

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS:

THE

Mystery of the Day:

COMPRISING AN

ENTIRE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN "SPIRIT"

MANIFESTATIONS.

BY

HENRY SPICER, ESQ.

"

"There came in a wise man and a fool. The wise man heard,
investigated, and decided. The fool decided."

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS:

THE

Mystery of the Day.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IF one may judge from present indications, before the following notes can be published, an apology will have become due to many readers, for deeming it necessary to explain the general features of that singular subject to which they principally refer. This explanation, however, is capable of being so succinctly conveyed, as scarcely to test the patience of the initiated too severely. The mysterious noises, then, denominated "spirit-rappings," which commenced four years since, in Rochester, U. S., and have since spread over the entire length and breadth of the Union—these rappings, or, to use the fashionable

phrase, "manifestations," embody communications purporting to proceed from those who have passed into another sphere of existence. These are conveyed, by the agency of the sounds, which are of a very remarkable character, somewhat resembling slight raps, or pecks, through a clairvoyant, or peculiarly impressible person, easily susceptible of magnetic influences, whose mere presence suffices to secure rapping replies ; and who, as the connecting link between the human querist and the supposed spiritual respondent, is called the *medium*. These *media*, though more frequently women, may be of either sex. The particular mode of question and answer will be found fully detailed in the body of the work. And it may be as well to mention, once for all, that, wherever the terms "spirit," "spirit-rappings," &c., are used, it is rather for convenience, as being in accordance with popular custom, than in adoption of any theory relating to the subject at large.

The whole affair, it must be owned, appeared to me, in common, probably, with all British novices, in its early aspect, idle and puerile enough ; and knowing pretty well the foibles of that community, whose holiday tastes a Barnum has contributed to form, it is not surprising that the manifestations suggested ideas more intimately connected with the realisation of dollars, than the advancement of religious and philosophical

knowledge. At best, the thing seemed but a scientific bubble awaiting puncture. Be that as it may, the rappings, loud as they were, failed for a considerable time to awaken any corresponding echo in my bosom. I felt persuaded that, whenever the enigma should have fulfilled its allotted duty, the necessary *Œdipus* would not be wanting.

In the mean time, however, manifestations multiplied. Media sprang up like mushrooms. Here was a man—a staid, intelligent citizen too,—who had learned from a “spirit” a secret he had imagined confined to his own breast. Here another—no less grave and accredited—who had sat by, and witnessed the performance of an intricate *pas seul*, by one of the heaviest dining-tables in New York. Another, who had received a revelation in reference to medical science, which could not fail incalculably to benefit mankind. Another, who had enjoyed a highly cheering and satisfactory conversation with his departed grandmother, the details of which, however, he was unable, for family reasons, to disclose. Now, a matter which seems fraught with powerful interest to the estimable and intelligent around, cannot easily be put aside with scorn. It soon became easy, next pleasant, to listen; and—not to conduct my friends through the gradations of belief, commencing even from the most abandoned scepticism—and, inasmuch as it is easier, and con-

siderably *safer*, to affirm what a mystery is *not*, than what it *is*,—let it suffice to say that I have seen, heard, and learned enough, to force me irresistibly—even against my will—to the conclusion that the mystery in question has its origin in no mechanical skill—in no human intelligence, however shrewd and penetrative—in no hitherto recognized law of physics—in no material organism whatsoever.

It is calculated that there are, at the present moment, not less than *thirty thousand* recognised *media* practising in various parts of the United States. A friend, who writes under date of July 17th, assures me, that in the city of Philadelphia alone, may be found no fewer than three hundred “magnetic circles,” holding regular meetings, and receiving communications. And, let it be remarked, that the majority of the parties alluded to are neither needy, illiterate, nor obscure, but members of highly respectable families, entertaining no views of pecuniary profit, nor, as far as can be seen, deriving any possible advantage from the exhibitions in question. Another American friend—himself originally a most determined sceptic—whose interesting communication will be found, *in extenso*, at a future page, writes:—

“The most astonishing circumstance connected with the whole subject, to my mind, is that so large a number of persons seem to have adopted

the system into their most familiar daily experience; and *use it*, with as little apparent idea of its extraordinary character, as they do the post-office or the telegraph! I saw persons come in, with an ordinary business countenance, ask their question of the spirit summoned to the table, and go off again, as well satisfied with their answer, as though it were in words from the lips or hand of their living partner in business."

"What," inquires another writer (a gentleman well known in American literary circles), "would you say to seeing your friend *lifted bodily into the air—standing on nothing for the space of half a minute?*" (See future page.) "Or to seeing the furniture moving about the room without any visible application of force, and an old demi-john taking a stroll through your premises, as if the *spirit* it held were the devil indeed? And yet, credible, educated, reliable men and women are testifying to such occurrences, under circumstances which leave no room for trickery or collusion. The witnesses are not from the ignorant class, such as go to swell the ranks of Mormonism, but are intelligent, sincere people, who have no interest whatever in countenancing delusion, or biasing the public mind in any direction which they do not believe that of truth."

Surely, when persons of high attainments and

unblemished character, men who would neither lend themselves to the propagation of known falsehood, or the fostering of what might prove delusion—when these are found calmly advocating the astounding theories already broached on the subject, or originating others scarcely less extraordinary—when to this is added the evidence of one's own calm senses, it is surely not only permissible to suspend decision, but almost incumbent upon the lovers of truth to aid in such inquiries as may trace out the mystery to its real origin. The fact of a demonstration so widely extended, a hoax (if such it be) on so tremendous a scale, holding its ground in the teeth of the most virulent opposition—in defiance of ridicule, abuse, pretended exposure, fallacious argument—every possible weapon which the armoury of scepticism can supply, would really constitute a claim to notice and investigation not to be passed over, even were it not for the very extraordinary and peculiar character of the theory to which the public mind in America inclines. European philosophy of the nineteenth century, fast as it had conceived itself, may be wholly unprepared for a stride so vast on the part of its transatlantic brother; and other causes combine to limit the chances of fair play to a question, the very locality of whose birth will doubtless be regarded, by some, as in itself a ground of suspicion.

But, not to anticipate our own weaknesses of judgment, nor to comment upon the respect due to the rough, sometimes mistaken, but always sturdy beginnings of a land, where at least the principle of progress is fully recognised, and over which hovers the grandest future ever presented to mortal fancy, let it be simply observed that this, the "new philosophy," if it be anything at all, is a subject for the consideration, not of cliques and classes, but of mankind; a question not of nations, but of worlds. And let us at least *hope* that the foul spirit of ignorance and prejudice, which put Galileo to the torture for a true discovery, and, in a later age, nicknamed the first American steam-boat "Fulton's *Folly*," is not to be resuscitated in enlightened Britain.

Too truly, however, has it been remarked by an able commentator on the new spiritual philosophy, that there is, in the world, "pride of position, pride of profession, and, most manifestly, pride of being on the popular side." To one or other of these may no doubt be attributed much of the disfavour, not to say hostility, with which every new doctrine, every new discovery, not in harmony with the persuasion or expectation of the multitude, is received.

"The philosophers of our schools do not," writes Mrs. Crowe, "quarrel with a new metal, or a new plant; and even a new comet, or a new

island, stands a fair chance of being well received ; while phrenology and mesmerism testify that any discovery tending to throw light on what most deeply concerns us, namely, our own being, must be prepared to encounter a storm of angry persecution. And one of the evils of this hasty and precipitate opposition is, that the passions and interests of opposers become involved in the dispute ; instead of investigators, they become partisans ; having declared against it in the outset, it is important to their petty interests that the thing *shall* not be true, and they determine it shall not be, if they can help it. Hence these hasty, angry investigations of new facts, and the triumph with which failures are recorded ; and hence the wilful overlooking of the axiom, that a thousand negations cannot overthrow the evidence of one affirmative experiment."

Some years since, a miserable little object, in the last degree disgusting and absurd, known by the name of "General Tom Thumb," was exhibited by its keeper to crowded assemblies of the rank and fashion of London. I cannot recollect that these fair and noble worshippers of manhood in its most degraded form of burlesque, —of this wretched child-ape,—were ever exposed to especial persecution. Whether the aforesaid ludicrous little monster grimaced upon his table, or the nobler hippopotamus wallowed in his mud-

bath—the coronetted carriages came and went, and the intense delight of their inmates, disgracing none but themselves, elicited no marks of public reprobation. Why is it that studies like *these* attract enlightened millions, and that the grand progressive march of philosophy passes unheeded or contemned? Is the voice of reason only melodious when set to a popular tune? nature only interesting in her museum of monsters?

Let me be allowed to state, in the plainest terms I can command, that, so far from advocating the spiritual origin of these phenomena, I have been, for what I deemed sufficing reasons, its most zealous opponent. When, however, theory after theory of explanation crumbles away, leaving the argument uncontroverted, the phenomenon intact, the public faith augmenting, a question at last arises, ought we to decline meeting these alleged pretenders on their own ground—that ground we have ourselves already pronounced untenable? The subject has attained too vast a head to render publicity a social harm, and no one will deny that the greater the fraud, the more complete should be the exposure—the more general the condemnation.

Even while writing these lines, the “movement,” as it has been called, has extended hither, and been met in precisely the same spirit which dictated the *earliest* phase of opposition offered to it in America, and which, as might have been

foretold, subsequently tended rather to accelerate, than arrest, its progress.

Let us avoid that error here.

One of the most able, earnest, and philanthropic serials of the day, has (for once, with more zeal than foresight,) led the assault, by sending two ambassadors, to wit, Messrs. Brown and Thompson, (under which *noms de plume*, patronymics no less familiar, yet more honored, are, one may fancy, recognizable), to demolish the pretensions of the first *medium* who has landed on our shores. Had the well-intentioned writer of the article to which I allude, first made himself acquainted with the past history and present position of the controversy, he would probably not have confined his attacks to a mere *réchauffé* of exploded arguments, refuted accusations, and statements not easily reconcilable with facts long notorious to all who have, within these two years, visited any portion of the United States. Unworthy are these worn-out weapons of such hands.

Had Messrs. Brown and Thompson challenged the subject where, in point of fact, it stands, we should have missed Mrs. Culver altogether from the discussion—should have suffered no re-introduction to the Cock-lane Ghost,—should have heard no syllable of the excitement among all classes “dying out.”

The result of Mrs. Culver's "disclosures" was to impart enormous impulse to that which it was intended to destroy. The moribund excitement has increased day by day. For the Cock-lane Ghost—old and valued friend—long embalmed and buried among the nursery treasures of old, now rudely dragged from its sanctuary, and compelled to a species of duty for which its weak constitution and simple habits render it wholly unfit—one word will suffice. No less a burden than the united rappings of thirty thousand *media* has been laid upon the shoulders of this ill-used sprite! The case was exceptional. Tests applied in vain to the American ghost, fairly exorcised that of Cock-lane. The sole feature of resemblance is to be found in the fact that, to this day, the precise *origin* of the sounds remains undiscovered; the parties implicated undergoing their penal sentence, not—as may be supposed—for creating the sounds, but for the infamous use to which they turned them. The matter is far too ridiculous for argument, and would not be worth even allusion, but for the pertinacity with which this venerable case is cast into the teeth of every one who but inclines to test fairly the genuineness of these American phenomena!

Messrs. Brown and Thompson are not the first, by many thousands, of able and intelligent men, who, while entertaining strong and natural suspi-

cions of the manifestations, have been wholly unable to account for their accomplishment ; and it certainly smacks of unfairness, that, when so many Americans of both sexes, honourable in position, eminent in science, and enjoying opportunities of rigid examination not yet accorded to inquirers here, have pronounced the mystery inexplicable, Messrs. Brown and Thompson should brand this American lady as an impostor, without deigning anything in disproof of her assertion and alleged belief, but that what they witnessed did neither accord with, nor fulfil, their expectations. The public, in our day, is not always prepared to accept the *ipse dixit* of even its most favoured and popular teacher, when unsupported by proof, and opposed by a vast accumulated testimony. It is surely not too much to expect to be informed of the ground on which those who brand the *medium* (Mrs. Hayden) as an impostor, arrive at a conclusion from which so many enlightened minds dissent. Will they, without having recourse to some already refuted hypothesis, even offer a plausible explanation of the sounds ?

The lady in question, was, I believe, regarded, in America, as a *medium* of less than average power, *i. e.*, though attended by the usual inexplicable noises, the proofs of intelligence witnessed in her presence, were of less significance than in the case of most of her sister *media*.

Far from desiring to cast any reflection upon this lady, and anxious only that the truth may prevail, I am bound to acknowledge that there has been too much reason to fear, that, in other instances, the weakness of human nature has induced the professed *media* to eke out partial success by grafting false effects upon what may, nevertheless, be genuine and true. The *media* have, as will be seen, their own mode of explaining discrepancies; but, unfortunately, the practice I have mentioned, leads to the same unlucky results as those which sent Messrs. Brown and Thompson forth from the "spirit" circle greater sceptics than they went, and effaced from their minds what *really* was deserving of inquiry.

Proof, therefore, and investigation, are what we require. On what is needful for the vulgar and illiterate mind, ever eagerly inclining towards what is mysterious and unintelligible, one might be content to rest the argument that these "spirits," or by whatever title they may come among us, have claims to be received and tested. Sneers will not suffice. Evil was never yet checked by simply ignoring its existence. Truth never yet suffered by investigation.

If the present mystery come to us in a questionable shape, the more need to question and to sift it—the grandeur of its assumptions rather

establishing a claim, than creating an obstacle, to due investigation.

If it be proved false, the greater the obloquy, the wider the warning, the deeper the shame. If any portion be true, (and who dare limit the power and realm of the Unseen ?) then should no instant be lost, in testing the order, character, reliability, of the intelligences so strangely developed among us.

Is this latter possibility so startling? I remember reading, not long since, a wise, calm, and thoughtful paper, writ by a scholarly hand, in a journal not usually addicted to such disquisitions—the *Morning Post*—

“The reason of man is not to be left idle, or to pursue its course in a faltering manner, because a supernatural influence rules over it; nor is supernatural influence to be despised, neglected, or disbelieved, because the great gift of reason is bestowed on man. Reason is our guide to the light, but it is not the light itself. It assists, but it does not assure.

“Reason or judgment has its own domain, and so has a belief, or at all events an acquiescence, in the existence of agencies which the present powers given to man cannot fathom. Nor does it always happen (though it frequently does) that the mind which is keen and energetic in sifting evidence, and in deriving therefrom legitimate

conclusions, is averse from acquiescence in that which is beyond the reach of investigation. No one did so much, by patient and clear research, to expose the purely fabulous character of the more ancient parts of what was called Roman history, as Niebuhr did, yet no one more frankly admits than he, the unfathomable mystery of the old heathen oracles."

"Southey has written—'But for myself, many, if not most, of those even who agree with me in all essential points would be inclined to think me superstitious, because I am not ashamed to avow my persuasion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy.' Such was the inner mind of the man who spent a laborious life in studious research and argumentative criticism.

"Wordsworth, who generally reasoned when he wrote, and rose upon the wings of his muse to the greatest height of philosophical declamation, protests earnestly against the 'uninspired research' which is content with formal inference from outward things. In the 'Excursion,' he makes his sage exclaim—

"'Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's verge,
And daily lose what I desire to keep;
Yet rather would I instantly decline
To the traditionary sympathies
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take

A fearful apprehension from the owl
Or death-watch ; and as readily rejoice
If two auspicious magpies crossed my way ;
This rather would I do than see and hear
The repetitions wearisome of sense,
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place ;
Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark
On outward things, with formal inference ends ;
Or, if the mind turn inward, 'tis perplexed—
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research.'

“ Lord Bacon declares that he would rather be so superstitious as to believe in all the fables of the Talmud, than believe in nothing but what his senses discovered to him. Addison, with his habitual politeness, begs that they who cannot give their credence to anything supernatural, will be so good as to abstain from disturbing the faith of those who can, by cavils and criticisms which he thought savoured more of presumption than of good sense. And Wordsworth, as we have just seen, would have preferred the most rustic ignorance of those whom owls affright with presages of misfortune, or magpies elate with hope of lucky chances, to being without belief of something beyond what mere human powers can discover.

“ Since every year's additional research discovers something in creation that was not observed before, and every artificial aid to our senses shows us new existences before undreamt of, may we not reasonably conclude that there

are existences which our present powers have not discovered, and perhaps never will discover?

“Some may say, however, that though there may be much in the universe of which our powers enable us to know nothing, yet there is nothing which at all concerns us save that which we may know by observation and study. But this is a conclusion which reflection will not bear out. There are many things which concern us very much, of which we know nothing. The very principle of life—that which distinguishes us from a piece of dead matter—what know we of it? Nothing. Electricity concerns us much—yet what do we know of it? Year by year we are learning more of the management of it, and of the different ways in which the mysterious force may be set in action; but what it is, whence it is, or how it does what it does, so wonderfully, so beautifully, or so awfully, we cannot in the least tell.

“There is, therefore, nothing contrary to analogy in the admission that there *may be* influences, and even sentient beings, constantly in action around us, that we know nothing of. The more any man knows, the less will he be disposed to place limits to creative power. Yet, for the purposes of practical life, our business is certainly not with conjecture, but with knowledge; and we should study to use our reason with activity and precision, while readily allowing that

there is a realm above it, into which reason cannot penetrate."

Fair inquiry is, therefore, all I claim, and this it is the object of the following notes to promote, not by the mere accumulation of strange facts, or the parading of individual persuasions, but by adducing sufficient evidence and argument to attract, if it may be, the attention of intelligent and scientific minds to circumstances which, so far as they have gone, acknowledge no parallel in the history of the world.

Such personal experiences as I have been able to detail, slight as they are, included matters wholly unexplainable by any known principles of physics; and the communications of friends, carefully selected and authenticated, embody circumstances calculated to startle the most apathetic.

One caution is necessary. The reports that have, from time to time, crept into our English journals, assuming to be veritable narratives of the proceedings of the "Spiritualists" in America (such as the Worcester Convention, justly ridiculed in the *Times*), have nothing whatever to do with the matter. The aptitude to degenerate into fanaticism is, without question, the most distressing feature of this new philosophy; yet this only quickens the desire to define its limits and character. Meanwhile, let no unjust prejudices be

engendered by fantastic follies, which bear no more resemblance to the *real* phenomena, than do the vulgar antics of some Jack-pudding at a country fair, to the glorious personations of a Talma or a Rachel.

Let the determined sceptic comfort himself with the remembrance, that if the exact pattern of the tongs, wherewith St. Dunstan once took the devil by the nose, be lost, ample means are left to chain and to exorcise the spirit of evil that, in our time, walks abroad. Only be it on all sides remembered, too, in proceeding to the consideration of a subject so peculiar, that the greatest acquisitions of human knowledge have been won, not grain by grain, but by swift and sudden advances; that the door already set ajar by magnetism, phrenology, mesmerism, &c., is capable of being far more widely opened; and, not to insult the understanding of the reader by questioning his belief that the spirit-world is in us and about us,—that it is not for us to doubt that a channel of communication *may*, in some period of the world, be found; far less to prescribe the time, the mode, the extent, of the intercourse that may follow.

All nature widens upward. Evermore
 The simpler essence lower lies—
 More complex is more perfect—owning more
 Discourse—more widely wise.

CHAPTER II.

RECORDS OF ANALOGOUS MANIFESTATIONS.

Former occurrence of similar phenomena in Germany—England—The Mompessons—In France—The Wesley Family, &c.—Knock-a-big—In America, in 1789—At Slawensick, Silesia—At Weinsberg—Captain Molesworth—Early American Traditions—The Shakers—Mr. Dods—Case at Newark—Cahagnet's Arcanes—Madlle. Clairon—Remarkable circumstance in England—Angelique Cottin—Reported manifestations at Pathhead, Hull, &c., &c.

THAT phenomena possessing most of the distinctive features—the method of communication not excepted—of the “spirit-rappings,” are by no means of recent origin, many authentic records in France, England, Germany, the United States, &c., abundantly prove; the German Chronicles, in particular, dating as far back as A.D. 1135. How many curious histories of a similar kind, belonging to a period when the means for the transmission of knowledge were limited and imperfect, have mingled with the dust of ages, it is impossible to estimate; but, without appealing to this vast, though shadowy fund of testimony, enough is at our command to show that these

modern practitioners in the science of rapping only follow a path and system worked out and trodden for centuries.

In running hastily through a few of the cases referred to, taking them as far as possible in order of date, I profess to deal with circumstance, not with cause, and to that extent must therefore tax the indulgence of the intelligent, and, it may be, sceptical reader. Old associations have endowed many a quaint inscrutable mystery with a claim to be heard. The fact is, however, that what is now occurring promises to impart to many of these ancient friends an aspect entirely new!

