worth of communication. Such is the *system of confederates*, which, of course, is the most essential part of the *juggle*.

The raps, how are they produced? or, are they real? Mrs. Culver, in her evidence, which has been previously referred to, tells us of *one* system. I must now inform you of others. Imagine the medium to be possessed of the power of ventriloquism, it would then be no difficult matter to convince a spectator that the raps proceeded from any part of the room—from the table—from beneath it, or from his own stomach, or that of any other spectator present. My little friend Blitz would make an excellent ventriloquial medium.

The *great secret* of the affair, however, is in the construction of the tables used by the professional rappers.

Suppose, for example, two rooms, one communicating with the other. The medium, tables, and confederates in one room, and apparatus with a galvanic battery in the other. The wires

from the battery pass *under* the door, or out through the wall beneath the skirting boards, passing under the carpet to the legs of the table; a communication is thus formed with the table in which there is concealed a *magnet*, attached to which is a small lever working upon a centre. The moment the galvanic current is applied, it raises the lever—the moment it is disconnected, the hammer of the lever strikes the table—rap, rap, rap, as often as the *medium* please. Of course, to render the delusion perfect, much must depend on the construction of the table, or wherever the apparatus is placed—the manufacture of which must be such as to deceive the machinist and those who have a knowledge of electricity, &c. (See Cut.)

The public can have an opportunity of hearing the raps nightly, upon a table which I have prepared to illustrate the system by which the raps are produced, which is on the above principles. Confederates, paragraph writers, agents, the above described machinery, and a galvanic battery form the whole required to communicate with the world of spirits.

*Sirs*: It may not be generally known that, in connection with the *Spirit-Rapping Delusion*, they have their *Newspapers*, *Magazines*, and *Publications* of various descriptions, edited by some of the most talented writers in the United States—

“To what *base uses* may we not return.”

They have their agents in every city in the Union, from Maine to California. There are in full operation *several spiritual banks* throughout the Union. A large amount of capital has been invested in the “*imposture*.” No stone has been left unturned by the projectors of this “*speculation*” to make it tell; and it will not be disputed that it has made a decided hit, and at this moment is the most popular mania in the United States.

My astonishment is, that it has not been denounced, long ere this, by the whole “*Press*” of the Union, which is ever foremost in the “*cause of humanity*.” Reports of *victims*, trials by courts of law, of the *infamous jugglers*—paragraphs of all kinds describing the wonderful effects in various parts of the

country—anecdotes and tales of the most marvellous *miracles*, which are supposed to be accomplished by the Spirits in every State—all these have been recorded by the press, and swallowed by the public as *undeniable facts*, till the *delusion* has taken such a hold upon the public as to render it a difficult matter to counteract the *imposition*.

There is not a rational member of the press but knows that the whole is a *base unnatural delusion*—having nothing to recommend it—no foundation but imposition. It has been allowed to go on unheeded, with the exception as before stated. Hence the cause of the great success of the *pernicious delusion*!

Had that mighty engine and public protector, the Press, denounced it, many of your fellow-citizens would have been saved from *premature death*. The Lunatic Asylums throughout the Union would have had fewer inmates by hundreds, and many a *now miserable* family would have been *happy*. The Rappings Swindle would have gone the way of "*Millerism*," "*Salem Witchcraft*," and the "*Cock Lane Ghost*," and remembered only as one of the popular humbugs of its day.

I trust that the public will not think that I seek notoriety or gain by this exposé. I have nothing to gain; on the contrary, I shall be the loser, from the very fact that I have placed myself in a position, as a *public man*, to be attacked. However, should I make a few enemies by the transaction, I will save *them* the trouble of *calling me* what I know I am myself—a humbug.—(This I leave, however, to the public.)

If I can but save one victim, I am sufficiently repaid for my labor. I trust in God I may be the humble instrument in saving many from lunacy and death.

I know that I will have a hard battle to fight, but there is one thing I will promise you, sirs—I *will not desert my cause, but will fight to the death every "rapper" in the Union*—proving not only to the public, but to the rappers themselves, that their so-called Spiritual Manifestations are nothing more than a *perversion of science*; (when I say *science*, I perhaps give it too much importance)—a vile juggle.