Hence, let us, at all events, *patiently* wade through that which may seem unworthy of the enlightened judgments to which I must ultimately appeal. "I doubt me," says Rabelais, "that you do not thoroughly believe the truth of this strange narration! Though you believe it not, I care not much; but an honest man, and of good judgment, believeth still what is told him, and that which he finds written!"

Although, if this be true, "honest men" of *our* day must possess very considerable powers of deglutition, a candid spirit of inquiry cannot be too strongly inculcated; nor can we justly blame the man who admits indifferent premises, for the sake of securing the widest possible scope to the argument he mistrusts.

It has been observed that German traditions refer the "spirit-rappings" to a period as remote as the year 1135.

In the year 1620, sounds and mixed phenomena of a similar character, were noticed at Oppenheim.

The next instance recalls an old acquaintance, worthy Mr. Mompesson, who, in 1661, at his residence at Tedworth, in return, as was supposed, for some indignity practised upon a vagrant drummer, was for some time made the victim of a series of similar startling visitations. The Rev. Joseph Glanvil, chaplain to Charles II., in a work directed against the Sadduceeism of the day, relates this history with considerable minuteness of detail. Mr. Glanvil was a gentleman of much learning and ability, and—(albeit his indulgent inclination towards legends and traditions tending to the glorification of wizards, &c., provoked the indignation of old John Webster, who proclaimed that his (Glanvil's) "Platonical Whimseys are as absurd as any," and his narrations "as futile and ridiculous as any can be")—his writings are at least entitled to as much belief as was ever accorded to productions of a similar nature.

The Mompesson story affirms, that shortly after Mr. M. had dismissed the vagabond in question, and confiscated his drum, the family were much disturbed by noises—knocking and drumming

in the night at the outside of the door. Mr. M. went about the house with a brace of pistols in his hand, but discovered nothing. When he got back to his bed, there was thumping and drumming on the top of the house, which continued a good space, and then went off into the air. This thumping and drumming was usually continued five successive nights, and then it would intermit three. After a month's disturbance without, it came into the room where the drum lay, and continued five nights in seven. It continued in this room for the space of three months. Its approach was indicated by a hurling in the air over the house, and its going off was like the beating of a drum at the breaking up of a guard.

About this period, Mrs. Mompesson was confined, and during her illness the noises politely surceased; nor were they renewed until the lady's strength was re-established, when they recommenced louder than before. Scratchings, as if with iron talons, were heard under the children's beds; the alarmed juveniles were tilted up, and, if they quitted the chamber, followed from one room to another. The drummer was, at some period of the disturbances, apprehended, and tried at Salisbury,—on what act of parliament is not set forth. While in gaol, a man came to see him. "What news?" asked the prisoner. "None, that I knows on," probably re-

plied the visitor, for the other continued, "Don't you hear of the drumming at a gentleman's house at Tedworth?" "That I do, enough," was the brisk reply. "*I,*" said the drummer, "*have plagued him, and he shall never be quiet till he hath made me satisfaction for taking away my drum.*"

The "satisfaction" received by the luckless drummer proved to be transportation for life; but he ultimately "made shift to get back again," and, as in those days such "quick returns" were rather winked at by the authorities, and relished as a good joke, the adventurer probably amused himself at coffee-houses by relating his experiences, and bragging of a certain "old fellow," who was a friend of his, had "given him gallant books," and was counted a wizard.

How much the prison scene may have had to do with the occurrences at Mr. Mompesson's, it is needless to inquire. Let us conclude the history.

On the 5th Nov., 1661, there was a mighty noise, and a servant observed two boards in the children's room seeming to move. He bid the spirit give him one of them; upon which the board (nothing moving it that he saw) came within a yard of him; the man said, "*Nay, let me have it in my hand;*" upon which it was shoved quite home to him, and so up and down, to and

fro, at least twenty times, till Mr. M. forbade his servant to be on such familiarities. This was in the day-time, and seen by a whole room-full of people.

A minister and several neighbours came to the house, when a bed-staff was flung at the former, and hit him on the leg, but *so favourably that a sack of wool could not fall more softly*, and it stopped just where it lighted, without rolling or moving from the place.

One of the most remarkable circumstances related of the freaks of this demon, is that when the noise was loudest, and came with the most sudden and surprising evidence, no dog about the house would look or move, though the knocking was oft so boisterous that it was heard at a distance in the fields, and awakened the neighbours in the village.

Once, when several gentlemen were present, one of them said—“*If the drummer set thee to work, give three knocks, and no more;*” which it did very distinctly, and stopped. Then the gentleman knocked, to see if it would answer him as it was wont, but it did not. For further trial and confirmation, he bid it, if it were the drummer, to give five knocks, and no more, that night. It did so, and left the house quiet all the night after.

These persecutions were continued with scarcely

any intermission for the space of two or three years.

In 1706, St. Maur, near Paris, was the scene of occurrences almost identical with the above.

The history of the extraordinary manifestations in the Wesley family, in 1715, at the parsonage-house, Epworth, Lincolnshire, then in the occupation of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, has employed the pen of his celebrated son, the founder of Methodism. It will be unnecessary to do more than recur to those peculiar features of the case which seem to bear affinity to the demonstrations of our day.

It may be remembered that certain unaccountable noises, of various descriptions, had alarmed the whole family, except its head, from whom they had been carefully kept secret, lest he should imbibe the belief, already arrived at by his family, that the sounds, &c., foreboded his death. When, however, it became no longer practicable to conceal the increasing disturbances, the good man seemed rather to incline to the idea that his daughters' lovers could solve the mystery; and it was, consequently, rather a relief to the young ladies when, one night, their sire was aroused from his midnight slumbers by some loud, distinct raps, with a pause at every third stroke, proceeding apparently from the adjoining room. The astonished old gentleman rose, and made

active search for the cause of the alarm ; but, as is well known, both then and thereafter, without success.

Mr. John Wesley, relating the attempts of his sister Mary to unravel the mystery, writes that, on a certain night, she had requested her younger sister to allow her to assume her usual office of taking away her father's bed-room candle, avowing her determination to find out the trick. " She accordingly took my sister Kitty's place, and had no sooner taken away the candle than she heard a noise below. She hastened down stairs to the hall where the noise was ; but it was then in the kitchen. She ran into the kitchen, where it was drumming on the inside of the screen ; when she went round, it was drumming on the outside, and so always on the side opposite to her. Then she heard a knocking at the back kitchen door. She ran to it, unlocked it *softly*, and when the knocking was repeated, suddenly opened it ; but nothing was to be seen. As soon as she had shut it, the knocking began again. She opened it again, but could see nothing. When she went to shut the door, it was violently thrust against her. She let it fly open, but nothing appeared. She went again to shut it, and it was again thrust against her ; but she sat her knee and her shoulder to the door, forced it to, and turned the key. Then the knocking began again ; but she let it

go on, and went up to bed. However, from that time, she was thoroughly convinced that there was no imposture in the affair."

Upon another occasion, Mr. Samuel Wesley, "at six in the evening, had family prayers as usual. When he began the prayer for the king, a knocking began all around the room; and a thundering knock attended the *amen*. The same was heard from this time, every morning and evening, while prayer for the king was repeated. I was also informed by Mr. Hoole, the vicar of Haxey (an eminently pious and sensible man), that my father sent for him and gave him an account of what had happened, particularly the knocking during family prayer. But the evening he spent with him, he says, 'to my great satisfaction we had no knocking at all during the time of prayer; but between nine and ten, a servant came in and said, 'Old Jeffrey is coming;' (that was the name of one that died in the house) 'for I hear the signal.' This, they informed me, was heard every night about a quarter before ten. It was toward the top of the house, on the outside, at the north-east corner, resembling the loud creaking of a saw, or rather that of a windmill, when the body of it is turned about, in order to shift the sails to the wind. We then heard a knocking over our heads; and Mr. Wesley, catching up a candle, said 'Come, sir, now you shall

hear for yourself.' We went upstairs; he with much hope, and I (to say the truth) with much fear. When we came into the nursery, it was knocking in the next room; when we were there, it was knocking in the nursery. And then it continued to knock, though we came in; particularly at the head of the bed (which was of wood), in which Miss Hetty and two of her younger sisters lay. He then went close to the place, and said, sternly, 'Thou deaf and dumb devil, why dost thou fright these children that cannot answer for themselves? Come to me in my study, that am a man. Instantly it knocked *his* knock (the particular knock which he always used at the gate), as if it would shiver the board in pieces; and we heard nothing more that night.'

* * * * *

"By this time all my sisters were so accustomed to these noises, that they gave them little disturbance. A gentle tapping at their bedhead usually began between nine and ten at night; they then commonly said to each other, 'Jeffrey is coming; it is time to go to sleep.' And if they heard a noise in the day, and said to my youngest sister, 'Hark, Kizzy, Jeffrey is knocking above,' she would run up stairs and pursue it from room to room, saying she desired no better diversion."

What is related, concerning actual appearances, is not well confirmed, and indeed may

have had its very natural origin in the excited apprehensions of the inhabitants of the disturbed dwelling. Yet this in no degree invalidates the other portions of this well-known story, which rest upon the concurrent testimony of many intelligent witnesses.

In 1740 demonstrations of a similar character occurred in a printing-house in England, which created much sensation, not only among the "devils" peculiar to the locality, but the whole country round.

In 1772, circumstances marked with similar features took place at Stockwell, England.

About 1782, a house at Dumfries, on the Nith, was the scene of various extraordinary manifestations. The place was inhabited by a highly respectable gentleman, a magistrate of Dumfries, whose family were perpetually annoyed by knockings and drummings in all parts of the house, as though some powerful hand had been exercising a heavy mallet on the partitions and floors. Although these noises were so loud as to be distinctly heard by the labourers in the neighbouring fields, no clue to their origin was ever discovered. Tenant after tenant occupied the house, but the invisible rapper continued among the "fixtures," and for many years the spot was popularly known as "Knock-a-big's Close," from the name bestowed upon the supposed spirit.

The *New York Packet*, a small commercial paper, publishes in its issue of March 10th, 1789 (sixty-three years since), the following curious communication:—

“Fishkill, March 3rd, 1789.

SIR,—Were I to relate the many extraordinary, though not less true accounts I have heard concerning that unfortunate girl, at New Hackensack, your belief might perhaps be staggered, and patience tired. I shall therefore only inform you of what I have been eye-witness to. Last Sunday afternoon my wife and myself went to Dr. Thorn's, and after sitting for some time, we heard a knocking under the feet of a young woman that lives in the family; I asked the doctor what occasioned the noise—he could not tell, but replied, that he, together with several others, had examined the house, but were unable to discover the cause. I then took a candle, and went with the girl to the cellar; there the knocking also continued; but as we were ascending the stairs to return, I heard a prodigious rapping on each side, which alarmed me very much. I stood still some time, looking around with amazement, when I beheld some lumber which lay at the head of the stairs shake considerably. About eight or ten days after, we visited the girl again; the knocking still continued, but was much louder.

Our curiosity induced us to pay the third visit, when the phenomena were still more alarming. I then saw the chairs move; a large dining-table was thrown against me, and a small stand, on which stood a candle, was tossed up and thrown in my wife's lap; after which we left the house much surprised at what we had seen."

This, at all events, *proves* that the manifestations are no new thing.

Justinus Körner, author of the *Seeress of Prevorst*, relates similar occurrences, which took place in 1806, at Slawensick Castle, Silesia, and in 1825 and 1828, at Weinsberg. The details of the former case are given at great length in Mrs. Crowe's able work, in the chapter referring to the *Poltergeist*, or rattling-ghost, of the Germans; but, inasmuch as the principal feature, *i. e.* the power exercised by the invisible intelligence over substances—seems analogous to what is most startling in the present manifestations—it may be worth while to recall the circumstances to the reader's memory.

In the year 1806, the Councillor Hahn, in the service of the Prince of Hohenlohe, was directed by the latter to proceed to Slawensick, in Upper Silesia, where he took up his abode in the castle, having for companion an old acquaintance, Charles Kern, a prisoner to the French, released on parole,

and, for attendants, the prince's two coachmen, and his (Hahn's) own servant. On the third day of their residence, the disturbances commenced with a small shower of lime, proceeding apparently from the ceiling, but leaving no token of its having originated from thence. On the following day, this disagreeable rain recommenced, accompanied by the sound of heavy blows, sometimes below, sometimes above, their heads. Every search and inquiry was instituted without success. Shortly, thereafter, a third noise was added, like the beating of a drum, and at night they heard what seemed to be a person walking about the room with slippers on, and striking a stick upon the floor as he moved. Day after day the affair became more complicated and mysterious. Various articles in the room were thrown about; knives, forks, brushes, caps, slippers, padlocks, funnel, snuffers, soap — everything, in short, that was moveable, whilst lights darted from corner to corner, and everything was in confusion; at the same time the lime fell, and the blows continued. Upon this the two friends called up the servant, Knittel, the castle watch, and whoever else was at hand, to be witnesses of these mysterious operations. In the morning all was quiet, and generally continued so until about an hour after midnight. Frequently, before their eyes, the knives and snuffers rose from the table, and fell after

some minutes to the ground, and so constant and so varied were the annoyances, that they at length resolved on a change of rooms. This, however, proved useless; the noises continued as before, and articles flew about the room, which they were convinced had been left in other apartments. Kern saw a figure in the mirror, interposing apparently between the glass and himself, the eyes of the figure moving and looking into his. It is unnecessary to recount the means employed to trace out these mysteries. Hahn and Kern, assisted by two Bavarian officers, Captain Cornet, and Lieutenant Magerle, and all the aid they could assemble, were wholly unsuccessful in obtaining the slightest clue.

One evening, about eight o'clock, Hahn being about to shave himself, the implements for the purpose, which were lying on a pyramidal stand in a corner of the room, flew at him, one after the other—the soap-box, the razor, the brush, and the soap—and fell at his feet, although he was standing several paces from the pyramid. In the evening, in spite of all the drumming and flinging, Hahn was determined to sleep; but a heavy blow on the wall, close to his bed, soon waked him from his slumbers. A second time he went to sleep, and was awakened by a sensation, as if some person had dipped his finger in water, and was sprinkling his face with it. He pretended to

sleep again, whilst he watched Kern and Knittel, who were sitting at the table. The sensation of sprinkling returned; but he could find no water on his face.

About this time, Hahn had occasion to make a journey as far as Breslau; and, when he returned, he heard the strangest story of all. In order not to be alone in this mysterious chamber, Kern had engaged Hahn's servant, a man of about forty years of age, and of entire singleness of character, to stay with him. One night, as Kern lay in his bed, and this man was standing near the glass door in conversation with him, to his utter amazement he beheld a jug of beer, which stood on a table in the room, at some distance from him, slowly lifted to a height of about three feet, and the contents poured into a glass that was standing there also, until the latter was half full. The jug was then gently replaced, and the glass lifted and emptied, as by some one drinking, whilst John, the servant, exclaimed in terrified surprise, 'Lord Jesus! it swallows!' The glass was quietly replaced, and not a drop of beer was to be found on the floor. Hahn was about to require an oath of John, in confirmation of this fact; but forbore, seeing how ready the man was to take one, and satisfied of the truth of the relation.

After some time the annoyances suddenly

ceased, when Hahn wrote down the whole narrative, adding these words:—

“I have described these events exactly as I heard and saw them. From beginning to end I observed them with the most entire self-possession. I had no fear, nor the slightest tendency to it; yet the whole thing remains to me perfectly inexplicable. Written the 19th November, 1808.

“AUGUSTUS HAHN, Councillor.”

And an opinion having been expressed that Hahn had been the dupe of some jugglery on the part of his friend, or else that both parties might have been in the habit of indulging in too deep potations, Hahn, in a calm and convincing letter, gave an ample refutation to both charges, concluding as follows:—

“I am still as unable as ever to account for those events, and I am content to submit to the hasty remarks of the world, knowing that I have only related the truth, and what many persons now alive witnessed, as well as myself.

“COUNCILLOR HAHN.

“Ingelfingen, 24th August, 1828.”

Mrs. Crowe simply adds, that on the subsequent destruction of the castle by lightning, there was

found among the ruins the coffinless skeleton of a man. His skull had been split, and a sword lay by his side. Philosophy has suggested a different solution to what may be found in this latter circumstance, viz.: that Kern was a very powerful magnetic medium, in which case the emanation of nervo-electric fluid from his body, and, probably, an electric condition of the atmosphere, might account for many of the phenomena—among the rest, the actual absorption of the liquid, in basins, jugs, &c., and the strange spectra with which these occurrences seemed to be accompanied.

A house in Weinsberg, relates Dr. Richmond, used as a wine-press, was, during the months of December and February, infested by sounds like those made by coopers, and these were audible to the whole neighbourhood. Councillor Muff (remarkable name!) observed that when these sounds were loudest, the vintage was best; and founding his wine speculations on this conviction, made his fortune! (Sensible Muff! He waived occult reasonings, and contented himself with one solid practical conclusion.) The fact, however, that when the vintage was best, most noises occurred, proves them to have been connected with the electric state of the air, or with causes that favoured vegetation. In 1830 and 1831, those noises were little heard, and the vintage was poor.

In 1835 the house of Captain Molesworth, at

Trinity, a short distance from Edinburgh, was the scene of a most extraordinary series of manifestations, in all essential points analogous to those now creating so deep an interest in the United States. This case is likewise given in detail in Mrs. Crowe's interesting work, and in it, as in the other cases alluded to, the most rigid scrutiny failed to detect the origin of the sounds in question. Other, not dissimilar, instances, might be adduced from Mrs. Crowe's work, for so completely has that lady swept up such scattered treasures of the invisible world as have been vouchsafed to this, that her research includes every description of development, and leaves me no more difficult duty than that of directing attention to such demonstrations as appear to have been most nearly allied to the subject of these notes.

America has contributed liberally, and from oldest ages, to the records of manifestations. The Indians of the Rocky Mountains have traditions of what may be called by the generic term "knockings," which they believe to proceed from a spirit, known as the "Great Bear," and to be intended as warnings.

The singular sect of "Shakers," or "Shaking Quakers," have for many years had among them manifestations of a similar nature; but, although acknowledging a perfect familiarity with the subject, I have been unable to obtain from them any direct

information as to the manner, object, or frequency of the demonstrations to which they lay claim.*

The first regularly recorded American manifestations commenced in the year 1834, at Canandaigua, New York, and recurred, in 1836, in various parts of Pennsylvania.

The singular case of the family of Mr. Dods, which occurred some few years since, is deserving of a little more detail, being of a character more closely resembling the circumstances dwelt upon hereafter. It is stated that the witnesses, now living, who have it in their power to attest the remarkable circumstances, are numerous and most respectable, individuals themselves in the highest degree incredulous, and who repaired to the theatre of operations, in order to detect, if possible, the means by which they were effected. I shall simply give the facts, as narrated, as briefly as possible, and without comment.

Mr. Dods was a resident in the village of Levant, Penobscot county, U. S. The first intimation that gentleman or his family received, that he or they were to be made the subject of any unusual manifestation, was conveyed in certain *rappings*, sometimes on the outside door

* After these lines were in type, intimation was received that a letter from a member of the sect, comprising some interesting details was on its way hither. This communication, should it arrive in time, will be found in a future chapter.

of his house, sometimes within—on the walls—in the chambers—his own apartment—in fact, in every part of his dwelling. Coming from the village late one evening, he observed the school-house brilliantly lighted, and forms of men and women moving to and fro. As he drew near, the lights were suddenly extinguished. Fancying, however, that the scholars had assembled for a dance, he crept silently to the door, and, opening it suddenly, stepped within. All was darkness and silence—not a human being was to be found! On other occasions, noises like the rolling of a heavy metal ball, were heard to reverberate from one end of the attic to the other; bedsteads were lifted and turned round, tables moved across the room, lights moved up and down the road before the house, or assembled in an open space, and then mingled in what suggested to the astonished watchers the idea of some fantastic dance! The scene of these extraordinary phenomena was visited by so many persons, that the clerk of the county courts deemed it his duty to attend at the spot, with his assistant, and endeavour to detect and expose the trick. Mr. Dods was perfectly willing to receive them, and permitted them to select their own apartment, to which, about nine o'clock in the evening, they accordingly withdrew. They first fastened the door; secondly, secured the windows; they then searched the room, the closet,

and the bed; they were confident that no human being was in the room, or could get in without their knowledge, equally certain that no machinery existed in the room. Placing the candle on the table, unextinguished, they went to bed. Soon after they retired, they felt the bed clothes move; they immediately caught hold of the quilts and braced themselves against the foot posts of the bedstead; the clothes continued to move until they relaxed their hold, when the quilts and sheet hopped six feet from the bed on to the floor. The candle was burning, but no visible power could be detected. The bed was again searched, but nothing was found. They replaced the clothes, and once more got into bed. In a very few moments, the feather bed started out from under them, and fell on the floor, notwithstanding their united exertions to retain it in its place.

The adventurers never succeeded in obtaining the slightest clue to these disturbances.

The like fortune attended another inquirer—a relative of Mr. Dods. At length, a company of gentlemen, from various parts of the country, assembled at the house, in the hope of witnessing the manifestations. Nor were they disappointed. They were conversing freely on various topics, when a noise was heard, like the rumbling of distant thunder. It continued to increase in loudness, drawing nearer and still nearer, and at last

burst directly over the house, shaking the whole structure to its very foundation. This took place in winter, and the stars shone out clear and cold. Soon after this thunder-peal, a noise was heard in the attic like the trundling of iron balls on a loose floor, and it continued for ten minutes, when the company were startled by a heavy weight falling apparently from the ceiling to the floor; it immediately commenced rolling about the room, would glide under the chairs without touching them, jump over the table, strike the four sides of the room, bounding without touching the floor, and at last it hopped upon a bed which stood in one corner of the room, and moved from the head to the foot. The clothes were distinctly seen to settle under it, as if some heavy weight was pressing them down. A gentleman in the room walked towards the bed, with the seeming intention to take hold of, or arrest its progress, but one of the company caught hold of his arm, and said, "Do not touch it *for your life.*" It then dropped on the floor and rolled out of the side of the house. During all these phenomena, nothing could be seen. That which made the noise was invisible. Mr. Dods was in the room, and appeared as much alarmed as any one of the gentlemen present. It would appear, however, that the spirit was by no means of a communicative disposition, since, after indulging in very many similar manifestations, too

numerous to mention, it ultimately withdrew from the house and neighbourhood, leaving all parties in total ignorance as to its character and object.

Eighteen years since, in 1834, the *Newark Advertiser* published a curious narrative of a rapping-case, into the truth of which its agents had previously inquired. It appeared that on a certain night the family of a Mr. Joseph Barron, living in the township of Woodbridge, about three miles from Rahway, Newark county, were alarmed, after they had retired, by a loud thumping against the house. Mr. B.'s first impression was, that some person was attempting to break in, but further observation soon undeceived him. The thumping, however, continued at short intervals, until the family became so alarmed, that Mr. B. called in some of his neighbours, who remained up with the family until daylight, when the thumping ceased.

The next evening, after nightfall, the noise recommenced, when it was ascertained to be mysteriously connected with the movements of a servant girl in the family, a white girl, about fourteen years of age. When passing a window on the stairs, for example, a sudden jar, accompanied with an explosive sound, broke a pane of glass; the girl at the same moment being seized with a violent spasm. This, of course, very much alarmed her, and the physician (Dr. Drake) was

sent for, came, and bled her. The bleeding, however, produced no apparent effect; the noise still continued as before, at intervals, wherever the girl went, each sound producing more or less of a spasm; and the physician, with the family, remained up during the night. At daylight the thumping ceased again. On the third evening the same thing was repeated, commencing a little earlier than before, and so every evening.

The circumstance rapidly spread, and produced a vast excitement, the house being filled and surrounded from morning till night. All imaginable means were resorted to in order to unravel the phenomenon. At one time the girl would be removed from one apartment to another without effect. Wherever she was placed, at uncertain intervals, the sudden thumping noise would be heard in the room. She was taken to a neighbour's house; the same result followed. When carried out of doors, however, no noise was heard. Dr. Drake, who had been constant in his attentions during the whole period, on one occasion, in company with the agents of the paper, made a variety of experiments with the girl, who was placed in an upper room with some members of the family. The noises then resembled those which would be produced by a person violently thumping the upper door with the head of an axe, five or six times in succession, jarring the house,

ceasing a few minutes, and then resuming as before. The girl appeared to be in perfect health, cheerful, and free from everything like the fear and apprehension she had on former occasions exhibited. The noise, however, continued; and in order to ascertain more satisfactorily that she was not herself the author of it, she was placed on a chair upon a blanket, in the centre of the room; the chair being bandaged with cloth, the girl's feet fastened on the front round, and her hands confined together on her lap. All these precautions produced no change, the thumping continuing as before, though the girl moved neither limb nor muscle. She was then placed in the doorway of a closet, the door being ajar. In less than a minute it flew open as if violently struck with a mallet, accompanied with precisely such a noise as would be produced in such a case.

The explanation suggested at the time by Dr. Drake, and others, was that the phenomena were electrical; and their opinion certainly seemed to derive some confirmation from the fact that, whenever any substance that happened to be a non-conductor, as a pillow, was interposed between the girl's person and the door, no noise or effect whatever was discoverable.

The following interesting account, extracted

from Cahagnet's "*Arcanes de la vie future dévoilés*," is worth perusal:—

"J'étais dans cette disposition (*sceptical*) à l'âge de dix huit ans lorsque, travaillant à ma thèse sur la prescience divine, et le libre arbitre humain, j'entendis frapper au dessus de ma tête; le bruit devint si fatigant par sa monotone continuité, que je montai dans la pièce d'où il partait: il n'y avait personne. Je pensais que c'était un effet d'acoustique; j'allais descendre, lorsque le même bruit se renouvela au dessus de ma tête, dans un grenier: j'y montai. Personne encore. J'explorai le grenier et les chambres au dessous: je me mis aux fenêtres: aucune cause physique au dedans, aucune bruit au dehors qui put être répercuté. Je repris ma plume; mais à peine fusje assise, que les mêmes coups réguliers se firent entendre, et aussitôt une pensée prit possession de mon esprit. Fritz est malade, et il n'en reviendra pas! Ce jeune homme était mon fiancé, et il m'aimait avec une sincérité et une tendresse infinie. Je courus rapporter à ma mère ce qui venait de se passer, lui faire part de mon intention et la prier de m'accompagner chez les parents de Fritz, qui, en effet, était au lit. Il me dit que depuis plusieurs heures, ses desirs m'appelaient. Dix jours après, il était fort mal. Ma mère alors étant souffrante, et ma sœur tombait

presque chaque nuit dans d'horribles convulsions, j'avais pris le parti pour veiller sur ces deux objets de mes affections, de coucher avec la première et de faire coucher l'autre dans notre chambre. La nuit du dixième jour de la maladie de Fritz, une forte secousse fut donnée au lit occupé par ma mère et moi. Pensant que cette secousse avait été imprimée par un coup de pied de ma mère, je ne m'en occupais pas, mais je mis doucement ma main sur sa jambe, et je pus m'assurer, lorsqu' arriva la seconde secousse, qu'elle ne provenait point de ma mère. La troisième fut si violente, que ma mère s'éveilla en sursaut, me demandant ce que je faisais. D'après ma réponse, elle me dit ; '*Fritz meurt, mon enfant ; il vient nous dire adieu.*' Je me leve doucement, allume la bougie, et explore la chambre et les chambres voisines ; puis je reprends ma place. Alors, sur le pied du lit nous entendons le bruit de deux poings qui tombent alternativement sur le bois du lit, et cela avec régularité et continuité. Ma sœur, à son tour, s'éveilla en sursaut s'écriant, '*Mon Dieu ! quel bruit faites vous donc ?*' Je lui parle, j'essaye de la rassurer ; peine inutile ; elle n'ose rester dans son lit. Ma mère va prendre sa place, et elle vient occuper la ruelle du lit. Les coups réguliers repassent par-devant le côté que j'occupais ; les secousses faisaient vaciller la bougie. Je me mets à lire à haute

voix pour partager l'attention de ma sœur, et le bruit ne cesse qu'après avoir duré plus de trois heures. En effet, mon fiancé était mort ! De ce jour tomba mon incredulité."—F. LAMB, 17, Rue Tiquetonne.

The remarkable case of the celebrated French actress, Madlle. Clairon, related in the first number of *Household Words*, will be in the recollection of many readers, who will probably coincide in the opinion that the elaborate effort at explanation (on the hypothesis of a trick), appended to the narrative, is far too greedy in assumptions to carry the slightest conviction with it.

As a *pendant* to the foregoing, may be mentioned an extraordinary circumstance of our own time. It is to be regretted that the absence of permission to mention names—(albeit the matter has been frequently and openly mentioned in many private circles)—deprives it of that actual seal of authenticity so desirable in matters of the kind. The facts, which occurred about ten years since, are, notwithstanding, incontrovertible.

A member of the College of Physicians, well known in London, had occasion to visit Dorsetshire, and, finding himself in the near neighbourhood of an old and valued friend, went to call on him. He found him under the care of two medical practitioners, who appeared, at the moment, in a high state of satisfaction, owing to the success

which, after a period of some anxiety, seemed suddenly to have crowned the efforts of their skill. The patient had completely lost all painful sensations, and, according to their opinion, mended rapidly. The practised eye of their eminent brother was not to be so deceived. From various symptoms which had escaped the notice of the others, Doctor —— judged that the disease, theretofore confined to the joints and limbs, had only quitted its deadly grasp to fasten upon the vitals, and his prognostications of an early and fatal result were too sadly verified—when, late on that very night (the two country doctors having departed) he was summoned from his bed to attend the patient, who had suddenly become worse. He was, in fact, already dying, and, about three o'clock, expired. So completely were all in the house (Doctor —— excepted) taken by surprise, at this sudden close of the scene, that they appeared as it were paralysed; and the last melancholy offices for the deceased had to be performed by Doctor —— himself, and a lady, Mrs. T., nearly connected with the family, who had been on a visit to her sick relative. They had just concluded, when a tremendous blow was struck upon the wainscot, exactly at the head of the bed. It was described by the two amazed hearers, to be such as might be given by a powerful man, armed with a sledge-hammer, and using

his whole strength; the room, and even the house, seeming to vibrate with the shock. One glance of indignation at the supposed indecent outrage, was exchanged, and then the Doctor ran into the gallery to ascertain the doer; but, though scarcely an instant had elapsed, no one was visible. It is right to state that the entire household consisted of two or three old respectable servants and nurses, all of whom had been warmly attached to, and anxious for, their master, and therefore most unlikely to have been guilty of such a silly and shameful insult to the solemn majesty of death. Dr. ———, at all events, upon whom the circumstance made a strong impression, has frequently declared his inability to account for it by any natural and physical cause.

The report of the Commission of the Academy of Sciences, at Paris, Feb. 16, 1846, records the case of one Angelique Cottin, a girl of fourteen, in whose presence sounds were heard, and movements of articles of furniture, without visible agency, noticed. The case, however, is reported briefly and unsatisfactorily; and we are entitled to inquire whether, had the circumstance occurred at the present period, a closer investigation might not have developed phenomena analogous to those hereafter mentioned.

So lately as August, in the present year, a circumstance occurred in Scotland, which created

considerable excitement in its immediate neighbourhood, and ultimately compelled the parties concerned to call into requisition the detective powers of the police. The scene of operations is described as a small farm-place, called Pleaston, near Pathhead, East Lothian; and it was here that, during the past autumn, certain mysterious knockings disturbed the peace of the quiet inmates, and led them to the belief that some intelligence more than human pervaded their dwelling. The rappings (the description of which accords precisely with those now so common in America), appeared to be attendant on the presence of a child of the family, a girl of about eight. This small specimen of a British "medium" is said to be a child of rather remarkable aspect, with eyes so wild and peculiar as to impart anything but a pleasing expression to her infant features. Wherever she went, rappings accompanied her,—sometimes in the wall, sometimes in the furniture, &c. If any person present struck the wall, &c., knocks instantly replied. The sounds were frequently heard after all the inmates and neighbours had retired to rest. Hundreds of persons, attracted by curiosity, visited the farm; and, at length, Mr. List, superintendent of the district, was appealed to, in order to solve a problem that was growing somewhat inconvenient. This gentleman, finding that the raps, as has been mentioned, attended

the little girl, naturally argued that she must be, in some mysterious manner, the cause of them, and directed her removal to a neighbouring village, after which the noises were heard no longer. *How* the rappings were produced remains still a mystery, for it is observable that the same difference of opinion exists on the subject, which characterised every early instance of the kind in America. The medical man who attended the family was of opinion that the sounds were produced by the child's "cracking some of her larger bones." How long the learned practitioner conceived that such a system of fracture might last, without exhausting that of the patient, we need not inquire, —the fallacy of this osseous hypothesis having been long since (as will be seen) so amply demonstrated in other cases, as to render any discussion of it, in this place, mere waste of words.

The superintendent, on his part, ignores the bone-cracking, and considers that the noises were produced by the girl (*or her sister*), striking the boarding of the box-bed, in which she slept. Here, again, our indefatigable friend of Cock-Lane celebrity, must, it appears, have a finger in the pie! In short, therefore, the origin of these Pathhead rappings remains as great a mystery as ever; and if they did, indeed, partake of the nature of those in America, which seems highly probable, the tranquillity of Pleaston farm, which

followed immediately upon the child's removal, only confirms the acknowledged rule, that the manifestations cannot be obtained without the presence of a *medium*. It is much to be regretted that Mr. List, a most intelligent and experienced man, should have suffered so fair an opportunity to escape; that, so far from resting satisfied with some vague idea of board-scratching, or of complicity with those around, and thereupon causing the girl's removal, he did not rather suffer her to remain where she was, and endeavour to obtain some proof as to which of his various suspicions might be correct. "List, List, O List—" (as another ghost has said), you were wrong in this! So simple an experiment as removing her from the box-bed, might have sufficed to establish, or disprove, *one* theory; but, by sending her away, the chance of investigation is lost, the secret remains *in statu quo*; and if any conclusion whatever is to be drawn, it must unavoidably be one favourable to the supposition that the girl was a *medium*.

Another example of the absurd and injudicious manner in which inquiries of this nature are usually conducted, has been furnished, during the present month (October), by the proceedings in a case of "rapping" at Hull, reported in the daily papers. The non-discovery of the mystery would probably, in any case, have been the result. It is

at the same time pretty clear that policemen are no profound philosophers, nor is it to that very useful arm that the unravelment of such a question is likely to be owing. A power greater than that of the whole detective force combined,—an intelligence infinitely transcending the shrewdness of that select body, has already revealed its presence in matters similar to the foregoing, and will, beyond question, extend its influence until widely different machinery—science, reason, judgment, candour, shall be set in motion, to gauge the real value of this so-called philosophy—its good or ill—to man.

CHAPTER III.

NOTED MEDIA.

Commencement and progress of the manifestations—Mr. Weekman—The Fox family—Their statements—Discovery of the method of communication—Excitement produced—Investigations—Mrs. Fish—Public meetings at Rochester—Rapid dissemination of the phenomena—Further investigations—The Foxes at New York—Public and private inquiries—Strong testimonials in favour of the media—Proceedings, &c.—The Foxes impeached—Mrs. Norman Culver—Failure of the accusation—Continued progress of the manifestations—Mrs. Bushnell, the Cincinnati medium—Investigations—New media—Dr. Owens—Professor Hill—Dr. Silsbee, &c.—Popular opinions, &c.

ALTHOUGH enough evidence has been adduced to demonstrate the probability that these phenomena have not declared themselves in the United States alone, it seems, nevertheless, to have been reserved for the latter country to be the channel through which the notice of society in general, and the learned and philosophic in particular, should be drawn to a subject which, in whatever light it may be viewed, offers more than sufficient phenomena of an unusual aspect, to protect the investigator from any charge of easy faith, or puerile curiosity.

In the village of Hydesville, township of Arcadia, Wayne county, New York, stands a house which, during a part of the years 1846-7, was in the occupation of Mr. Michael Weekman. The account given by this gentleman is that, late on a certain evening, he heard a rapping on the street-door, opened it, and saw no one. A few minutes later, a second and louder rapping succeeded; again he opened the door, with the like result. Thinking it might be some silly disturber of the night's repose, in shutting the street-door, Mr. Weekman, on this occasion, retained his hold of the handle, and when the strange summons was a third time repeated, flung open the door and sprung out. No one was visible!

Nothing of moment subsequently occurred during Mr. Weekman's tenancy, and on the 11th of December, 1847, the house passed into the occupation of Mr. John D. Fox (formerly of Rochester) and his family.

It was late on a certain night, about the close of March in the succeeding year, 1848, that the disturbances, which afterwards became so frequent, first commenced. The noise seemed to proceed from one of the bed-rooms, and sounded as though some one was knocking on the floor, moving chairs, &c. Four or five members of the family were at home, and they all got up to ascertain the cause of the noise. Every part of the

house was searched, yet nothing could be discovered. A perceptible jar was felt by putting their hands on the bedsteads and chairs, or even while standing on the floor. The noise was continued that night as long as any one was awake in the house. The following evening they were heard as before, and on the evening of the 21st of March, the neighbours were called in for the first time.

The following is an extract from Mrs. Fox's statement, made soon after the occurrences narrated took place:—

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

“My husband had not gone to bed when we first heard the noise on this evening. I had just laid down. It commenced as usual. I knew it from all other noises I had ever heard in the house. The girls, who slept in the other bed in the room, heard the noise, and tried to make a similar noise by snapping their fingers. The youngest girl is about twelve years old. As fast

as she made the noise with her hands or fingers, the sound was followed up in the room. It did not sound different at that time, only it made the same number of sounds that the girl did. When she stopped, the sound itself stopped for a short time.

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

“I then asked if it was a human being that was making the noise? and if it was, to manifest it by the same noise. There was no noise. I then asked if it was a spirit? and if it was, to manifest it by two sounds. I heard two sounds as soon as the words were spoken. I then asked if an injured spirit, to give me the sound. I then heard the rapping distinctly. I inquired if it was injured in this house? it rapped. Was the injurer living? same answer. I further understood

that its remains were buried under the dwelling ; that it was 31 years of age, a male, and had left a family of five children, all living. Was the wife living? silence. Dead? rapping. How long since? two raps.' ”

Hence it appears that up to this time, sounds were only made when either an affirmative reply was intended, or numbers were designated. Subsequently, however, a more general attention having been awakened, and various means canvassed, with a view to improve the mode of communication, a person present conceived the idea of interrogating the sound-maker by means of the alphabet. Accordingly, the spirit was asked whether, if the alphabet were called over, it would rap for the letters composing its name? The reply was in the affirmative, and the name of “ Charles Rayn,” was spelled out.

A series of *five* raps, in quick succession, having been frequently noticed, it was ascertained, by question and experiment, that this was a signal for the alphabet.

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that, in this spirit-language, an affirmative is conveyed by a single rap (though, perhaps, emphasized by more), a negative by silence. Five raps demand the alphabet, and that may be called over, *vivá voce*, or else, in a printed form, laid upon a table, and the finger, or a pencil, slowly passed along it ;

when, on arriving at the required letter, a rap is heard; the querist then recommences, until words and sentences are spelled out, upon the accuracy or intelligence displayed in which, depends, in a great degree, the amount of faith popularly accorded to these manifestations.

To proceed with the narrative of facts and evidence.

It appears that a vast number of persons visited Mrs. Fox's house, heard the noises, and received, to a very varied assortment of questions, satisfactory replies. In the course, however, of an interrogatory, an answer was returned intimating that a murder had been formerly committed in the house, and that the body lay buried beneath the cellar. In relation to this, the following statement was made public:—

“I went over again on Sunday, between one and two o'clock, P.M. I went into the cellar with several others, and had them all leave the house over our heads; and then I asked, if there had been a man buried in that cellar, to manifest it by rapping, or any other noise or sign? The moment I asked the questions, there was a sound like the falling of a stick, about a foot long, and half an inch through, on the floor in the bedroom over our heads. It did not seem to bound at all; there was but one sound. I then told Stephen Smith to go up, and examine the room, and see if he

could discover the cause of the noise. He came back, and said he could discover nothing; that there was no one in the room, or in that part of the house. I then asked two more questions, and it rapped in the usual way. We all then went up stairs, and made a thorough search around the rooms, but could find nothing.

“I then got a knife and a fork, and tried to see if I could make the same noise by dropping them, but I could not. This was all I heard on Sunday. There is only one floor, or partition, between the bed-room and the cellar—no place where anything could be secreted to make the noise. When this noise was heard in the bed-room, I could feel a slight tremulous motion or jar.

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

“On Monday night, I heard this noise again, and asked the same questions I did before, and got the same answers. This is the last time I have heard the rapping. I can in no way account for this singular noise, which I and others have heard. It is a mystery to me, which I am wholly unable to solve. I am willing to testify under oath that I did not make the noises or rapping which I and others heard; that I do not know of any person who did or could have made them;

that I have spent considerable time since then in order to satisfy myself as to the cause of it, but cannot account for it on any other than supernatural ground. I inhabited the same house about seven years ago, and at that time never heard any noises of the kind in and about the premises. * *

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

" (Signed) WM. DUESLER.

" April 12, 1848."