## FOURTH LETTER

From Professor Anderson on the Spirit Rapping Imposture.

BALTIMORE, APRIL 8TH, 1853.

*To the Editors of the Baltimore Sun.*—The statistical accounts of the various lunatic asylums throughout the Union return 573 *lunatics* as victims to this destructive delusion, while 17 persons have committed suicide, caused by a monomaniac belief in the spiritual powers of these *juggling* pretended communicators with the immaterial world. Is there no public protection for the weak and credulous?

When the cholera or any other malignant epidemic makes its appearance amongst us, we become alarmed, not only for our own safety, but also for the safety of our friends and fellow-citizens. Boards of Health are constituted, to check (if possible) the disease on the instant. Why should not Boards of Enquiry and Protection be formed and maintained, to warn and screen the public from a *seductive imposture*, which is as malignant in form and effect, and which engenders that worst of human maladies—madness?

Ought not the authorities of every city where the rapping delusionists make their appearance, to investigate the imposture, and protect the public from madness and suicide, as much as they would from cholera or any other fatal disease?

I call upon the assistance, in God's name, of all intelligent and well-meaning persons, to assist in destroying the imposture and its baneful influences. The whole juggle is inconsistent with the character of God. What blasphemy! when ignorant impostors tell us "that they can hold communication with the Saviour of Man, by knocking on a table." Is this the character of Him who fed the multitudes and raised the dead? Are the wretched impostors not afraid of God's wrath, and of being, like Ananias and Sapphira, struck dead?

New discoveries are daily being made in the scientific world, by which mankind benefit—but all discoveries hitherto are consistent with the great laws of Nature and Nature's God. The spiritual juggle is inconsistent with both.

We are, (I have no doubt) surrounded by spirits; but God has placed a VEIL before MORTAL EYES, which completely hides from us the World of Spirits. When HE, by death, removes that VEIL, THIS WORLD OF SPIRITS will be visible to our departed spirits. There is a wide barrier placed between Mortals and the Spirit World. None has yet appeared from "that bourne whence no traveler returns." The DEAD will rest, as will the spirit, till the last trumpet shall sound. The souls of the departed will not meanwhile be troubled by Spiritual or any other kind of Rappers.

We have no instance of "Spiritual communication" with earth, either from Sacred or other history, nor of the dead revisiting the earth, except in the cases of the raising of Samuel by the Witch of Endor, and of Lazarus by our Saviour. "Hamlet's father walked like a *ghost*, but spoke so like a man when he said—

"That incestuous beast,  
With witchcraft of his wits and traitorous gifts,"

that I do not give him credit as being a Ghost.

In conclusion, and in order that the public may have faith in the above statement, I challenge the whole Spirit Rapping League, from Maine to California, for \$5,000 or \$10,000, that there is not one of them can produce a knock on my table which I cannot account for by natural causes, consistent with the well understood laws of Natural Philosophy. With thanks for the use of your valuable columns,

I remain, Sirs,

Your obliged servant,

J. H. ANDERSON,  
The Wizard of the North.



# A WRITING MEDIUM'S REPLY

## To Professor Anderson's Letters.

BALTIMORE, APRIL 11TH, 1853.

*To the Editors of the Baltimore Sun :* GENTLEMEN—My attention has been specially directed, for the last four or five days, to several letters, occupying a large space in your valuable sheet, professing to be an expose of what is now called “*Spiritual Manifestations*.” Knowing your general character for impartiality, I have taken the liberty of sending you the following in answer to the statement made by your former correspondent, Prof. Anderson, on the subject of “spiritualism,” trusting you will accord it that consideration which a fair discussion of any subject interesting to the public ought to be entitled to. To pass upon all the statements made by the Professor would be rather an elaborate matter ; I shall, therefore, confine myself to a few simple remarks in refutation of what the talented Professor has so shrewdly and ingeniously set forth. He says that the whole is a *juggle*, a *delusion*, an *imposture*, got up for the purpose of making money—that the originators are ladies, and are now considerably rich, &c. This latter fact, I cannot pretend to dispute, but that any thing like an *imposture* or *juggling* is connected with the “*Spiritual Manifestations*” I unhesitatingly declare to be false. Witness the numerous instances of the most intelligent men of our day having become, by practical examination, and personal enquiry into the minutiae of the subject, confirmed in the belief that there “*are modes of communication*” between this world and immateriality, which were never before dreamed of, but which the rapid strides of advancing knowledge and science are daily developing before our eyes.

There are hundreds of the most respectable of our fellow-citizens, of both sexes, who will gladly testify to this fact, that

no matter how the communication is made, still there is a decided method of holding conversation with any departed friend or relative—*unbelief* and the opinions of skeptics to the contrary notwithstanding. The Professor states that there have been no instances wherein spirits from the other world have had communication with us poor mortals, excepting in two cases, viz. : Lazarus raised from the grave by our Saviour, and Samuel by the Witch of Endor. These, however, are quite extraneous. The matter to be proved is, “whether or not we can hold converse with those who have gone before us, to the invisible, immaterial, or spiritual world?” I, for one, firmly believe so; but my own asserted opinion would be of little use, when opposed to the general incredulity which always attaches to any new Theory. I could cite various authorities, of the most unimpeachable character, in support of the position which I have assumed, in order to controvert or entirely do away with the impression which Prof. Anderson's *intended* expose may have created. I cannot but give him credit for the manly manner in which he comes before the public, and for the very specious and plausible explanations he gives of the *imposture*, as he chooses to call it. Being myself a sincere believer in the Spiritual manifestations, I have no doubt that what I am about to relate will place me in a very bad position in the opinion of the learned Professor, and those who have, no doubt, swallowed his *attempted* exposure of one of the most extraordinary developments of *moral science*. Before relating my own experience, let me ask one question. Why, if such progress is daily making in Physical Science, for the benefit of mankind—why, I say, should there not be a like progress in Spiritual Science, when the same object is in view.

Prof. Anderson truly says, that scientific discoveries have hitherto been a source of good to humanity. Should this new discovery be proscribed before its intrinsic merits have been made known? *Who* can say that there is not *some benefit* to accrue from the gradual developments of the various phases in *Spiritual Communication*? Every day brings forth some new



fact in support of Spiritualism, and when these facts are backed by the voluntary evidence of such men as Judge Edmonds, of New York, and various other gentlemen of the highest standing in society, and endowed with every intellectual gift, how can the "ipse dixit" of *one man* have an influence sufficiently powerful to break down the barriers which a steady application to, and minute investigation of, Spirituality have already so firmly constructed and established? Why are clergymen of the various denominations of religion so suddenly become converts to this—the only true faith? How is it that we hear so frequently of fresh converts to this ridiculous theory, (as it is conventionally termed?) The reason is, that a new era in *Moral Science* has commenced—a state of things is coming about which will completely subvert all former notions of *Futurity*. Churches, Curates, Bishops, Popes, "et hoc genus omne," will, instead of wielding their present almost absolute powers, be completely divested of them.

The progress of spiritualism is *onward*. Nothing can stay it; as well expect Niagara's mighty cataract to return its volume of waters to their source. The iceberg of the Arctic will as soon melt under the simple touch of a mortal hand, as the advance of spiritualism be retarded. Look at the convention of spiritualists held the other day at Springfield, Mass.; are these individuals to be considered as humbugs, or their assertions to be treated as fictions, and nothing else? I trust not. That this whole world will be united in one common brotherhood I have no doubt, and that this happy period is close at hand, I firmly believe. Witness the gigantic strides which the spirit rappers have made in every section of this extensive country, daily making proselytes, and becoming gradually a *body*, which will exercise a universal and wholesome influence over the interests of their fellow-creatures. That there will be many unbelievers in our new doctrine I feel certain; that we have many prejudices to do away with, and deeply imbued feelings to counteract, I am not prepared to dispute; but that spiritualism will ultimately succeed, I can safely pledge my word.