In a pamphlet, published at Canandaigua, in 1848, by E. E. Lewis, certificates corroborating the foregoing statements are given, signed by the following persons:—

"John D. Fox, Walter Scotten, Elizabeth Jewel, Lorren Tenney, James Bridger, Chauncey P. Losey, Benjamin F. Clarke, Elizabeth Fox, Vernelia Culver, William D. Storer, Marvin P. Loser, David S. Fox, and Mary Redfield."

The high character and respectability of this family did not, nevertheless, protect them from certain unpleasant results of these manifestations. Immense excitement was created in the neighbourhood, and considerable prejudice, extending even to threats of violence, existed against them.

At this period, a widowed daughter of Mrs. Fox, a Mrs. Fish, hearing much of the strange

affair, paid a visit to her mother's house, and had her curiosity completely gratified. Upon her return to her residence at Rochester, New York, a part of the family accompanied her, among whom was her youngest sister but one, Margaretta Fox, aged fourteen. The sounds accompanied them. Whether they had "packed the thing among the beds," or what other and more correct theory may ultimately prevail, time and philosophy must determine. At all events, the arrival of the manifestations at Rochester created, at once, so great a sensation, that a public meeting was convened, and two committees were successively chosen to investigate the matter thoroughly. Of one of these ex-Chancellor Frederick Whittlesea and Dr. H. H. Longworthy were members. Both bodies failed to arrive at any satisfactory solution of the mystery.

In the meantime the demonstration rapidly progressed. The mysterious sounds no longer confined themselves to the immediate neighbourhood of these ladies. They were heard, among other places, at the house of a wealthy resident at Rochester, Mr. Granger, and this without the presence of either Mrs. Fish or her sister.

The third town in which the rappings were noticed, was Auburn, New York. Catherine Fox, the youngest daughter, aged about twelve, was visiting at the latter place, and thither the sounds

attended her. Since that period, as is now known, manifestations have occurred in places almost too numerous to mention. It has been already stated in the introduction to this curious subject, that the city of Philadelphia alone supplies three hundred "magnetic circles," that is to say, small assemblies, meeting periodically, to each of which belongs a recognised *medium* of its own. In other large cities there are forty or fifty *media* to be found, and it is calculated that at the present period (September, 1852) there are in the whole extent of the States no less a number than thirty thousand! The following places have been the scene of the most noted manifestations:—

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| New York, | Cincinnati; |
| Boston, | Buffalo, |
| Springfield (Mass.), | Jefferson, |
| Providence, | Troy, |
| New Haven (Conn.), | Stoughton, |
| Rochester, | Keokuk (Iowa), |
| Cleveland, | Morris, |
| Woonsocket, | Austinburgh, |
| Stratford, | St. Louis, |
| Athol, | Auburn, |
| Sennat (Cayuga County), | Manchester (N. H.), |
| Warren (Penn.), | Long Island, |
| Syracuse, | Portsmouth (N. H.) |
| Greece and Monroe County, | New Brighton, |

&c., &c., &c.

We now arrive at November, 1849, when, at

Rochester, the sounds communicated to the parties investigating as follows:—

“You have all a duty to perform. We want you to make this matter public.”

The *New York Weekly Tribune* (edited by Mr. Horace Greely), in its issue of December 8th, 1849, supplied a report of the public investigation which thereupon followed, through the medium of a committee composed of Messrs. A. J. Combs, Daniel Marsh, Nathaniel Clark, A. Judson, and Edwin Jones, who declared—

“That without the knowledge of the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, the committee selected the hall of the Sons of Temperance for investigation—that the sound on the floor near where the two ladies stood, was heard as distinctly as at other places, and that part of the committee heard the rapping on the wall behind them—that a number of questions were asked, which were answered, not altogether right, nor altogether wrong; that in the afternoon they went to the house of a private citizen, and, while there, the sounds were heard on the outside (apparently) of the front door, after they had entered, and on the door of a closet. By placing the hand upon the door, there was a sensible jar felt when the rapping was heard. One of the committee placed one of his hands upon the feet of

the ladies and the other on the floor, and though the feet were not moved, there was a distinct jar on the floor. On the *pavement*, and on the *ground*, the same sound was heard—a kind of double rap, as a stroke and a rebound, were distinguishable. When the ladies were separated at a distance, no sound was heard, but when a third person was interposed between them, the sounds were heard. The ladies seemed to give every opportunity to the committee to investigate the cause fully, and would submit to a thorough investigation by a committee of ladies, if desired. They all agreed that the sounds were heard, *but they entirely failed to discover any means by which it could be done.*”

Subsequently, another committee of responsible men was appointed to investigate the “mystery.” This committee met at the rooms of Dr. Gates, at the Rochester House, and appointed a committee of ladies, who took the young women into a room, disrobed them, and examined their persons and clothing, to be sure that there were no fixtures about them that could produce the sounds.

When satisfied on this and other points, the committee of ladies gave the subjects of their examination the following certificate:—

“When they were standing on pillows, with a

handkerchief tied round the bottom of their dresses, tight to the ankles, we all heard the rappings on the wall and floor distinctly.

“ (Signed) MRS. STONE.
 MRS. J. GATES.
 MRS. M. P. LAURENCE.”

Various other measures only served to show, more conclusively, that if there were any deception, the subjects themselves were deceived; that they did not produce the sounds, and, if they did, could not have answered a tithe of the questions propounded.

The annexed curious and circumstantial detail, from the hand of a respected clergyman of Rochester, the Rev. C. Hammond, will at once illustrate the manner in which these spiritual *séances* were conducted, and the mystery in which they were, and yet remain, enshrouded.

Mr. Hammond, on a first visit to the house which was the principal scene of these manifestations, heard nothing beyond certain inexplicable sounds, and went away as sceptical as he came. His second visit was more successful. This was his account:—

“ During the interval, I had prepared my mind with certain questions, touching events unknown to the family, and of a remote date. The sounds told me my age precisely, though my appearance

is such as to indicate a difference of eight or ten years. The names of six of my nearest deceased relatives were given me. I then inquired, 'Will the spirit, who now makes these sounds, give me its name?' Five sounds directed me to the alphabet, which I repeated until the name of 'Charles' appeared, which answered to an infant child whom we consigned to the grave in March, 1843. To my inquiries, it gave me a true answer in regard to the time it had been in the spirit-land, and also the period since my eldest sister's death, which was nearly eighteen years; the latter fact not being recollected then, I found true by dates on my return home. Many other test questions were correctly answered; and yet, notwithstanding the origin of these sounds seemed inexplicable, I was inclined to impute them to mesmerism or clairvoyance.

"On the third visit, I was selected from a half dozen gentlemen, and directed by these sounds to retire to another apartment, in company with the three sisters and their aged mother. It was about 8 o'clock in the evening. A lighted candle was placed on a large table, and we seated ourselves around it. I occupied one side of the table, the mother and youngest daughter the right, and two of the sisters the left, leaving the opposite side of the table vacant. On taking our positions, the sounds were heard, and continued to multiply and

become more violent, until every part of the room trembled with their demonstrations. They were unlike any I had heard before. Suddenly, as we were all resting on the table, I felt the side next to me move upward. I pressed upon it heavily, but soon it passed out of the reach of us all, full six feet from me, and at least four from the nearest person to it. I saw distinctly its position; not a thread could have connected it with any of the company without my notice, for I had come to detect imposition, if it could be found. In this position we remained until the question was asked, 'Will the spirit move the table back where it was before?'—when back it came, as though it were carried on the head of some one, who had not suited his position to a perfect equipoise, the balance being sometimes in favour of one side and then the other. But it regained its first position."

After minutely describing other experiments, Mr. Hammond concludes with his "confession of faith:"—

"That any of the company could have performed these things, under the circumstances in which we were situated, would require a greater stretch of credulity on my part, than it would to believe it was the work of spirits. It could not, by any possibility, have been done by them, nor even attempted, without detection. And I may

add that near the close of the demonstrations at this visit, there was a vibration of the floor as though several tons in weight had been uplifted and suddenly fallen again upon it. This caused everything in the room to shake most violently for several minutes, when the force was withdrawn.

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

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

“C. HAMMOND.

“Rochester, Feb. 22, 1850.”

Mrs. Fish and the Misses Fox now visited New York city, whither, it is almost needless to say, their fame had preceded them; and there, as in Rochester, every conceivable test was applied, in

a manner to satisfy the most sceptical. The ladies were disrobed, and subjected to the most searching investigation by a female committee chosen for that purpose, who reported to their constituents that the sounds in question *could* not, by any possibility, emanate from the parties themselves.

The Rev. Dr. Griswold, who had hitherto remained wholly incredulous as to the alleged preternatural origin of the manifestations, now determined to investigate the facts of the case for himself; and with that view assembled a small party at his house in Broadway. The circle was composed of gentlemen of high character and intelligence; persons, who, probably without exception, had no prepossession in favour of the principal actors in the scene, and who even numbered among them several avowed sceptics.

Among those present were the late Mr. J. Fenimore Cooper, Mr. George Bancroft, the Rev. Dr. Hawkes, Dr. J. W. Francis, Dr. Marey, Mr. N. P. Willis, Mr. Bryant, Mr. Bigelow, Mr. Richard Kimball, Mr. H. T. Tuckerman, and General Lyman.

In order to prevent any suspicion as to the arrangement of the room, the furniture, closets, &c., the *réunion* was appointed, as has been mentioned, at Dr. Griswold's own dwelling, which neither of the ladies had ever entered before. A little past

eight o'clock, Mrs. Fox and her three daughters, accompanied by two gentlemen of Rochester, made their appearance. For some time—perhaps half an hour—no sounds were heard, and the company began to exhibit obvious symptoms of impatience. They were then requested to draw nearer the table, which was in front of the ladies, and form themselves into a compact circle. Soon after, faint sounds began to be heard from under the floor, around the table, and in different parts of the room. They increased in loudness and frequency, becoming clear and distinct, while no one could deny their presence, nor trace them to any visible cause. The question was now asked, "Will the spirits converse with any one present?" No satisfactory answer was obtained, though there was a general rumbling succession of sounds, the purport of which appeared to be ambiguous, to those who professed to be most conversant with the language. The question was then put more definitely with regard to several gentlemen present. After a good deal of coquetting, it was said that replies would be given to any questions proposed by Dr. Marcy. He inquired whether the spirit with whom he wished to converse, was a relation—was a child—and what was its age at the time of its death. We understood Dr. Marcy to say that the answers were correct, but nothing worthy of special notice was elicited.

Mr. Henry T. Tuckerman was the next to propound inquiries, which, contrary to the usual custom, he expressed audibly, so as to be heard by the ladies and the whole company. Having fixed in his mind the name of an individual, he asked, "Did he live in New York?" No answer. "In Baltimore? In Cambridge? In Boston?"—three distinct raps. Mr. T. continued, "Was he a lawyer? A merchant? A physician? A clergyman?" Knocks. "Was he an Episcopalian? A Presbyterian? A Unitarian?"—going over the names of the principal sects. No answer. At the suggestion of a gentleman, Mr. T. asked, "Was he a Christian?" Knocks. Mr. T. then asked the age of the person in a series of tens. "Was he twenty years old at the time of his death? Was he thirty? Fifty? Sixty?" Knocks. "Has he left a family?" Knocks. "Children?" Knocks. "Five? Three? Two?" Knocks. "Did he die in Boston? In Philadelphia? In Albany? In Northampton? Bennington?" Knocks. "Did he die of consumption? Of fever? Of cholera? Of old age?" Knocks.

The person in the querist's mind was the late Rev. Dr. Channing, of Boston, who died, as stated, at Bennington, (Vt.) while on a journey. It may be remarked that, for the last years of his life, Dr. Channing disclaimed all sectarian names, pre-

ferring to be called only Christian; and, though under seventy, had nearly exhausted his physical powers.

The Rev. Dr. Hawkes was less successful in obtaining replies, and, after a short period, gave way to Dr. J. W. Francis, who was welcomed with a general roll of knockings, from the mysterious agents, seeming to claim the privilege of old and intimate acquaintance. With his proverbial urbanity, seating himself, as if at the bed-side of a patient, Dr. F. asked, in terms of the most insinuating blandness, whether the spirits present would converse with any member of the company? Would they vouchsafe to speak to his illustrious friend, the world-renowned author, Mr. Cooper? Would they converse with the great American poet, Mr. Bryant? To these flattering invitations no reply was given. Would they speak to so humble an individual as himself? Loud knocks. Dr. F. then asked, fixing on a person, "Was he an American? Was he an Englishman? Was he a Scotchman?" The knocks were loud and unanimous. "Was he a merchant? Was he a lawyer? Was he an author?" Loud knocks. "Was he a poet?" Yes, in distinct knocks. "Will you tell his name?" Here the spirits called for the alphabet, by sounds intelligible to the ghost-seers. It then spelled out B-u-r—when the

company indiscreetly, but spontaneously, interrupted, by crying out "Robert Burns." This was the true answer.

Mr. J. Fenimore Cooper was then requested to enter into the supramundane sphere, and proceeded to interrogate the spirits, with the most imperturbable self-possession and deliberation. After several desultory questions, from which no satisfactory answers were obtained, Mr. C. commenced a new series of inquiries. "Is the person I inquire about a relative?" Yes, was at once indicated by the knocks. "A near relative?" Yes. "A man?" No answer. "A woman?" Yes. "A daughter? A mother? A wife?" No answer. "A sister?" Yes. Mr. C. then asked the number of years since her death. To this an answer was given in rapid and indistinct raps, some counting 45, others 49, 54, &c. After considerable parleying, as to the manner in which the question should be answered, the consent of the invisible interlocutor was given to knock the years so slowly that they might be distinctly counted. This was done. Knock—knock—knock—for what seemed over a minute, till the number amounted to fifty, and was unanimously announced by the company. Mr. C. now asked, "Did she die of consumption," naming several diseases, to which no answer was given. "Did she die by

accident?" Yes. "Was she killed by lightning? Was she shot? Was she lost at sea? Did she fall from a carriage? Was she thrown from a horse?" Yes.

Mr. Cooper did not pursue his inquiries any further, and stated to the company that the answers were correct, the person alluded to by him being a sister, who, just fifty years ago the present month, was killed by being thrown from a horse.

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

ness, causing sensible vibrations in the sofa, and apparently coming from a thick hearth-rug before the fireplace, as well as from other quarters of the room.

Such are the most important facts derived from the statement of an eye-witness. Mr. Greely subsequently published the following testimony, signed with his initials:—

“We vouch for the perfect honesty and good faith of the Fox family. There we stop, awaiting more evidence. That some influence, outside and unconnected with the volition of the family, causes these manifestations, we are confident. What that *is*, we have yet to be assured.”

And further:—

“He must be well acquainted with the arcana of the universe, who shall *prêsume* 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."

Here, too, is the testimony of Mr. N. P. Willis, in the *Home Journal* :—

"The suggestions and 'outside' bearings of this matter are many and curious. If these knocking answers to questions are made (as many insist) by *electric detonations*, and if disembodied spirits are still moving, consciously, among us, and have thus *found an agent, at last, ELECTRICITY, by which they can communicate with the world they have left*, it must soon, in the progressive nature of things, ripen to an intercourse between this and the spirit-world. * * *

"There seems an alphabet in this to learn, as in other new fields of knowledge; and, indeed—considering the confusion of ideas in the minds of those who visit and try to talk off-hand, with these newly discovered 'natives,'—it is wonderful that the 'Knockers' make themselves as well understood as they already do. If Providence designed to subject an *intelligent* power to our service—(in addition to the *unintelligent* miracle-

workers, steam and electricity, which have successively been given us)—the beginnings would, by all precedent, be at least as imperfect and dimly understood as these are.”

It would be useless to multiply testimonies, and adduce proofs of the candid and serious spirit in which many wise and eminent persons did not scruple, for an instant, to take up a subject commended to their notice by features so extraordinary. An account, however, by Mr. J. M. Sterling, a highly respected gentleman, of Cleveland, Ohio, is, for certain reasons, worth recording.

Mr. Sterling commences by assuring us, that, at the time of his witnessing this singular phenomenon, his senses were in healthy action, unclouded by prejudice, or by any physiological or mental hallucination, such as might interfere with a fair and candid inquiry into the *facts*, as they really were. He then proceeds:—

“I devoted two days to the investigation, and witnessed the manifestations in three different forms; and that which I am about to relate is, and has been, an every-day occurrence for the last eighteen months, in the presence of hundreds of individuals from every part of the country. Without expressing my own opinion on the subject, I would state that these manifestations are deemed *spiritual* by the persons connected with them; and, in speaking of them, I shall use their

language. They uniformly address them as spirits, or by the names by which they were known in this sphere of being.

“It is usual, upon the arrival of a stranger, to request him to be seated at a table, around which are placed two or more of the family (consisting of Mrs. Fox and her three daughters), when the question is asked,—

“‘Will the spirits converse with this gentleman?’

“If the answer be affirmative, the rap is heard; if negative, there is silence.

“The conversation proceeded as follows:—

“‘Will the spirits converse?’

“Rap. (*Yes*).

“I then inquired—

“‘Have I guardian spirits present?’

“Rap.

“‘How many?’

“Five raps (for the alphabet), and the names of three deceased members of my family were spelled out.

“‘At what age did William die?’

“Answered correctly.

“My wife’s name was given, and various other questions answered with accuracy; after which the alphabet was demanded, and the word ‘*dōne*’ spelled. This, as I was told, signified that no further communications could then be had. Upon rising, I expressed a wish for a different test,

such as causing the table to move, whereupon one of the ladies repeated my request. In a few moments I was sensible of a tremulous motion of the table, and it was moved, from one to two feet, directly from me and against the girls, nearly pushing them from their balance. I had two subsequent opportunities of witnessing the manifestations, and received to numerous questions the most accurate replies. I also heard the rappings in answer to two of the young ladies, while standing out of doors, in the day-time, upon a brick pavement."

So far Mr. Sterling;—but so completely have the phenomena witnessed by him been cast into the shade by what has since occurred, that it would have been scarcely worth while to detail his experience, but for the circumstance of his testimony being one of the earliest, of a reliable kind, to which publication was given.

The circumstances to which he and the former parties bear concurrent witness, had, at this period, been at least eighteen months matter of universal notoriety. Thousands of persons, of all classes of the community, had been present at their occurrence. In short, it had become just as irrational to question the fact that a great and inexplicable mystery existed, as to doubt the reality of an American continent itself.

But the facts—the *facts*, my friend. Surely, if

my memory and the English *Athenæum* are to be trusted—the whole affair exploded—or, to use the Yankee vernacular, “caved in,” a long time ago, considerably before the “days when we went gipsying,”—for, if I mistake not, it was in the pleasant month of April, A.D. 1851, that an accomplice, one Mrs. Norman Culver, peached.

Sceptic, you are right. It is so. Room, then, for the lady. Let us hear what she has to impart. Probably, the grand arcanum itself—the heart of the spiritual mystery—*how* the rappings are made?

Mrs. Norman Culver, a connexion by marriage of the Fox family, in a sort of deposition, or rather declaration, since it was not made upon oath, dated April 17th, 1851, related as follows:—

“Catherine wanted some one to help her [make the rappings], and said that if I would become a *medium*, she would explain it all to me. She said that when my cousin consulted the spirits, I must sit next to her, and touch her arm when the right letter was called. I did so, and was able to answer nearly all the questions correctly. After I had helped her in this way a few times, she revealed to me the secret. The raps are produced with the toes. All the toes are used. After nearly a week’s practice, with Catherine showing me how, I could produce them perfectly myself. At first it was very hard work to do it. Catherine told

me to warm my feet, or put them in warm water, and it would then be easier work to rap; she said that she sometimes had to warm her feet three or four times in the course of an evening. I found that heating my feet did enable me to rap a great deal easier.

“Catherine told me how to manage to answer the questions. She said it was generally easy enough to answer right, if the one who asked the questions called the alphabet. She said the reason why they asked people to write down several names on paper, and then point to them till the spirit rapped at the right one, was to give them a chance to watch the countenance and motions of the person, and that in that way they could nearly always guess right. She also explained how they held down and moved tables. She told me that all I should have to do to make the raps heard on the table, would be to put my foot against the bottom of the table when I rapped, and that when I wished to make the raps sound distant on the wall, I must make them louder, and direct my own eyes earnestly to the spot where I wished them to be heard. She said if I could put my foot against the bottom of the door, the raps would be heard on the top of the door. Catherine told me that when the committee held their ankles in Rochester, the Dutch servant girl rapped with her knuckles under the floor, from the

cellar. The girl was instructed to rap whenever she heard their voices calling the spirits. Catherine also showed me how they made the sounds of sawing and planing boards. When I was at Rochester, last January, Margaretta told me that when people insisted on seeing her feet and toes, she could produce a few raps with her knees and ankles."