Among the class of opponents by whom we are liable to be attacked, I must *particularly* mention Professor Anderson. Her as yet has been the *only one* who has endeavored to attack us in our *vital* parts ; but, after all, has not succeeded in doing us much injury. That he is a dangerous enemy to spiritualism is an undoubted fact, as witnessed by his letters to you on this subject. But what would the gentleman say if I were to tell him, *that by a spiritual communication with the soul of the great and illustrious Father of our Country, George Washington, I have been desired to expose him to the citizens of America as the greatest foe to the advancement of science, and earnestly entreat them to drive away from their shores one whose influence may ultimately cause a complete subversion of all our laws, institutions, &c.; this solely owing to his skepticism on one of the most interesting branches of modern science. Gladly shall I hail the day, and bless the breezes that shall waft from America the "Wizard" who so boldly proclaims his unbelief in "Spiritual Communications."* I am afraid I have transgressed my limits, and trespassed on the patience of your readers, but I feel sure you will pardon the unintentional offence.

Should Prof. Anderson choose to continue this discussion, I shall be prepared to adduce such facts as will not only silence him, but set at rest all doubts which may remain in the minds of the world generally on the subject of inter-communication with this world and the World of Spirits. Trusting you will excuse the length of this, in part refutation of the *one-sided* arguments or *rather assertions* made by Professor Anderson, for whom, nevertheless, I entertain the highest regard, and from whose eyes, I sincerely trust, the scales may soon fall.

I remain, gentleman, with great respect, your obliged servant,

A WRITING MEDIUM.

The above is written under the influence of the Spirits.

N.B.—If Prof. Anderson will allow his bet of \$10,000 to be decided in a private circle, instead of a public, I will take him up, and double the amount.

The above addressed to the "Sun office," will find me.

## FIFTH LETTER.

## Professor Anderson's Reply to the Spirit Rappings.

BALTIMORE, APRIL 12TH, 1853.

*To the Editors of the Baltimore Sun:* GENTLEMEN—I will have no difficulty in answering the letter of your correspondent in to-day's issue, under the signature of a "*Writing Medium*"(?) there being nothing in it to require an answer.

All that he states in his communication is, that spiritalism does exist, and will extend itself to the destruction of all our systems, as heretofore and at present established. He also states that it is not a *juggle*. That is just the difference of opinion.

I have taken some trouble to show that it is nothing more than a juggle of the worst kind. Your correspondent has not advanced one single item of *proof* that it is not. He simply calls on M.D's, D.D's, and Judge Edmonds, as his authorities. The latter (Judge Edmonds) is just as likely to be humbugged as any other citizen. 'Tis not the seat he fills that will protect him from imposition, when he submits himself to be imposed upon as a matter of choice. Judge Edmonds must make further inquiries and researches into the subject, and then both he and your correspondent will find out their error. By the way, it might save the State of New York a considerable sum per annum if Judge Edmonds were a medium. He could then empanel a jury in the spirit world; also, witnesses living and dead. The counsel for or against the defendants might as well arrange their matters in the world of spirits as here on earth; for, according to the "rapping system," *there are no lies, no false witnesses, no partial judges*. The whole is the truth, and nothing but the truth.

The most eminent lawyers and judges who have preceded us to the spiritual world, might be called into the spiritual cir-

cle. Judge Edmonds might take it coolly, and await the verdict from the spirit world, which, as a medium, he would undoubtedly hear by raps on the judicial bench before which he sat.

If such were the case, there would be no necessity for *new trials*. This, I have no doubt, is one of the innovations which will be brought about by the rappers, when the *old system* is by them abolished.

With the establishment of the spiritual science upon this broad basis, the explorations of the old ruins of Europe, Asia, and America will become an "*obsolete idea*," for we then can call in the "*builders*" themselves. *All history* can be rectified, and the blanks filled up from contemporaneous witnesses through all time. We shall then be enabled to know directly to the point:

"How much it cost to build the Pyramids."

"What became of the Ark after the Flood."

"The contents of the Books of the Alexandrian Library."

"Who stole the last Books of Livy."

"The Travels of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, and where those people are now."

"The doings of the Dark Ages."

"The author of the Letters of Junius."

"The History of the Aztecs."

"Where Sir John Franklin is."

"What was the true fate of the President" (steamship.)

"Who struck Billy Patterson."

And all matters concerning any person, any country, any people, or any thing that has occurred in all time, of whom or of which *Historians* or *Antiquarians* are in the dark. So, also, with reference to transpiring events. Telegraphs will become utterly useless, except as an *opposition* line to the spiritual mediums. All that we shall have to do will be to hire a first-rate *rapping medium*, and *he* or *she*, by communicating spiritually with General Pierce and his Cabinet, can inform us of all they are doing, or intend to do, for the next six weeks, which will

be somewhat *ahead* of the *Morse* and *House* lines ; and so of events transpiring in any and every part of the world.