A most killing testimony, indeed. One would hardly be willing to look beyond it, and would rather dismiss the whole affair from his mind, with wonder and compassion, as a thing strange and attractive indeed in the eyes of men, but which not being "of God," has, like all its kindred, come to nought. But, on the other hand, it is incumbent upon us to weigh the testimony of our fallible fellow-mortals, and not, by a too ready inclination towards that which bears the aspect of truth—rush headlong into the very error against which we are trying to guard—the abuse of honest faith.

It will probably surprise you, dear Sceptic, to learn that, in the teeth of these damaging disclosures, the Fox family should at this very day be holding sittings in New York, at one dollar admission, and be patronised by the *élite* of the city, including several eminent judges and divines. Is that so? Indeed it is. A New York paper of but a few weeks' date, announces as follows:—

"MRS. FISH AND THE MISSES FOX.

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

"Strangers can be entertained on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, from 3 to 5 o'clock; also on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings, from 8 to 10 o'clock."

The fact is, Mrs. Norman Culver's disclosures, if not wholly discredited, at all events failed in elucidating the mystery.

The evidence of an approver is, in all cases, viewed with a very commendable jealousy, and it is notorious that a very bitter feeling existed on the part of Mrs. Culver towards the Fox family, dating from a period long antecedent to her connexion with them in the rapping affair. Now let us glance through the lady's testimony, and see what it is really worth.

Mrs. Norman Culver having been, by her own admission, for two years, a sincere believer in the preternatural character of the rappings, suddenly begins to doubt. Resolved to satisfy these tardy scruples, she takes immediate measures, not of the most honourable nature, to insinuate herself into the confidence of her young connexion, Catherine

Fox, proposing to aid her in the rappings, or, at least, in one especial instance, provided Catherine would instruct her fully in the method of producing the sounds. The latter (according to Mrs. Culver), though perfectly cognisant of the unfriendly feeling that existed between them, walked at once into the trap, saying (asserts Mrs. Culver), "as Margaretta was absent, she needed some one to assist her, and that if I would become a *medium*, she would explain it all to me." After which followed the supposed explanation.

Of Mrs. Culver's statement it may not be amiss to observe that an old and experienced member of the legal profession in Maine, remarked that, on perusing it, he was forced, irresistibly, to the conclusion that it was a concocted affair, and contained the elements for defeating its own object. Independent of the *malus animus* acknowledged to exist, and of the not wholly unimportant circumstance that the affidavit, as it was termed, was no affidavit at all—let us consider the discrepancy between Mrs. Culver's statement and facts ascertained. For example, she says—

"Catherine told me that when the committee held their ankles, at Rochester, the Dutch servant girl rapped with her knuckles under the floor, from the cellar."

Whereas, a person who was present at the said

inquiry (when their ankles were held), states that no one of the meetings took place at the house of the Fox family. That the family did not know where they were to take place, till the committee called for them. That they did not occur twice in the same house or building. That up to that time they had never had a Dutch or other servant-girl in the house. And, finally, that Catherine Fox was not in Rochester at any time during the investigation, but in Auburn, seventy miles distant.

Thus it is proved, that, if Miss Catherine Fox ever made the statement attributed to her by Mrs. Culver, the aforesaid Catherine must have asserted what could not possibly have been true.

One of two things must have occurred: either Mrs. Norman Culver must have fabricated her singular impeachment, or Miss Catherine Fox her confession. Which is the most probable? It is distressing to be compelled to arbitrate between two ladies of station and character, on a simple question of—who has fibbed? But some decision must be arrived at, and I give it at once as *mine*, that Mrs. Culver's statement was, in the main, true; Catherine's Fox's, on which it was founded, in the main, *false*. And that the latter young lady, mistrusting, as was most natural, her importunate connexion, and assured of nothing beyond her hostility, threw out false lights with the view

of misleading, and casting deserved ridicule upon a treacherous enemy.

Up to the present date (September, 1852) the Fox family have never discontinued their meetings, which, in all parts of the States, have been both numerous and respectably attended. In July last, while they were at St. Louis, a party assembled for the purpose of once more carefully investigating the mystery, and published their report in the *Morning Signal*, a St. Louis journal. It stated that "there could be no collusion, nor were any means perceptible whereby chicanery could be practised without detection. A large number of questions were written, and propounded *mentally*. These were principally of a theological, scientific, philosophical, and metaphysical character; and were, one and all, replied to in a manner perfectly satisfactory."

It was in the summer of 1850, that the "Queen City" of the West—Cincinnati—first became the scene of manifestations through recognised *media*.

Mrs. Bushnell, theretofore known as a clairvoyante of remarkable power, and who had been for some time in the practice of holding medical examinations, and prescribing accordingly, while in the clairvoyant state, visited Cincinnati in the course of her professional tour. In a short time, it became rumoured that this lady was a *medium*; and as the subject of "spirit rappings" was

already one of general interest in the city, it was not long before the attention of scientific persons was attracted towards the new arrival. It was stated that Mrs. Bushnell had heard the knockings for some time previous to her visit to the Queen City, and had communicated with them at Cleveland, Rochester, and other places.

Mr. Coggeshall, of Cincinnati, relates that, on the 26th of September, 1850, he saw this lady at the house of Professor J. M. Buchanan, the well-known neurologist, editor of the *Journal of Man*, a select party having been assembled to meet her. On this occasion, Mrs. Bushnell, having been impressed by the professor, made accurate phrenological examinations of several gentlemen then present, whom she had never before seen. She described Dr. Buchanan's father, many years deceased; giving a perfectly correct and truly graphic sketch of his appearance, manner, and general character; stating, at the same time, that he was at that moment spiritually present with her. She then, in answer to Mr. Coggeshall himself, who inquired if he had lately lost a relative, described that gentleman's brother—his appearance, character, &c.—even to the slightest mental peculiarities; the object and direction of the journey upon which he was then absent, his illness, and death, the effects and mementos in his possession, &c., &c.; and all this, as was found, with the most perfect accuracy.

Mrs. Bushnell having, during this clairvoyant investigation, announced that she was familiar with the rappings, and had communicated with unseen intelligences through these means, a strong desire was expressed to witness the manifestations; and a meeting was arranged for the 14th of October, at the house in which Mrs. Bushnell happened to be boarding. The party assembled, and the sounds were heard, but the only intelligible communication received on this occasion was to the following effect:—

“Your battery is not strong enough.”

This demonstration sufficed, however, to stimulate public curiosity, and excite interest of a more kindly nature in the minds of such as were sufficiently advanced in the “faith” to believe that a channel of communication was at length reopened with the world of spirits, and that tidings might be received of many a beloved one whose foot had threaded

Those dark gates, across the wild
That no man knows.

No wonder, therefore, that on the next occasion, Wednesday evening, October 16th, a large number of persons assembled at the appointed place, eager for information upon themes so “rich and strange.” An immense number of interrogations were proposed, and replied to by means of

the rappings, in a manner apparently transcending human knowledge; but, owing to the private character of the questions, the proceedings could not be properly made the subject of a detailed report. A more circumstantial account is given of the meeting which took place the succeeding evening, the 17th, at which, among other parties, there were present Dr. J. P. Gatchell, of the Eclectic Medical College; Mr. Anson Atwood, of Troy, New York; Mr. Wattles, of Rural, Ohio; Dr. William Owens, of the Eclectic Medical College; Mr. W. Ball, of Covington, Kentucky; Messrs. Goodin, Norton, Coggeshall, and others, of Cincinnati.

The alphabet was called over by one of the gentlemen who understood the *modus operandi*, and the persons in the circle took turns in putting questions. Many of these interrogations, though important enough to those interested, are scarcely adapted for insertion. It may, therefore, be better to afford a specimen of the dialogue, and add, that, at the close of the sitting, the gentlemen mentioned above—all persons of known probity and social reputation—expressed themselves completely satisfied that the matter was one deserving of the most anxious attention, and the most rigid inquiry.

On its arriving at Mr. Goodin's turn to interrogate, he inquired, in the usual manner—

"Is there a spirit present who will communicate with me?"

Rap (*Yes.*)

"Can I know what the spirit answers?"

Rap.

The alphabet was called, and the "spirit" announced itself as the child of the questioner, and requested him to "be patient, and not to fret;" which expression was understood to have reference to the fact of Mr. Goodin's having reflected upon himself for some supposed mistaken medical treatment of the deceased child.

After some further questions and replies of a private character, it arrived at Mr. Wattles's turn to interrogate. He inquired—

"Is there a spirit present that will converse with me?"

Rap.

"Do I know the person?"

Rap.

"Will you spell the name?"

Silence (*No*).

"Will you give the initials?"

Rap.

The alphabet was called over, and "W. W." was indicated.

"Is it my brother?"

Rap.

"Do you intend that I should understand that my brother is dead?"

Rap.

"Did he die in California?"

Silence.

"Near California?"

Silence.

"Were you well cared for?"

Rap.

"Of what disorder did you die?"

The alphabet was called, and the word "diarrhœa" spelled.

"When shall I hear of this in the usual course?"

Silence.

"Within one year?"

Rap.

"Six months?"

Silence.

A number of replies, wholly unintelligible except to the querist for the time being, were returned, the effect of which can only be judged of by the answer of Mr. Ball to some one who asked—

"Is there any meaning to *this*?"

"Meaning, indeed, to *me*!"

It is much to be lamented that the wish, however natural, for information upon private and domestic subjects, was allowed to prevail at these earlier meetings to such an extent as to leave little room for tests which would have satisfied

the general public, and at the same time protected the intelligent persons who conducted the first investigations from the charge of easy credulity.

Before the company dispersed, some one inquired if all the spirits present would "rap" on the table? In response, there was a great number of sounds made at the same moment upon the table, some loud, some feeble, some sharp, and some prolonged.

During Friday and Saturday of this week, most of the persons who visited Mrs. Bushnell for medical consultation, heard the mysterious sounds, and on Saturday evening, the 19th, another party assembled at the house of Mr. J. F. Taylor, a gentleman of high respectability, and deeply interested in scriptural investigation. Among the persons present, were Major Gano, clerk of the Supreme Court of Cincinnati; Dr. J. S. Garretson; Dr. William Owens, of the Eclectic Medical College; Dr. Childs, of Walnut Hills; Mr. Wattles; Dr. Wilson, Botanic Physician and many other gentlemen; together with a large number of the gentler, but not less curious, sex. There were three known clairvoyants in the company.

Mrs. Bushnell then commenced a lecture on Spiritualism, during which sounds were heard apparently under the floor, near the speaker. She spoke of the rappings under the term of *electrical*

vibrations, and said, communications might be had with the spirit-world, if a battery could be formed. This was to be effected by the simple process of sitting round a table, and, this arrangement made, Mrs. Bushnell placed herself at the head, when sounds were immediately and distinctly heard, under the floor, directly beneath her. Presently the usual five raps demanded the alphabet, and the name "Cornell," was spelled out.

"Was it the spirit of Mr. Cornell that communicated?"

Rap.

Mr. Cornell, a lawyer of some distinction in Cincinnati, died of cholera, in the summer of 1849. He had, in his lifetime, been earnestly and extensively engaged in clairvoyant investigations, and had publicly advocated the doctrine that spiritual manifestations could be made through clairvoyants. A few unimportant questions were asked, when suddenly, a new description of manifestation startled the whole company—the left arm of a lady present was drawn back with great force, as if it had been grasped between the elbow and shoulder. Attempts were made to release the arm by magnetic passes, but without effect. Inquiry was made—

"Is it the spirit of Mr. Cornell that affects this lady?"

“ Yes.”

“ Will the spirit release her ?”

No sound ; but, suddenly, the arm was thrown forward, and the lady entirely relieved. It was stated that this same lady had, during the day, remarked, in reference to the manifestations, that she would not believe in the spiritual origin of the rappings unless through the medium of *touch*. And this fact being communicated aloud to the assembled party, several raps were heard, near the lady, as though intended in corroboration.

The persons present satisfied themselves that this manifestation was, at least, not the effect of magnetism, as generally understood, because the muscles of the arm were not contracted, the arm being merely drawn, or pulled back, as described.

On the succeeding Monday and Tuesday evenings, manifestations took place at different houses where Mrs. Bushnell visited ; and, on Wednesday, she again attended at the house of Professor Buchanan, when communications were declared to have been had with the father of the Professor, many years deceased, and Dr. T. V. Morrow, a few months deceased, formerly Dean of the Eclectic Medical College.

The following report of another occurrence is so far satisfactory, as it emanates from a source heretofore wholly incredulous and disposed to ridicule the affair.

“Mrs. Bushnell addressed Mrs. — thus:—

“‘You will go to sleep to night at eight o’clock, and will see your sister’s spirit; and you will go to sleep also at eight o’clock on Monday night next.’

“The lady was entirely sceptical on the matter, and declared positively, at half-past seven o’clock on Saturday evening, that she had no idea of going to sleep; but precisely at eight she received a shock, and passed into a magnetic sleep. While she was in this state, she wept freely, and shook her head frequently, but would not converse. She slept fifteen minutes, as Mrs. Bushnell said she would; and when she awoke, stated that she had seen her sister and two gentlemen, and the reason she wept was, because, when she endeavoured to embrace her sister, she receded. On being asked why she shook her head with such determination, she replied, that the spirit wished her to be a medium of communication by sounds, and she refused.

“On last evening, at precisely eight o’clock, the lady began to have the magnetic twitches, but so sternly resisted the influence, that she did not go to sleep for half an hour. She slept about fifteen minutes, and when she awoke, said that she had seen the spirits of her father and her sister, and described the one that magnetised her, precisely as Mrs. Bushnell describes the person whom she

states she personated on two occasions. The lady said she had given her consent to be again magnetised, and, probably, when she was the next time under the influence, communications would be made through her by means of sounds.

“These things are wonderful, and we are disposed to inquire into them candidly.”

On the 26th October, Mrs. Bushnell left Cincinnati for the western part of New York, and, during her absence, no rappings occurred by which communications could be had. On her return, however, early in the succeeding month, the manifestations were resumed, and in the presence of Mr. James Goodin and Dr. Curtis of the Botanical Medical College, sounds were heard, and questions replied to, in the usual mysterious manner.

One circumstance is worth recording. A young lady of the assembled party inquired if any spirit would communicate with her; distinct raps were given, and the following communication made:—

“I have done as I agreed.”

Upon this, the young lady, greatly agitated, informed those present, that she had been in Rochester with her sister, when rapping manifestations were being made in the family of Mrs. Fish. They did not believe them to be spiritual manifestations; and when they parted, they mutually agreed that whichever died first, should visit the

other in spirit, and make raps, if it were possible. The sister went to Wisconsin, and died. She had come to her sister in Ohio, in spirit, and fulfilled the promise made in the flesh.

The manifestations were now no longer confined to Mrs. Bushnell and her neighbourhood, but rapidly spread over the city. One lady, a Miss B., residing in Cutter Street, had frequently heard them, but had never attempted to communicate, and her family regarded the mysterious sounds as forerunners of calamity. Another lady had heard them repeatedly, before Mrs. Bushnell, the favoured *medium*, visited Cincinnati. Two years before, a Miss A. had heard them so frequently, that the family became alarmed, and endeavoured, by every means, to ascertain their cause, but without effect.

Dr. William Owens, of the Eclectic Medical College, had also heard the sounds, and had *received answers to mental questions* from the spirit of a deceased friend.

Professor B. C. Hill received, by means of raps, what he considered to be a very important communication in reference to medical science.

Dr. Silsbee, a resident of Cincinnati, relates that he was sitting, one afternoon, in his study, in company with his brother, when he heard the sounds distinctly. He called his brother to the table at which he was writing, when the sounds increased

in loudness. He requested that, if it were of spiritual origin, *two* raps might be given. This was done so positively, that he felt the vibration. He inquired if his brother was a *medium*, and was answered affirmatively, but, after this, could obtain no further replies.

The persons above alluded to are all of character and station in and about Cincinnati.

Besides these instances, several persons, while consulting Mrs. Bushnell for medical purposes, held communications with the sounds; and it appears that, on account of the ridicule thrown upon such as were most intimately connected with the rapping manifestations, and because the curiosity they excited, brought so many persons to her house, her practice was materially interfered with. Mrs. Bushnell decided positively, in the beginning of December, that she would, under no circumstances, place herself in a "circle," for the purpose of receiving manifestations; and, with a few exceptions of a private nature, adhered to her resolution.

CHAPTER IV.

MEDIA CONTINUED.

Stratford—Connecticut—Occurrences there—Rev. Dr. Phelps—Extraordinary manifestations—Physical demonstrations—The Poltergeist—Excitement—Investigations—Imputations on the family—Refuted—Letter of Dr. Phelps, &c.—Judge Edmonds, his career, conversion, &c.—Wonderful manifestations—The demonstration at the house of Mr. Cheney, &c.

THE third of the more notorious manifestations, to which it is necessary to direct attention, declared itself in the town of Stratford, Connecticut, at the residence of the Rev. Dr. Phelps, a gentleman who held a situation of trust and honour in the Presbyterian Church, and enjoyed the reputation of being a most worthy, intelligent, and upright man.

On Sunday, March 10th, 1850, Dr. Phelps and his family, on their return from divine service, were amazed to find the doors, which had been carefully secured on leaving home, unlocked and unbolted; some of them standing actually open. On the knob of the front door, was hung a piece of black crape. The doctor at first supposed it had been the work of some idle and mischievous

person ; but, upon further examination, came to the conclusion, that it was something, at all events, of a wholly different nature, and, in his judgment, scarcely compatible with any degree of human ingenuity.

Nothing appeared to have been abstracted from the dwelling, although the furniture of the lower rooms lay scattered in the utmost confusion in every direction. After hastily restoring some kind of order; the family proceeded to the upper rooms, in hopes of discovering some clue to the authors of these strange doings. A most extraordinary scene presented itself ! A number of figures, probably eight or ten, constructed with great skill by means of various articles of wearing-apparel and bed-room furniture, were found in the middle of the room, in a kneeling attitude, each having before it an open Bible ! After exhausting their wonder and conjectures excited by this extraordinary spectacle, the family closed up the "phantom-chamber," as it was thenceforth called, leaving the dumb kneeling circle as they were found ; and the doctor himself took possession of the key. In spite of this precaution, however, some strange addition was daily made to the phantom group, without a possibility of tracing the hand at work in it. And of these latter figures, it may be stated, that the extraordinary rapidity with which they were constructed, renders the supposition of its

being done by any one, in or about the house, wholly inadmissible; the materials used for the purpose having been seen in various parts of the house within three minutes of the time they were discovered wrought into a figure, with an accuracy and grace which would have required an hour's labour from a most artistic and tasteful hand.

Strange circumstances, of a different character, now began to occur, and of these, the son of Dr. Phelps, a boy about eleven, seemed to be the chief object. On one occasion he was fairly lifted from the ground, as though by a powerful man, and borne partly across the room. At another time, while preparing for church, the boy's boots and cap were suddenly missing. Others were procured, but before they could be put on, these also were gone, and were, only after a long search, discovered in different parts of the house.

One evening, as the family were quietly sitting in the back parlour, with the door open leading into the hall, a tremendous noise was heard, as if some one had thrown or dropped a heavy body on the back stairs; and, upon examination, an indentation of about three quarters of an inch was found on one of the steps. No person could be found that could be supposed to have done it. At one time, after the family had retired to the sitting-room after supper, and while the servant was below in the kitchen, the table, with all its con-

tents, was lifted three times from the floor and let down with great force, so much so that the whole house was jarred, and the dishes on the table were heard to rattle, but none were found broken.

The accounts of what was daily transpiring at Dr. Phelps's created, as may be supposed, an immense excitement and curiosity, and in the course of a few days the place was visited and inspected by fifteen hundred persons. The utmost facilities for investigation were afforded. Every nook and corner of the house was explored. Persons known as being the most incredulous on the subject were invited to spend days and nights in the family. One boy, to whom some slight suspicion attached, was sent away, and every plan ingenuity could devise was employed to detect the cause. So confident was Dr. Phelps himself that there was no trickery or deception in the case, that he issued a sort of public challenge to the effect that, if any one would visit the house and perform similar movements, under similar circumstances, and yet escape instant detection, he would present him with the house itself and all it contained.

A communication, vouched for by a well-known and respectable citizen of Boston, Mass., states, in reference to a report then recently promulgated, that some member of the Phelps's family had contrived the "trick" as follows:—

"I have been personally cognizant of many of

the mysterious phenomena that have occurred at the house of Dr. Phelps. Dr. Phelps has invited the most rigid scrutiny, and of the hundreds of people who have visited them, not an individual has found a single material fact to substantiate the charge of collusion. On the contrary, I have myself witnessed those phenomena, both alone and in company with others than the family, more than an hundred times, and, in the great majority of instances, under circumstances in which it was absolutely *impossible*, from the nature of the case, that it could have been done by any member of the family, or by any *visible* agency whatever.