In my former letter I gave you an idea of the various systems, in full operation, for carrying out the plans of the rappers. Your correspondent refers to the Spiritual Convention lately held at Springfield, Mass., as unmistakeable evidence of the truth of spiritual manifestations. My only answer to this is, "*my surprise that the Convention did not meet at Salem, Mass., where they could have had the benefit and assistance (no doubt) of the witches in their 'very extraordinary rappings.'*"

"That knocking—that knocking  
Of the Spirits—all a knocking  
On the ceiling and the floor.  
It is positively shocking,  
But why don't they stop that knocking—  
That most TREMENDOUS KNOCKING  
AT THE DOOR?"

This Springfield Convention ! what is its meaning ? who are the parties ? "Ay, there's the rub !" Who are they ? What are their intentions ? Your correspondent does not say, beyond stating that they are *Spiritualists* ! I will tell your correspondent who these Spiritualists are, and what their intentions are.

"For a long time back there has been in the United States a class of minds dissatisfied with existing religious creeds ; or rather, perhaps, disbelieving in any religion at all. By a process which cannot be well explained, they have torn themselves away from the restraints incident to a reliance upon the truths of Christianity ; and, to fill the void thus created, have suffered their imaginations to form dreams, upon which they have loved to dwell.

"Unsettled in their views, and united only in denying what is by them termed a delusion of eighteen and a half centuries, they needed but some mind, visionary as themselves, but more stable, to draw up a creed, in the profession of which they all should at once unite.

They wanted a *guiding star*, and such a *star* was, and is,

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS, whose name is familiar to every reader. Under his guidance all these skeptical minds have agreed to pursue their favorite idea of 'HUMAN PROGRESS,' to disprove Christianity, and to remodel science. Davis has succeeded in uniting the *visionaries* of our country, and, by his feats of asserted communication with the other world, has made himself the leader of a band—small, it is true, but steadily increasing. We cannot pretend to say how or by whom his books and lectures have been written. We are not decided whether the '*rappings*,' which have assisted him in his professions, are to be ascribed to '*mental delusion*,' or to '*ingenious imposture*.'

"But whatever be the true state of the case, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is an organized body at work in the community, and upon such grounds and principles as leave very little room to hesitate on the course proper to be pursued with respect to it. Societies are being organized all over the Union under the title of '*Harmonial Brotherhood*,' all professing the same things, and all working as much in unison as it is possible they should. Their intentions are, '*to reduce to the test of reason*' all the revelations of the Bible, rejecting those truths which we cannot comprehend. Among such truths are those upon which the generality of mankind rest their dearest hopes here and hereafter, and those upon which the principles of society are planted. It is Christianity itself against which these infidels aim, and they claim from us a denial of its doctrines and mysteries because we cannot understand them. The very idea seems unworthy a being of sound intellect, for what an absurdity it is for the *finite* mind to suppose that it can understand all the workings of the one *infinite* mind! All that has been said may be completely summed up by the use of the remarks of Locke: 'If you do not understand the operations of your own finite mind, that thinking being within you, do not deem it strange that you cannot comprehend the operations of that eternal *infinite mind*,' who made and governs all things, and whom the *heaven of heavens* cannot contain."

This is the class of *individuals* who met at Springfield in



*Spiritual Convention extraordinary.* I submit a quotation from the speech of the delegate from Cleveland, Ohio, which will tell your *Christian* readers who “HE” is, and what his religion is:

“Mr. Finney, of Cleveland, Ohio, a noted ‘speaking medium,’ then rose, and stated that in the city of his residence there were seven hundred mediums, in various stages of development, and five thousand disciples. He stated that as the churches there had opposed the movement, the spirits had taken hold, and made mediums in the churches. Even the school-children had spiritual circles. In Cincinnati there were one thousand two hundred mediums. He then gave an instance of the spirits splitting a table all in pieces, in order to convince a company of skeptics. He said that in Cleveland, while the churches were pining for spiritual life, there was growing up around them the church of universal brotherhood, endowed with spiritual life. Thus much he said, and more of similar purport.”