“It is declared that, ‘things instead of starting before one’s eyes, are merely found moved.’ This is false. I have myself seen things in motion more than fifty times, and when no power was visible, by which the motion could have been produced. And so in regard to breaking windows. I have been present, and myself seen several panes of glass in the ‘very act’ of being broken, and when I *knew positively* that no person in or about the house, could have done it without instant detection.

“The family—one and all—have invited the most searching investigation. Their house has been open, and their table has been free to hundreds, who have been afforded the best possible means

of solving the mystery ; but it remains a mystery still. Those who have *strictly examined*, have not been able to discover any facts that would in the least degree implicate the family, in any of those events which are considered mysterious.

“There are scores of persons of the most respectable character, who are ready to make solemn oath, that many of the strange phenomena which have transpired at Dr. Phelps’s house, have occurred under their own eyes, and under circumstances in which trick, or collusion, or imposition, was *utterly impossible*.”

The notice of the all-observant American press having been drawn to the subject, certain reflections upon Dr. Phelps, conveyed through the letters of correspondents, induced the editor of one of the most ably conducted and important journals of Boston, to address a communication to that gentleman himself, in reply to which, and not from having *sought* publicity for his explanation, the Doctor wrote as follows—his letter being subsequently printed :—

“Stratford, Nov. 2, 1850.

“A copy of your paper, containing an article on the recent strange events at my house, came to hand yesterday.

“I have not hitherto noticed any anonymous publications on this painful subject, nor have I

published anything except what is signed with my own name. In regard to your inquiries, I can assure you that *the whole affair still remains a profound mystery*. The troubles at my house continued for at least seven months. During that time, events which cannot be accounted for occurred, to the number of two or three thousand. Many of them, to be sure, were of such a nature that they *might* have been done by human agency. But, in multitudes of instances, they have taken place in a way which rendered all trick or collusion utterly impossible. I have myself *seen* articles moved from one place to another; *not*, as your correspondent says, '*found* them moved.'

"I have *seen things in motion* more than a thousand times, and, in most cases, when no visible power existed by which the motion could have been produced. I can produce scores of persons, whose character for intelligence, piety, and competence to judge in this matter, no one who knows them will question, who will make solemn oath that they have witnessed the same things. As to *the reality of the facts*, they can be proved by testimony a hundred-fold greater than is ordinarily required in our courts of justice in cases of life and death.

"At the time these troubles commenced, my family consisted of my wife, two daughters, one sixteen and the other six years of age, and two

sons, one eleven and the other three, and one domestic. The smallest child *did*, by accident, somewhere about that time, break a pane of glass, and the elder boy did once, it is said, throw a poker on to the floor. But no one ever intimated or dreamed of there being anything mysterious in those things. There have been broken from my windows *seventy-one panes of glass*; more than thirty of which I have seen break with my own eyes. I have seen objects, such as brushes, tumblers, candlesticks, snuffers, &c., which, but a few moments before I knew to be at rest, fly against the glass, and dash it to pieces, when it was utterly impossible, from the direction in which they moved, that any visible power should have caused their motion.

“The statement of your correspondent, that the windows were never ‘*seen to break*,’ nor the furniture ‘*seen to move*,’ is wholly untrue; and the charge that these things were done by members of my own family, a cruel and wicked slander.

“If I seem to be unduly earnest on this subject, I trust that you and your readers will consider that I have feelings as keenly alive to the honour of my family as other men. I know them to be innocent in this matter. Within the range of your paper’s circulation, I have friends, I have children, and grandchildren, and brothers, and sisters, and a circle, by no means limited, who are bound to

me, and I to them, by other ties. They have feelings to be pained and lacerated by any aspersions affecting the honour either of myself or my family ; and I ask what right has your correspondent, or any other man, thus wantonly to asperse the character and assail the reputation of an innocent family ?

“ I will not, and I need not characterise the act, or the man, by the epithets they merit.

“ELIAKIM PHELPS.”

In a foot-note, appended to this letter, the editor stated that another letter had been received from a responsible gentleman of Stratford, written apparently without Dr. Phelps's knowledge, in which the statements of the latter were supported by the most earnest and explicit testimony.

In another letter, called forth by the fact of its having been publicly declared that the mystery was discovered, and had been traced to one of the children, Dr. Phelps writes, “ The statement, too, which some of the papers have reiterated so often, that ‘ the mystery was found out, ’ is, I regret to say, untrue. With the most thorough investigation which I have been able to bestow upon it, aided by gentlemen of the best talents, intelligence, and sound judgment, in this, and in many neighbouring towns, the cause of these strange phenomena remain yet undiscovered.

“ About the middle of April, a gentleman, who

was spending the night at my house, proposed to try the method of interrogation which had been adopted in Western New York, and, to our utter amazement, a series of responses were returned, from which the inference was irresistible that they must have been produced by a being which possessed intelligence. I tried by all the methods I could devise, to find what the power was by which the rapping was produced. I have heard it hundreds of times, and have done my best to ascertain the cause; but as yet I have not succeeded. I have been often asked, if I believed it was the work of spirits. I have as often replied, that I did not know what it is. I have never seen a spirit, and I do not know what a spirit could do if it would, or what it would do if it could. The facts, however, are of such a nature, and have transpired under such circumstances, as to render the idea of trick, or designed deception, wholly inadmissible."

It is not usual with persons placed by station or profession peculiarly in the eye of the world, and thus presenting easy marks for criticism, to lend themselves readily to the serious consideration of an unpopular subject. Far less, when convinced, to their own satisfaction, of its truth and value, will they openly avow such an opinion. The more credit, then, is due to the learned Judge Edmonds, of Massachusetts, a man of unusual

talent and unimpeachable integrity, who, from having been in a state of complete scepticism in respect to the whole affair, became, through stages of careful investigation and discovery, first a listener, then a believer, lastly, himself a *medium*, and one of most wonderful power.

The Hon. John Worth Edmonds is the son of General Edmonds (who served with distinction during the War of Independence), and Lydia Worth, the descendant of an old Devonshire family, a quakeress. The Judge was born in 1799, graduated in 1816, at Union College, Schnectady, and then commenced the study of the law with George Morell, Esq., afterwards Chief Justice of Michigan. Inheriting his father's military tastes, he entered the militia at an early age, and, in fifteen years, had risen to the command of his regiment, which office he resigned on being, in 1828, appointed Recorder of Hudson. In 1831 he was elected to the State Senate, by an immense majority of votes; and was thenceforth remarkable for the industry and energy he brought to bear upon the important duties that devolved upon him. His senatorial and legislative career was marked throughout with circumstances of unusual interest, and, at the end of four years, during the last of which he discharged the office of President, he retired from the Senate, declining

a re-election, which was tendered him in a district where his party were greatly predominant.

After visiting, with a commission from General Jackson, the Indian tribes on the borders of Lakes Huron and Superior, he, in 1837, removed to New York, and resuming the practice of the law, found himself almost immediately in an extensive and profitable business. Appointed, in 1843, an Inspector of the State prison at Sing-Sing, then in a most disgraceful state as regards its system and management, the Judge has the merit of having completely cleansed that Augean stable, and introduced reforms so admirable, and so successful in experiment, as to lead to their becoming a portion of the governing principle in the other State prisons and penitentiaries generally; one portion of the Judge's plan consisting of a Prison Discipline Society, the object of which is, not only the reform of prison-government, but of the prisoners themselves, by aiding these unfortunate persons, when discharged, to obtain an honest livelihood. This admirable Society is, at the present moment, in very successful operation.

In 1845, Mr. Edmonds was appointed Circuit Judge of the first Judicial District; in 1847, a Judge of the Supreme Court; and in the routine of official duties, has been successively Associate, and presiding Judge of the most important dis-

trict of the State—perhaps of the Union; finally, taking his seat for the current year in the Court of Appeals. In his present position, the Judge's quick perception, piercing investigation, and prompt decision, appear to great advantage. In his court, questions diversified as the affairs of men, come in rapid succession under his notice, while masses of affidavits, &c., statement and counter-statement, which, to the uninitiated, would seem to require years of toil in the investigation, are evolved and discussed by the trained intellects engaged, with an ease and rapidity hardly to be believed.

The Judge's fearlessness and independence of character, was curiously exemplified during some important trials at Columbia County, in 1845. The counsel engaged, it appears, manifested no small amount of combativeness, and, at length, carried their dispute so far as to come to blows in open court! The offenders were gentlemen of high standing, and personal friends of the Judge, and both at once apologised to the Court for the outbreak, notwithstanding which, the Judge, *à la* Gascoigne, committed both to prison, and adjourned his Court, with the remark, "That it was not his fault that the course of justice was thus interrupted." The circumstance attracted much attention throughout the Union, and was noticed by European papers as "evidence of advancing civilization in America."

Judge Edmonds transacts a greater amount of business than any jurist who has ever occupied the Bench in the city of New York ; but though his decisions are delivered with the greatest promptness, they are masterly specimens, exhibiting all the elegance and perspicuity of the most elaborate legal judgments.

With this brief sketch of a very distinguished man, we pass on to the circumstances which led to his connexion with the manifestations, as related in a quarterly review, published in New York, under the management of Mr. S. B. Brittan.

It seems that, up to the early part of 1851, Judge Edmonds had always entertained the conviction that intercourse with the spirits of the departed was impossible ; and possessing, unhappily, no very definite notions of the future life at all, was, as might be expected, as ready as any one to scoff at the spiritual intercourse now assumed to be established.

His first experience of the kind was in December, 1850, some few weeks subsequent to the death of his wife, to whom he was warmly attached, and by whose loss he had been deeply affected. He was, at this time, residing alone ; two of his daughters being married, and the third at school. One night, when the servants had retired to bed, he was reclining upon a sofa, reading. Suddenly, he distinctly heard the voice

of his wife addressing a sentence to him. As he himself described the incident, he started up as if he had received a shot, and, gazing eagerly around him, half expected that the speaker would reveal herself to his eyes. His lamp was burning, and the fire blazed cheerfully in the grate. Nothing unusual was visible, and, persuading himself that it was a delusion, originating in grief and want of rest, he presently lay down again. Still, reason as he would, the impression that it was a *real* voice continued and strengthened daily; while, like a true philosopher, he studied and analysed the operations of his own mind, in the hope of ascertaining *why* it was that the impression was stronger than were the conclusions of his reason.

In December, he removed into the city, hoping to derive some benefit from change of scene and occupation; and it was in the ensuing month that a lady, a friend of his late wife, invited him to her house to witness the "spiritual manifestations," stating that she had been impressed for several days to do so, and during that time had *felt* the continued presence of Mrs. Edmonds in a remarkable manner—the idea of her departed friend mingling with every action and circumstance of her daily life. The Judge, though without the slightest faith, and with little curiosity in the matter, accepted the invitation. The interview

was brief, yet several things occurred which at once rivetted his attention. He ascertained that the sounds he heard were not, and could not be, produced by the persons present. He saw, moreover, that there was *intelligence* in them. In short, his curiosity was fairly excited, and he resolved to investigate the subject, and, if there were imposture, to detect it.

The worthy Judge, however, must have been one of the hardest bargains ever made by the unseen intelligences—a subject of the very toughest kind! He kept very full and careful records of all he witnessed, a duty which his habits of reporting enabled him to fulfil with ease and accuracy; he compared the proceedings of different days, in order to detect any lurking inconsistencies or contradictions; he sought for different *media*, thus precluding the possibility of concert of action, and only “finally yielded his belief, when no sane mind could withhold it longer.”

The Judge had, it seems, commenced his investigations by demanding *proofs*—proofs that the matter was deserving of investigation at all; and, this tolerably high ground being conceded to him, by certain mystifying phenomena, he went further, and requested to be furnished with evidence that the affair was altogether super-terrestrial, and that those who professed to be his interlocutors from the spirit-world were, really and truly, those

whom they pretended to be. "*What proofs did he require?*" The experienced lawyer was not to be caught with so shallow a device. He handled the case in a legal manner. It was not for him to call witnesses to the good character of his opponents, nor, by indicating the precise nature of what would convince him most, suggest to them the means of his own conversion! Proofs he must have, and good ones too, or they might be off about their business, and seek out more credulous subjects for their experiments in mechanico-metaphysics.

Strange to say, so far from resisting this sturdy scepticism, the more *exigeant* the Judge became, the more the "other party" (we must use general terms) conceded; and he was promised, in plain words, proofs that could not, and should not, fail utterly to annihilate his slightest misgiving. It was clear that he was, at any price, to be won. Nevertheless, it appears that the Judge held gallantly out,—meeting, with the calm sense of a really clever man, and the quick penetrative discernment of the practised lawyer—such minor appeals to his credulity, as were comprised in rappings, table-tippings, &c., or in vague communications purporting to proceed from the extramundane sphere. He certainly heard the sounds, and saw the movements, and *that*, as in the case of everybody else, without being able to refer

them to any satisfactory origin. But the Judge remembered the pledge he had received; and, knowing that the "spirits" were bound to prove their whole case, wisely refused to accept any instalment. He would receive it, in its entirety, or not at all. These matters amounted to a mystery, and nothing more. They were simply puzzling, and only retarded the march of the grand *éclaircissement* he had been distinctly promised, and which he now claimed.

"*Qui s'arrête à chaque pierre, n'arrive jamais,*" thought the Judge; and he would doubtless have grown weary of results which perpetually fell short of his high expectations, had not an event at last occurred, which was destined to work an entire change in his views and feelings, and make him, as has been said, not only a believer, but a participator, in the extraordinary demonstrations now challenging the wonder of the community.

On the 21st of May, in the present year, a meeting, for the purpose of spiritual investigation, took place at the house of Mr. Charles Partridge, of New York, a gentleman who had devoted much time and attention to such inquiries, and promoted, as far as possible, every attempt then making to arrive at a proper understanding of the much-vexed subject in question. The account of what transpired at the meeting referred to, is

taken from the elaborate report furnished by himself to the New York journals.

It seems that there were present about fifteen to twenty persons, among whom may be mentioned the names of Judge Edmonds himself, Dr. and Mrs. Gray, Mr. E. Fowler and his sister, Mrs. Fox and her daughters, Messrs. Gordon, Cooley, J. Partridge, &c., &c. Rappings were heard, and a communication from the "spirits" requested the company to play upon a piano in the room. This was done, the raps beating accurate time to the measure. Mr. Gordon, who was a *medium*, was thrown into a magnetic sleep, during which he gave utterance to some remarks directed against the too ready yielding to sister-superstitions with those which, in past ages, obstructed the advance of Gospel light, and the pure influx of the Holy Spirit.

While this was proceeding, sounds were occasionally heard on the door and sides of the apartment, aloof from any person, as loud as could be produced by a violent "pounding" with a man's fist. The table at which Mr. Partridge was employed in taking notes, was several times moved from its place; and a chair, which stood outside of the circle, and several feet distant from any one present, was moved up to the circle, and back again, placed on its side, &c., &c.

These, however, were the usual phenomena,

and of such frequent occurrence, that they excited but little interest. In the present case they proved to be but the prologue to demonstrations of a most astounding character, and such as, I am fully aware, will tax to the utmost the faith of the uninitiated in the veracity of those upon whose concurrent testimony these facts were subsequently made public.

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

The card-table before mentioned began to move with violent force from one side of our circle

(which was large) to the other, rocking and rising up and coming down, and finally the leaf was shut up, the cover turned round to its place, the table was gently turned upside down, and laid at our feet. In this situation, myself and others took hold of it, and ascertained its position; and, after a short interval, it was turned up, the leaf opened, and the table placed as before. A chair, which stood outside of our circle, and several feet from any one, was suddenly moved up to the circle and back, rocked, and finally, with great rapidity, conveyed from one end of the room to the other, winding its way among the people who sat there without touching them, and yet at times passing with fearful rapidity within an inch or two of our persons.

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

Afterwards the bass viol and violin were raised above their heads, and out of their reach (except one end, which sometimes rested on their hand, head, or shoulder, often changing), and in this

position they were played and rapped upon as by human fingers, and the time marked as before.

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

From this period, the Judge became a regular member of the magnetic circle, and at a meeting somewhat subsequent to the above, it was announced to him that he would shortly be himself a *medium*, and that too under circumstances which would enable him to record and give to the world such communications as he might receive. This promise is understood to have been realised. The Judge became clairvoyant, or, as he expressed it, "found in his mind" certain scenes or visions relating to the spiritual world, in all of

which scenes, actors, and incidents were as vividly pictured, as though presented to his outward senses. These occur as well by day as by night, and only require that external objects be shut out by closing the eyes. Certain of these visions or "revelations" have been made public from time to time, and are, as has been justly observed of them, "eminently practical in their character, and containing sentiments that cannot be unacceptable to the most pure and humble Christian. The lessons they teach are those of love and kindness, and address themselves to the calm, deliberate reason of man, asking from him no blind faith, but a careful inquiry and a deliberate judgment."

That the effect of the "manifestations" has, in this instance, at least, been fraught with advantage, is proved by the change said to be worked in the Judge's mind and manner. "From being irascible and excitable at times, he has become calm and moderate; from being occasionally stern and unyielding, he has become kind and gentle; from being a doubter as to the future, he has become well grounded in the belief of man's immortality, and his redemption through the mercy of God; and he has found in spiritual intercourse, not merely matter to gratify an idle curiosity, or responses to vain and frivolous inquiries, but wisdom most profound, knowledge most in-

teresting, and morality most pure and elevating, as all may find who will seek with an earnest desire for truth, and with minds open to its reception.

“A single consideration will conclude this sketch. The man who esteems it a privilege to respect his conscience at the hazard of whatever personal influence he may have acquired in half a century, who calmly follows, and with no vain regrets, his deepest convictions of duty, and, moreover, with a certain consciousness of all he has at stake, justly claims the respect and admiration of men.

“For this, more than for all else, is Judge Edmonds deserving of honour; nor is there aught in the settled purpose of his mind, to indicate that his course is determined by caprice or a momentary excitement. His recent legal opinions exhibit the method of his mind; they are clear, concise, and vigorous in statement, and denote a healthy action of the faculties most essential to the honourable discharge of his official duties.”

Such is Judge Edmonds, one of the latest, and certainly the most distinguished of those who have not scorned to listen with candour to the spiritual philosophy, and to yield to it the full amount of belief their reason declares to be its due. That he has been selected as the victim of a delusion and imposture, none who have the slightest idea of the training necessary for those

who attain the first rank in his astute profession, will dare affirm. That, by a simulated faith, he has any new honour to achieve, and not, rather, everything so hardly gained to forfeit, no one who has mixed with American society of the present time will be likely to affirm. Many as are the adherents of the doctrines we are discussing, the confessions of faith are few. However the discussion of crude philosophies may divert a leisure moment, it must not endanger the paramount interests of the store and counting-house. It is gossip, and nothing more. The editor will not endanger his paper, the physician his practice, the merchant his reputation for cold, calculating shrewdness, by acknowledging that he can believe such marvels! In fact, the spirit-manifestations, though revered in private, like a monarch "in hiding," bears as much proportion outwardly to the real market-business of life as does the stick yonder respectable Kentuckian is whittling, to the bargain he is attempting to drive.

The more honour, therefore, to Judge Edmonds.

To select any other individual examples from the multitude of *media* since developed, would be to detain us unnecessarily from the consideration of such other points of interest as attach to the general subject; and I would therefore only illustrate this portion of it, with the history of the manifestation said to have occurred at the house

of Mr. Ward Cheney; the *medium* on this occasion being a Mr. David or Daniel Hume, a member of the New York Conference, and a clairvoyant of extraordinary power. The narrative cannot be more concisely conveyed than in the words of the eye-witness; and it remains only to add that, however singular and incredible the circumstances may appear—whatever the machinery, be it material or otherwise, set in motion to produce them—the facts themselves are from a source which I have every reason to believe deserving of the most ample reliance.

“On the 8th, in company with three gentlemen, I paid a visit to Ward Cheney, Esq., residing in Manchester, at whose house a good *medium*, Mr. Daniel D. Hume, was temporarily stopping. After a formal introduction by one of our party who was acquainted with Mr. C., we entered into social and pleasant conversation, and a proposition was soon made by one of us to try our luck in getting spiritual communications. A circle was accordingly formed, with Mr. Hume as a member, and the well-known vibrations on the table were soon forthcoming, loud and distinct. One of my friends had never seen anything of the kind, and he accordingly looked under the table, to make sure that no one touched it. Answers of a personal character were given very freely; such as tests of identity (the *medium* being a total stranger

to both parties), messages of a joyful import, &c. &c.