From the same authority (the New-York Herald of the 8th April) I would also quote the following, in connection with the above.

“The evening session was occupied, throughout a very long length, by an address by Mr. Finney, of Ohio, a smart man, with fine natural powers of oratory, excellent wind, and a very high developement of infidelity. His theme was the emancipation of the human race from the slavery of error, and, in its discussion, he endeavored to illustrate and enforce the great law of human progress, and kick over the Bible, the priests, and the church. We cannot undertake to give an outline of his address, which, in some points, was sufficiently ingenious, and in some points sufficiently sound, but which, in its general tendency, was subversive of all those principles which have formed the basis of human progress this far, and which are broader and deeper than have yet, save in one instance, found exemplification in human life. When mankind have become as good as Christianity can make them, we will call on Mr. Finney for more enlightenment.”

"Your" correspondent shows that "he" is one of those who *ought to have been present* at Springfield, in order to have held forth upon

"That New Era in Moral Science."

God forbid that his predictions are ever to be attempted, much less fulfilled! Should such attempts be made, there will be another "Revolution" as bloody (if not more so) as that which gained the independence of this great nation.

Is the banner of Christianity to be trodden under foot, and the flag or ensign of abominable Infidelity and Atheism to be raised in your blessed country? No! The eyes of Christians will be opened to this movement, who will, with the assistance of the "*True Ministers*" of Christ's Gospel, use their combined influence to check the progress of this vile Atheistic imposture.

To start a new religion is always a profitable speculation. Philosophy does not pay.

Mere Science and abstract truth do not attract a multitude. A "*gross lie*" is easily accepted, as *subtle truth* is difficult to understand. I am perfectly aware that, to the mass of the persons now laboring under this spiritual delusion, all that I can do to open their eyes will, perhaps, be fruitless, (yet I hope not.) It is not to these that I address myself, but to those who are stronger minded, and whose aid I would enlist in exposing and checking a system of fraud and jugglery which has sent so many victims to the lunatic asylums, and dealt desolation and death all around.

Your correspondent is more to be pitied than condemned when he advances *as a fact, and in support of his argument*, "a spiritual communication from the 'Father of his Country.'"  
All that I can say is, that he and the rest of his clique are a disgrace to such a father. *Washington!* the immortal Washington, sanctioning spiritualism! *No!* *He* was a Christian, and if his soul have any power in the world of spirits, he will use that power to bar the progress of such an evident imposture. Washington's standard was the banner of Christianity, which



carried him victorious to the end of his glorious earthly career ; a banner never stained, never tinted with the slightest spot of infidelity !

What a species of blasphemy your correspondent would introduce to support his argument. I hope the Great Disposer of all Events has a more suitable regard for the *great*, the *virtuous*, and *good*, who he would leave this “vale of tears,” than ever to be called on, in the Spirit World, to perform such works as are assigned to them by the Spirit Rappers. Christian Americans, think for a moment of such a vile imposition. The spirit of the immortal Washington condemned to obey the call of unprincipled impostors, and rap on a table for their amusement ! No ! my friends, no ! Such is not the fate or occupation of the immortal Washington in the realms of God. In conclusion, I beg to inform your correspondent that I have more faith in the good old system (as I trust also the majority of American citizens have)—that good old faith that has raised to eminence every nation wherein it has been planted. Your correspondent may look at the nations who have not admitted it, and still repudiate it, and he will find that they are tottering on the very verge of desolation and ruin. On these ruins the *cross* of Christ will rise, and the desolate places will bear the good fruits of Christianity, bringing blessings wherever it may find a habitation or a home.

As a public character, all my actions in connection with, or reference to the public, must be conducted publicly. This being a great public question, it cannot be conducted privately. If your correspondent thinks proper to make his appearance at the Theatre or any other public place, I am ready to meet him on his own terms. He calls himself a writing medium, and that his communications are written under the influence of the spirit. This I do not doubt, yet I rather think the spirits that influenced him were those called, in the vulgate, *ardent spirits*.

With many thanks for past favors, and requesting an early insertion of this, I remain yours, most obediently,

J. H. ANDERSON,  
Professor of Natural Magic.