“The *medium* was then (apparently) thrown into a spiritually magnetic state, discovering great rigidity of muscle and the ordinary phenomena of the psycho-magnetic condition, including a magnetic locking of the jaws, in which an iron-like hardness of the muscles was apparent. He then spelt out (with his eyes closely bandaged) some remarkable and interesting messages to one or two of the company, the personal nature of which precludes their publication, but which were declared by those interested to be perfect tests. He did this by pointing, with almost incredible rapidity to the different letters of an alphabet arranged on a 7-by-9 card, and thus spelling out the necessary words. A rapid writer had difficulty in keeping up with him, and when a word or a sentence was partially finished, a suggestion from any of the company as to what was intended to be spelt, would, if correct, be answered by eager and vehement rappings in various parts of the table. Among others (all remarkable) came a message from two sailors lost at sea, relatives of one of the company, a stranger to most of those present. These spirits announced themselves, somewhat unexpectedly, by canting over the solid and ponderous table, and rolling it in the manner of a vessel in a violent tempest. Accompanying this

demonstration, came a violent *creaking*, as of the cables of a ship when strained in a gale; then came the loud sound of a prolonged wailing, shrieking blast of wind, precisely such a noise as the wind makes in the rigging of a ship in a storm at sea; and the creaking of the timbers and masts, as the vessel surged to one side or the other, was distinctly heard by all. Next came the regular, sullen shocks of the waves as they struck the bows of the doomed vessel. All this time the table kept up the rocking motion. And now the table was *capsized* on the floor! All this was done with no one touching the table, as a close and constant scrutiny was kept up by two, at least, of our party. These two sailors (whose names and ages were given), it seems, lost their lives by the capsizing of a vessel, as represented; although this fact, I have the best reasons for knowing, was not previously known to the *medium* or the company!

“Demonstrations now increased in force and number. The table was actually lifted up from the floor, without the application of a human hand or foot. A table, weighing (I should judge) 100 pounds, was lifted up a foot from the floor, the legs touching nothing! I jumped upon it, and it came up again! It then commenced rocking, without, however, allowing me to slide off, although it canted at least to an angle of 45° . Finally, an

almost perpendicular inclination slid me off, and another of the company tried it with the same results. These things all happened in a room which was light enough to allow of our seeing under and over and all around the table, which was touched by no one except the two persons who, respectively, got upon it to keep it down.

“ We went into a darkened room to see the spiritual flashes of light said to have been vouchsafed to some investigators. Instead of this, we were greeted with *tremendous rappings* all about us. Some of the blows on the walls, floor, and tables, within three inches of myself, were *astounding*. I could hardly produce such violent demonstrations with my fist, though I were to strike with all my might. The very walls shook. Answers to questions were given by concussions of varying force and intonation, according to the character of the spirits communicating. A favourite little daughter of one of the gentlemen present—a stranger from a remote state—who had left the earth in the fourth year of her age, announced her presence by a thick pattering *rain* of eager and joyful little raps; and in answer to an inward request of her father, she laid her baby hand upon his forehead! This was a man who was *not* a believer in these things; he had never before seen them; but he could not mistake the thrilling feeling of that spirit touch. I also had a similar

manifestation, in the character of which I am not deceived.

“Suddenly, and without any expectation on the part of the company, the *medium*, Mr. Hume, was taken up in the air! I had hold of his hand at the time, and I felt of his feet; they were lifted a foot from the floor! He palpitated from head to foot with the contending emotions of joy and fear which choked his utterance. Again and again he was taken from the floor, and the third time he was carried to the lofty ceiling of the apartment, with which his hands and head came in gentle contact. I felt the distance from the soles of his boots to the floor, and it was nearly three feet. Others touched his feet to satisfy themselves.

“This statement can be substantiated, if necessary.”

Mr. Ward Cheney, at whose house these manifestations were witnessed, is, I believe, the brother of the Boston artist of that name; and he has since, if I am rightly informed, published a detailed account of this and other scenes of a like strange nature. I have not, however, seen this document, and am indebted for further information and corroborative testimony, as to the leading feature of the case, chiefly to private sources; from one of which, a lady resident in Boston, I extract the following:—

“I remember that, in your last letter, you requested to be informed of the precise particulars of the Cheney spirit-story. It was related to me by — —, who also mentioned at the time that Mr. Cheney’s brother had published a full account of it. If, on my return to Boston, I can possibly procure this letter, I will send it to you as being, no doubt, the most circumstantial narration.

“In the meantime, however, the facts are these :—

“A circle were in the habit of assembling at Mr. Cheney’s house, and had, on every occasion, very wonderful manifestations. One evening, an unanimous request was preferred, that the spirits would afford the party there assembled some irrefragable evidence of their actual presence. To the utter amazement, as you may suppose, of the entire circle—prepared, as they doubtless were, for something strange—the *medium* was, on the instant, *lifted into the air, and there suspended by invisible agency for a space of two or three minutes, without touching anything or anybody present!*”

Should *you*, my dear Sceptic, or any of your incredulous brotherhood, be disposed at once to reject this story as a bold romance, all that can be required of you is, that you suspend your final judgment, until you have seen, in the following

pages, how, by the operation of recognised laws, phenomena of a different kind, yet no less marked and extraordinary, have been eduuced, and accepted as results not merely *possible*, but natural and true.

CHAPTER V.

WRITTEN MANIFESTATIONS.

Communications purporting to proceed from the spirits of eminent deceased—Remarkable similarity of style—Edgar Poe—Macdonald Clarke, the “Mad Poet”—Robert Southey—Percy Bysahe Shelley—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—A rapid composition—Prose communications—Washington—Jefferson—Calvin—Fenelon—Private Messages—The sentiment of freedom—Spiritual autographs—Spirit linguists, &c.

A NEW feature was now to display itself; one of a character sufficiently remarkable to awaken sudden interest in the minds of many who had theretofore stood aloof from the controversy, “non-committal,” as the American phrase has it, and permitting the affair to work its own way towards a defined position.

The writings of the deceased American poet, Edgar A. Poe, have not, hitherto, attained any great degree of European celebrity. His curious poem, the “Raven,” published in the *Illustrated London News*, and since principally known, like many other pieces of rare desert, by its numerous

burlesque imitations, affords but an indifferent example of his peculiar style of thought and diction. Written with excessive care and labour, it must, after all, be considered rather as an able and finished specimen of poetic mechanism, than as offering a fair reflex of the writer's singular and most sensitive mind. This is the more to be regretted, inasmuch as the perusal of other poems, flowing more unrestrainedly from this writer's fruitful but morbid fancy, would have enabled the reader to judge more accurately of the extraordinary *vraisemblance* suggested by the lines I am about to quote.

It was announced in a work, entitled the *Spirit Messenger*, got up with the avowed object of gathering all information of interest on the subject of the manifestations, that a *medium*, Mrs. Lydia Tenney, of Georgetown, Massachusetts, had, in a magnetic circle recently assembled, communicated the following "message" and poem, purporting to be from the spirit of the deceased poet :—

"Listen to me, and I will tell you of beautiful things—of thoughts both wild and tender—both soothing and tumultuous, which dwell in a human heart. A question which has moved the minds of millions is, What is the end and aim of imagination?—for what was it implanted in the human organisation? What was my own? but a vortex rushing within itself, upon whose brink I could seem to stand and see what was being swal-

lowed and reproduced — thorns, jagged rocks,
beautiful flowers—all in the whirl of this ceaseless
current merged.

' O, the dark, the awful chasm !
O, the fearful spirit spasm !
Wrought by unresisted passion,
 In my heart.
Fancies joyous, but alluring,
Love pure, but unenduring,
From time to time securing,
 Each a part.

Then embraced by seraph bands—
Drawn by tender, loving hands—
From those treacherous, hateful sands
 Of despair.
How my soul was waked to gladness,
And cast off the deadening sadness,
And the soul-devouring madness
 Writhing there.

*Then came dreams so soft and holy,
Over roses wandering slowly,
With sweet music stealing lowly
 To my ear.*

Hark ! I hear—I hear her calling,
In tones no more of wailing,
But in dewy sweetness falling—
 ' Here—up here !'

Thanks, great Heaven, I am stronger—
Slave to earthly lusts no longer,
 I am free.
*O, this lightness ! O, this brightness !
O, this pure and heavenly whiteness,
 Marking thee !*

Freed from earth and sin for ever—
Death can us no more dis sever,
Humbly thank great God together—
Thou and we.'"

To those unable to judge of the wonderful manner in which not only the style of the unfortunate poet, but his peculiar idiosyncrasy, is reflected in the above lines, this poem can only address itself in one of two shapes, viz. as a proof that spiritual manifestations have indeed affinity to something more than incarnate intelligences, or as presenting the phenomenon of minds of extraordinary power and genius lending themselves to a system of fraud and collusion without parallel in the history of mankind.

Be this as it may, the publication of this singular production increased an hundred-fold the interest already felt in the rappings, and, as a matter of course, attracted much attention to the *medium*. Mrs. Tenney's character and position were made the subject of scrutiny, and proved to be alike above reproach and beyond dispute—many persons resident in Georgetown (hitherto entirely sceptical as to the alleged manifestations), declaring their confident belief that she was incapable of deception in the matter. The lady herself repudiated all claim to poetic fire, positively averring that she was unable to write a line, uninfluenced by another will than her own; and that

her hand, in the act of writing, was entirely beyond her own control.

If the works of Edgar Poe are as yet little known on this side the Atlantic, still less are those of another unfortunate child of song—Mr. Macdonald Clarke—familiar to the reader. Poor Clarke, known as the “Mad Poet,” died, a year or two since, in an asylum for the insane. The following poem, communicated, like the former, through Mrs. Tenney, embody, as I was informed by Mr. Epes Sargent (no mean judge), the tone, style, and manner of the alleged author, with the same strange felicity as in the former case:—

“MARY O'SHANE.

Come listen to me while I sing unto thee
Of a cot in a flower-hedged lane,
Where near the deep sea, with a spirit as free,
Dwelt a maiden called Mary O'Shane—
Brave Mary, my Mary—Mary O'Shane.

O! my heart wanders back through the old beaten track,
Wept over so often in vain,
And the years roll away bringing back the last day
I parted from Mary O'Shane—
Dear Mary, my Mary—Mary O'Shane.

Through the long, idle days, I sang to her lays
From my own wild and wandering brain,
While lingering near, with a smile or a tear,
Listened my Mary O'Shane—
Dear Mary, my Mary—Mary O'Shane.

Drawn away one sweet night by the moon's gentle light,
 My steps wandered down to the main,
 Where the first wave that beat cast up at my feet
 The form of my Mary O'Shane—
 My Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

Poor reason undone, forsook her frail throne,
 And madness careered through my brain ;
 My beacon-light gone, I wandered alone,
 Wildly mourning my Mary O'Shane—
 My Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

The sun beaming now from the hill's smiling brow
 Rests down on the flower-hedged lane ;
 But no more can it rise on the soul-beaming eyes,
 The eyes of sweet Mary O'Shane—
 Dear Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

While the wild booming sea brought over to me
 'Thoughts sharp with their torturing pain,
 In each wave of the sea came wailing to me
 The voice of my Mary O'Shane—
 Loved Mary, lost Mary—Mary O'Shane.

Weary heart, wandering head, gladly sought their last bed,
 Madly prayed for again and again ;
 'Mong the Angels above I have found my lost love,
 I have clasped sainted Mary O'Shane—
 Angel Mary, my Mary—Mary O'Shane !"

Remarkable as are these communications, still
 "the greatest is behind." Cavillers might object
 that the muse of Robert Southey was unequal, at
 least while in this state of being, to the produc-
 tion of anything so beautiful and touching as the
 following:—

" P O E M .

Dictated by the Spirit of Robert Southey, March 25, 1851.

I.

Night overtook me ere my race was run,
And mind, which is the chariot of the soul,
Whose wheels revolve in radiance like the sun,
And utter glorious music, as they roll
To the eternal goal,
With sudden shock stood still. She heard the boom
Of thunders ; many cataracts seemed to pour
From the invisible mountains ; through the gloom
Flowed the great waters ; then I knew no more
But this, that thought was o'er.

II.

As one, who, drowning, feels his anguish cease,
And clasps his doom, a pale but gentle bride,
And gives his soul to slumber and sweet peace,
Yet thrills when living shapes the waves divide,
And moveth with the tide ;
So sinking deep beneath the unknown sea
Of intellectual sleep, I rested there :
I knew I was not dead, though soon to be,
But still alive to love, to loving care,
To sunshine and to prayer.

III.

And life and death and immortality
Each of my being held a separate part :
Life there, as asp within an o'erblown tree ;
Death there, as frost, with intermitting smart ;
But in the secret heart

The sense of immortality, the breath
 Of being, indestructible, the trust
 In Christ, of final triumph over death,
 And spiritual blossoming from dust,
 And heaven with all the just.

IV.

The soul, like some sweet flower-bud yet unblown,
 Lay tranced in beauty in its silent cell ;
 The spirit slept, but dreamed of worlds unknown
 As dreams the chrysalid within its shell,
 Ere summer breathes its spell.
 But slumber grew more deep till morning broke,
 The Sabbath morning of the holy skies,—
 An angel touched my eyelids and I woke ;
 A voice of tenderest love said, ' Spirit, rise'—
 I lifted up mine eyes.

V.

And lo, I was in Paradise. The beams
 Of morning shone o'er landscapes green and gold,
 O'er trees with star-like clusters, o'er the streams
 Of crystal, and o'er many a tented fold.
 A patriarch, as, of old,
 Melchisedec might have approached a guest,
 Drew near me, as in reverent awe I bent,
 And bade me welcome to the land of rest,
 And led me upward, wondering as I went,
 Into his milk-white tent."

Slightly different from the foregoing, is a fragment, for which we are indebted to the ghost of Shelley! The poem is as unsubstantial as the man; but, considering that, under the circum-

stances, we are not reasonably entitled to expect more than the "ghost of a poem"—here it is, commencing, at all events, with a sturdy axiom, such as no man will be hardy enough to challenge :—

" Man hath no power
To bind the spirit here. Immutable and pure
Are laws that move us in our *Spirit-home*.
We have no Word of God save holiest page
Of Nature's book, spread out in panoramic view.
Here I am blest—"

And Sceptic, in whom I have more than once been compelled to rebuke a slight tendency to slang, remarks, *sotto voce*, that *he* will consent to be "blest" also, if he believes that in any change of sphere whatever, Shelley would be capable of inditing such a line as the penultimate. But worse is coming :—

" My mind can sweep o'er all
Of Beauty, and drink in a freedom
That on earth I was denied. Earth's sons,
With souls of clay, would have despoiled me ;
They made me what I was—they made me doubt ;
But here, they have no power to mar my soul,
For to my 'luminated spirit is revealed
What once was dim and shadowy on earth.
Ah ! Immortality, thy bliss—and still
'Twas I who doubted thee !

Friend, listen why :
I saw the wrongs in *Church* and *State*, and I, too,
Saw a power to right them, and to make
An Eden's garden smiling here—

But others scorned, and wished not to right
Those wrongs I saw, for they were false,

Yet feigning to be true.

And when I thought of life, I said, 'tis dreams;

And *Death* I said, is but a dreamless sleep;

And man, so false to man, I ne'er can wish

Affinity to thee—far better not to be;

And so I wished there was no *after life*.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY."

The *medium* has, in this latter instance, thought fit to conceal her name and residence, conscious, probably, of some secret misgiving that the next communication received from the quarter last mentioned, might convey what in spirit parlance would be equivalent to notice of action for defamation of character.

Poor Coleridge fares little better. Could he have foreseen to what imputations his muse was to be exposed, he might have been less indifferent to posthumous fame than his simple and beautiful epitaph implies.

Listen to the following:—

"There is no doubt that there exist such voices;

Yet I would not call them

Voices of warning, that announce to us

Only the inevitable. As the sun,

Ere it be risen, sometimes paints its image

In the atmosphere; so often do the spirits

Of great events stride on before the events;

And in to-day already walks to-morrow.

COLERIDGE."

Some one having already noticed that "coming events cast their shadows before," the spirit of S. T. C. strikes out a new and bold idea, and the image of to-morrow quietly "walking into" to-day, ought to embalm this little poem for ever, in the memories of all true lovers of genius and originality.

One other poetic communication, remarkable chiefly for having been, as the report states, written in *fifteen minutes!* The authorship is indefinite, the piece having been dictated by "a guardian spirit,"—the *medium* being a Mr. L., of the U. S. navy. The report continues in these singular words:—

"On the 29th August, the *invisible* author is stated to have *appeared*, and dictated as follows: The same spirit wrote the title, '*Dawning*,' underscored the 'wrong of ages,' placed an asterisk by the words, and wrote at the foot, 'Theology;' directing that it should be forwarded to the *Spiritual Telegraph* (a weekly journal), and signed 'EBEN.'

'DAWNING.

' It is midnight; and dark shadows wrap the earth in murky gloom,
 And the silence is as death-like as the silence of the tomb;
 Not a zephyr's breath is stirring, e'en the owl has ceased his call,
 And the darkness and the silence clothe the earth as with a pall.
 In this hour of Nature's stillness, Thought roams free and uncontrolled;
 Now the body rules no longer, but the spirit's powers unfold.

Now the Future's sable curtain seems to roll away in night,
 To reveal the coming ages to the spirit's eagle-sight,
 Now we see the God of Mercy, stooping from his golden seat
 To dispense his living justice to the Nations at his feet.
 Lo! the despots' iron sceptre crumbles in the eager hand,
 And the monarch's throne stands vacant for the meanest of the land.
 Bloated wealth with all his treasure is not worshipped as a god,
 Not will conscious virtue tremble at the mammon-seeker's nod.
 Lo! the prison's massive portals, closed no more with jealous care,
 Shut not out heaven's glorious sun-light from some lonely prisoner
 there,
 But the doors stand idly open, swinging in the summer gale;
 Those walls shall never echo back some weary captive's tale;
 The mighty *Wrong of Ages*, that has grown to giant size,
 Fades away like winter frost-work when the sun illumines the skies:
 And *sin*, that word ill-omened, blackens *not* the human soul,
 Man's heart looks *on* and *upward*, with an Eden for its goal.
 Look up! ye sons of sorrow, see ye not the coming light?
 See ye not the golden glory that illumines the Eastern height?
 Lo! the earth that hung in shadow sees the glory from afar
 Of a mighty *dawning FUTURE*, of *another Morning Star!*

EBEN.'''

Volumes might be filled with the prose communications purporting to proceed from the like supernatural sources. It must be owned that the great majority of these are of a very mediocre character, and would rather induce an apprehension that the spirits of the illustrious and eminent persons from whom these lucubrations emanate, have rather deteriorated than improved, by their translation to another sphere.

Readers must judge for themselves. Here are

abundant specimens. Where shall we begin?
With George Washington, perhaps.

WASHINGTON.

Robert White—Medium.

“O ye men of intelligence! Be ye warned that this doctrine of spiritual intercourse will spread and overleap all opposition. Be patient, examine, investigate—try all things by the unfailling laws of nature and reason. Be not easily turned from your course—let onward and upward be your watchword—all will be well if you persevere. Have charity; love your opposers; forbear; seek to enlighten them. Oh! be forgiving; you are progressing. All is not truth that is asserted, but that which will stand the test of examination alone. All will work together for your good. O persevere in the investigation of this truth. I would like to impress on the mind the necessity of purity in life and thought. It would make man happy and prepare him for the reception of these heavenly truths. The mind will become pure and cleansed of its prejudice and bigotry, and it will begin to advance and be able to understand the subject in all its fulness and beauty; it will make you wise, and advance you to occupy a higher position in the spirit-world. You must not expect to comprehend spiritualism in a moment,

or in a day, week, or year. As you progress, the hidden beauties will be unfolded to the mind. Exercise and pursue the subject with diligence. Be pure and have holy and God-like views, and in proportion, you will progress.

Signed, "WASHINGTON."

Communicated April 21, 1852.

JEFFERSON.

William Rogers—Medium.

"I am pleased that I am permitted to express my thoughts to those who remain on earth. I can but render thanks to our Father, God, for the great blessings he has conferred upon my beloved country. The anniversary of America's birth is now being observed by millions of happy people, who enjoy the greatest blessings of any earthly nation. These blessings were won by a thorough and impartial investigation of the various theories of government, one of which was carried out in practice by a class of men who were not afraid of truth. In all of its affairs (the government) it is as near the intended of God as its founders could, at that time, adopt, and at the same time consolidate the States. But with all its blessings, it was not perfect, nor is it yet, and probably never will be. The Union as it is, is worth preserving, and I pray my countrymen will not destroy it, for as

sure as they do, civil war and carnage will assuredly follow. Better permit *one evil* than to destroy all that is good. From this fire of Liberty the sparks of freedom are flying across the waters, and have already kindled fires beyond the seas. These will burn wherever the winds of thought and education blow, until tyranny, bigotry, superstition, and all the curses which afflict man, are consumed.

“THOMAS JEFFERSON.”

4th July, 1851.

CALVIN.

(ON THE LAWS OF THE SPHERES.)

D. G. Green—Medium.

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

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

“JOHN CALVIN.”

FENELON.

Mrs. S. French—Medium.

“Spirits would speak of the faith which they would give unto you:

“Love first our God, with constant outpourings of thankfulness for his boundless mercy; then, love thy brother, and if he hate thee, love him still, and let him not go without thy blessing.

“Ye may know that all nations shall be united, even as one brotherhood; that our work, though mighty, nevertheless shall be complete. See you not that our heavenly Father loveth all, even as an earthly parent loveth his children? He has spread all things before you, saying: ‘Come ye and partake, for ye are my children.’

“Live in the light of that faith which we give unto you, and that love of God within you; and that love shall be a faith unto you, which shall glow brighter and brighter to a glorious reality. For we *know* whereof we confirm you; that as your love is for one another, even so is your love for God. And, remember, I beseech you, that in the life which the soul liveth, you are rewarded according to the spirit of truth, love, faith, and wisdom, which now dwelleth in you; for as is your *true* love and wisdom, even so shall be your recompense. *We* will aid you, strengthen you, and lead you, step by step, through the immeasurable fields of progressive wisdom to that fountain from whence gusheth the waters of eternal life,—to that joy which hath no sorrow, to that eternity which hath no bound.

“While on earth, I sought, and still seek with a mightier than earthly power, to correct not the *outer* but the *inner* man; and your mission is to aid us. Then *work*, not doubting; for what we

give unto you is *good*, and that which is good can in no wise be *evil*. See that you live not by faith alone, but by works also."

Out of the immense mass of communications received from less eminent spirits, many curious specimens might be selected. Certain of these, it is distressing to remark, are less distinguished for their orthography and grammatical construction, than could be wished or expected. Many an illiterate phrase, or verbal common-place, might startle even the fondest believers in the spirit-theory, were it not considered probable that the messages in question are joint productions of the spirit and medium; the former suggesting the *idea*—the latter the grammar!

Here are a few specimens of what may be called the *private* class of communications.

From a father in the spirit-world:—

"My son, oh, my son, what can a spirit-father say to interest you most? I am with you to inspire your soul with hopes of a glorious future. Then go on, my son, let hope bear you on the tide of life that hath nearly attained its meridian, and ere it begins to settle down, be thou prepared for a high and holier seat in the kingdom of heaven, where you may be joined in the happy circles of those who have kept vigils over you."

From Lorenzo Dow, Methodist, who died in 1836, but could not, in his present state of being, recollect the month:—

By Miss Irish, Medium.

“Sweet is the *joy* of the holy, whose motto is truth, who have the true meekness and are lowly, who are never *saucy*, or use disrespect to their superiors. Young man, from a sincere friend.”

From the spirit of Elias Smith:—

“My friends: a change will come, and you will enjoy the fruits of your labours; let hope inspire your hearts, for the good time is soon coming. Society is changing, and men are learning to exercise charity.

“That power which now controls the spiritual telegraphing from sphere to sphere, cannot fail to convince man he is immortal, that he should place dependence upon God, and not upon the creeds of men. (Signed) “ELIAS SMITH.”

“Upon *what* creeds?” was shrewdly asked by one of the circle.

The communication continued:—

“We refer to such creeds as exclude and prohibit that liberty of thought, or freedom of expression, which tends to reform society.”

A young lady received the following from a sister, who told the time of her death, the year and month, and spelled out her name, *correctly* :—

“Loved friends, who still retain the forms of earth, I am often near you, and would make you sensible of the fact, if I could make you sensible of my approach without giving you alarm. Angels are ever your constant companions to guard and influence and to invite your spirit onward and upward to the land of harmony.”

From a little girl who died in 1846, aged four years :—

“We are all sons of freedom, and we know nothing but love and harmony with innocence and virtue. We are clothed with the most lovely garments. We have nothing to rest the eye upon that is unpleasant. We are surrounded with the most refreshing atmosphere. What else would you like to hear from little Cis.”

The reader, however, has probably had enough of little Cis, or any other (to him) anonymous interlocutors. Something of more extended significance must close this chapter.

The visit, or as he preferred to call it, “mission” of Kossuth to the United States, gave rise to one of the most remarkable phenomena in the whole history of the manifestations.

It must be observed, that, besides the many oral and physical demonstrations afforded by the magnetic circles in New York, there had been obtained, from time to time, mystical manuscripts, chiefly in foreign and ancient languages; or in the form of autographs of eminent persons deceased. The history of the operation is as follows:—

At one of a series of meetings (hereafter more particularly described), convened for the purpose of “spiritual intercourse,” at the residence of Mr. Charles Partridge, New York, the subject of Kosuth’s “mission” was referred to, and (whether from a desire to know how far “material aid” might be safely accorded, or from some idle curiosity as to the missing crown of Hungary), pressed somewhat eagerly upon the notice of the spirits. The latter, however, cut all questioning short, by addressing the medium, Mr. Edward P. Fowler, thus:—

“Edward, place a paper on your table, and we will write a sentiment on this matter, and subscribe it with our names. You will then sign it also.”

The result reported was as follows:—

In accordance with the above directions, Edward placed a paper on his table, in his sleeping room, which was duly written upon in the course of the night, and signed by forty-three spirits. It was subsequently signed by the members of the circle, but, owing to the omission of the his-

tory, and the irregular mode of affixing the signatures of the members, the spirits made the following communication at the succeeding regular meeting:—

“Burn that, and we will write upon another.”

Accordingly, the first paper was destroyed, and a parchment was procured and placed on Edward's table, on his retiring for the night. On the morning of the 23rd of December, when the medium rose, he found the sentiment, “PEACE, BUT NOT WITHOUT FREEDOM,” and the signatures inscribed on the parchment.

At the meeting of the circle held on the 25th of December, Dr. Hull asked the spirits whether each spirit executed his or her own name, as they occurred on the parchment, when the spirits answered emphatically, “YES!”

A certificate was then drawn up, and signed by sixteen witnesses.*

* “We the undersigned, believing that these are the signatures of the spirits themselves, and fully concurring in the sentiment expressed, hereunto affix our names this twenty-fifth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one.

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| JOHN GRAY, | EDWARD P. FOWLER, |
| JOHN F. GRAY, M.D. | WILLIAM J. BANER, |
| S. T. FOWLER, | MISS ALMIRA L. FOWLER, |
| F. F. CARY, | MRS. S. A. PARTRIDGE, |
| MRS. CHARLOTTE F. WELLS, | ALMON ROFF, |
| ROBERT T. SHANNON, | WARD CHENEY, |
| DANIEL MINTHORN, | DR. R. T. HALLOCK, |
| CHARLES PARTRIDGE, | MRS. MARTHA H. F. BANER.” |

The doubt cast by Dr. Richmond, and other opponents of the spirit-theory, upon the authenticity of this document, subsequently called forth a more detailed account of its origin, which I will shortly give from Mr. Brittan's statement:—

STATEMENT CONCERNING THE MANUSCRIPTS, &c.

The authenticity of the SPIRIT-WRITINGS which have been given to this circle,* through Edward P. Fowler, as *medium*, having been called in question by Dr. Richmond, the undersigned beg leave to state that they have been in the habit of attending circles with Mr. Fowler, for the investigation of spiritual phenomena, for the last two years, generally once, and sometimes twice, in a week. During these sessions a great variety of demonstrations of spiritual presence and power have occurred, and numerous communications have been given, some of which may be thus briefly stated:—

Persons at the circle have been unexpectedly turned round with the chairs in which they were sitting, and moved to and from the table; chairs

* The NEW YORK CIRCLE was organised on the first of August, 1851, for the purpose of making careful observations concerning modern spiritual phenomena. The circle was composed of the following named persons: Judge Gray, Edward P. Fowler, Miss A. L. Fowler, Dr. Gray and lady, Dr. Hull, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Partridge, Dr. Warner, Dr. Hallock and lady, W. J. Baner and lady, and Robert T. Shannon, who have been accustomed to hold frequent

and sofas have suddenly started from their positions against the wall, and moved forward to the centre of the room, when they were required in the formation of the circle; the persons in the circle have each successively lifted his own side of the table, and the invisible power has raised the opposite side correspondingly; occasionally the spirits have raised the table entirely, and sustained it in air, at a distance of from one to three feet from the floor, so that all could satisfy themselves that no person in the flesh was touching it; lights of various colours have been produced in dark rooms; the table has often been rocked with great violence, and suddenly,—and unexpectedly to the whole company—it has been instantly arrested and held firm and immovable, with the upper surface inclined to an angle of some forty-five degrees, when the lamp, pencils, and other objects on the table, would slide or roll to the very edge, and there remain fixed as if rivetted to the table; a man has been suspended in, and conveyed through, the air, in all a distance of fifty feet or more. The communications have been given in various ways, but chiefly in writ-meetings up to the present time. It will not of course be inferred that all of these parties have been present at every meeting of the circle, or that they have, in all cases, witnessed precisely the same phenomena. It should be observed, however, that Judge Edmonds, Prof. George Bush, S. B. Brittan, Almond Roff, Samuel Fowler, D. Minthorn, and others, have, on several occasions, participated by invitation.

ings and by the rappings, after the ordinary alphabetical mode.

To establish the authenticity of the spirit-writings through Mr. Fowler, the following specific statements seem to be required: At the close of the session, held on the 17th of November, 1851, the spirits—through the alphabet, and in their usual manner—said, “We wish to give you a sentence for you to find out and remember;” when the following was communicated: “*Debemos amar á todo el mundo, aun á nuestros enemigos.*” No person present on that occasion understood a word of this language, but we were subsequently informed that it was Spanish.

At the sitting on the 24th of November, 1851, the spirits commenced with their signal for the alphabet, and the following message was communicated to the circle:—

“My dear friends,—I am happy to announce to you that the project which has engaged our attention for some years, has at last been in part accomplished.

“I am,

“BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.”

Question.—Do you refer to what took place with Edward in the nights of Friday and Saturday last?

Answer.—Yes.

Question.—Was the writing in Hebrew, exe-

cuted in Edward's presence, chosen by the spirits as significant of a new spiritual era ?

The Spirit.—Partially.

Here the colloquy was interrupted, and the spirits charged the medium as follows, the alphabetical mode of communication being preserved : “Edward, I wish you to get a book, and note down very particularly what you have witnessed and will yet see.”

By Mr. Partridge.—If I had been in the room, could I have seen what Edward saw ?

The Spirit.—Your sphere would not have admitted us to present ourselves even to Edward.

By some one.—Who was the small man that Edward saw in the room ?

Spirit.—The small man was Hahnemann.*

On Thursday evening, December 11th, 1851, while specimens of writing in Hebrew and Sanscrit, executed by spirits in Edward's room a day or two previous, were under examination, the signal for the alphabet was given, and the following communication spelled :—

“Edward, put that paper on your table, and we will write a sentiment and subscribe our names ; then you may sign it too.”

* The occurrence here referred to was the visible appearance of spirits as men in Edward's sleeping-room, during the nights of Friday and Saturday. On the last mentioned night, a spirit wrote in Hebrew—Daniel xii. 12, 13.

A paper was accordingly placed on the table, and, on the following day, in the absence of Mr. Fowler, the words, "PEACE, BUT NOT WITHOUT FREEDOM," were written on the paper, together with nearly all the autographs which were subsequently executed on parchment, an engraved *fac simile* of which was published in No. 9 of the *Spiritual Telegraph*.

Subsequently, on two separate occasions, viz., on the 18th and 22nd of December, remarks were made relative to the paper, and the signing of it by those of the circle who concurred in the sentiment it was supposed to teach. Some had signed it already, but irregularly, and in such a manner as to leave no room to record its history, which was regretted by all. At length the spirits said, "BURN THAT, AND WE WILL MAKE ANOTHER." This direction was obeyed; the paper was destroyed, and two sheets of parchment were procured and placed in a roll on Edward's table, and during the night of Dec. 23rd, 1851, the same sentiment, "Peace, but not without freedom," was again written, and fifty-six autographs attached, including all, or nearly all, the names on the first paper, with several others.

At the next meeting, which occurred on the 25th of December, the sentiment and signatures being under consideration, the question arose as to what was proper to be written as the history of

the manuscript, when the following message was received from the spirits:—"Now agree upon what should be written on the parchment." The spirits then directed Dr. Gray, Dr. Hull, Mr. Baner, and Mr. Partridge, to retire to another room and determine as to what should be written on the parchment. Dr. Hull was then designated as the one to execute the writing, which was done accordingly. It was then asked if the signatures were in each case executed by the will of each spirit whose name appears, or done by one operator for the whole? Answer: "Each for himself; by the aid of the battery."

During the session on the 19th of January, 1852, the spirits signified their desire to make a communication in Hebrew. Mr. Partridge asked who should call the alphabet, and received for answer, "*The only one present who understands it—GEORGE BUSH.*" Professor Bush thereupon proceeded to repeat the Hebrew alphabet, and a communication in that language was received!

Many additional facts might be given, to show that spirits communicate in various languages through E. P. Fowler, but the above will suffice for the purposes of this statement. We cannot allow the present occasion to pass without an expression of the entire confidence and unqualified esteem with which Mr. Fowler is regarded by the members of the New York Circle, and by those

who know him generally. We have had an intimate personal acquaintance with him for two years past—some of us for a much longer period—and we have only known him as a high-minded and honourable young man. From the beginning he has steadily refused to accept the slightest compensation for his time and services while employed in the capacity of *medium*. And we deem it but an act of simple justice to Mr. F. to record the fact, that, on all occasions we have found him entirely unassuming in his deportment, and eminently truthful in his life.

R. T. HALLOCK, M.D.,
L. T. WARNER, M.D.,
ALMIRA L. FOWLER,
A. G. HULL, M.D.,
W. J. BANER,
MR. & MRS. CHARLES PARTRIDGE,
JOHN F. GRAY, M.D.,
SAMUEL T. FOWLER.

A variety of other evidence is adduced, and the result of the whole is to show, first, that the spirits made no objection to the manner in which their own names were executed, and only required a new copy on account of the irregular mode of attestation by the witnesses; secondly,

that the rough and tremulous appearance of most of the autographs was owing to the surface of the parchment being extremely imperfect; thirdly, that the writings consisted of communications in various languages totally unknown to the medium, Mr. Fowler; and that the aforesaid autographs—(proved on examination to be perfect *fac similes* of those of the living persons)—were equally unknown to that gentleman; and, fourthly, that forgery of the document, and its conveyance, into the apartment of the *medium*, by any human collusion, were alike impossible.

It is only fair to observe that this evidence, though far too voluminous to transfer to these pages, carried with it a very strong feeling of conviction of its having been at least honestly adduced, and in a spirit of sincere belief in the circumstances deposed to.

The testimony of the New York Circle may be thus summed up:—

1. An invisible agency has been operating in the circle for two years past, producing a great variety of manifestations of power and intelligence—raising, moving, arresting, holding, suspending, and otherwise disturbing numerous ponderable objects—and all in direct contravention of the laws which govern the realm of material nature.

2. The agency that does all this, has appeared in the circle—by the multiform exhibitions of its mysterious presence—from time to time, and by means of the alphabet has made intelligent communications in several different languages, the import of which was not understood by the parties present.

3. The same agency has, on numerous occasions and in presence of many witnesses, asserted its claim to the authorship of the written communications and autographs now under consideration.

Mr. Brittan's statement of this singular case concludes with several strong testimonials to the character of Mr. Fowler, and the veracity of his statements.

The first from Professor George Bush, dated New York, March 27th, 1852, states that the alleged spirit-communications in Hebrew, Arabic, Sanscrit, Bengalee, Persian, French, Spanish, Malay, and Chinese, which had been submitted to his (the Professor's) inspection were of a very extraordinary character, and such as he could not well convey by any verbal description. That Mr. F. had no knowledge of the above languages, nor was he likely to be acting in collusion with any who had. The Professor declared himself satisfied; further, that Mr. Fowler could not have copied the writings from printed works, relying upon internal

evidence and a multitude of collateral circumstances for the correctness of this conclusion. On one occasion, indeed, it happened that a Hebrew communication had been spelled out to the Professor (through Mr. Fowler), in the presence of a large circle, not one of whom, himself excepted, had any knowledge of that language.

A second testimony declares:—

“I have been cognisant of the execution of some of the said manuscripts, under circumstances physically precluding the possibility of their having been done by any human agency.

“With most of the languages written, I believe Mr. Fowler to have been entirely unacquainted; and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, he has no books in any other of the languages than Greek, Latin, French, and German, with the exception of a small portion of the New Testament in Syriac, *which came into his possession subsequently to the production of these manuscripts.*

“MARTHA H. BANER.”

A third:—

“I can in a few words reply to your questions respecting Mr. E. P. Fowler. He has hitherto sustained an unblemished reputation for honesty and veracity, and enjoyed the confidence of all acquainted with him. * * * I have evidence

sufficient to my own mind, that he has had no agency in the writing of the different languages executed in his room, and purporting to be the productions of spirits.

“ Respectfully yours,

“ ALMIRA L. FOWLER.

“ Philadelphia, Sept. 24, 1852.”

Here the case rested.

CHAPTER VI.

NOTICE OF THE PULPIT.

Notice from the Pulpit—Different views of the clergy—Opinions compared—The Rev. C. B. Boynton and the Rev. J. P. Stuart.

IN any matter seriously affecting the feelings of the community at large, the pulpit is rarely altogether silent, and surely with great advantage may the preaching of abstract doctrines be suspended for a moment, when the opportunity offers of pressing home to the hearts of men the moral to be drawn from every great public event, and directing its application. It was not likely, therefore, that the much discussed manifestations should be overlooked by the clergy, nor that they should be insensible to the necessity of endeavouring to impart some direction to the fermenting flood of popular opinion, at this period fed by most conflicting currents. Some persons treated the entire affair with the supremest scorn; some with a sort of patronising approbation, as a capital trick, com-

pletely worthy of the success it had achieved; others denounced it as a dangerous delusion, and all its abettors as knaves and villains; others, again, inclined to the spirit-doctrine, but referred the manifestations to the exclusive agency of evil spirits, affirming, on scriptural authority, that in "these latter days, there shall be signs, and wonders, which should, if it were possible, deceive the very elect." Happily for the interests of knowledge, there are in all communities a candid few prepared to deal fairly by such new matters, and vindicate their claim to a calm and honest investigation.

Various indirect allusions were made, from time to time, by teachers of different sects, but these in a tone so guarded as to exercise little influence, until at length, by one orthodox pulpit, the matter was fairly taken up and dwelt upon.

The Rev. C. B. Boynton, of the Vine Street Congregational Church, on the evening of Sunday, Nov. 3, gave a lecture on Spiritualism, and made especial reference to the new "manifestations," which he characterised literally as *demonstrations*. He traced their progress through the history of past ages, expressing an opinion that the astrologers and magicians of old received their power of magic and divination from evil spirits, and that the influences of the present day have a similar origin.

Legions of demons encompass, in his opinion,

the atmosphere about us, and have the power to make "manifestations" through man. They might enter man and personify other spirits—spirits of friends deceased, or of prophets or apostles. The Prince of Darkness had the power of the air, and if a spirit should speak to him (Mr. B.), representing itself as the ethereal essence of his dearest departed friend, discrediting, in any particular, the doctrines and prophecies of the Bible, *as now understood*, he should believe it a lying spirit, assuming shapes that did not belong to it, for evil purposes. We must try the spirits by the teaching of Christ and his apostles.

If, from the demonstration now being made, a sect of Spiritualists should grow up that discredited established theology, and that sect should "increase and multiply," he should consider that the period was commencing, which he conceived to be foretold in the Bible, when the Prince of Darkness shall for a time have dominion, and the wicked shall triumph, prior to the winding up of terrestrial affairs, when the saints shall prevail, and Christ shall come in the clouds with his holy angels to judge the world.

About the middle of December, Professor Gatchell, of the Eclectic College, delivered two lectures at the hall of the Institute, in the course of which he gave a sketch of spiritual manifestations in various ages of the world, and presented his views upon their philosophy.

On Sunday evening, December 22nd, the Rev. J. P. Stuart, of the New Jerusalem Society (Swedenborgian), announced a series of lectures on the communications between men and spiritual beings in another sphere. These lectures, though necessarily imbued with sectarian doctrines, contained so much new and deeply interesting matter, that, eschewing as far as possible the theological portions, I am tempted to give a brief condensation.

Mr. Stuart commenced by dividing the communications which formed the subject of his addresses, into four heads, viz.:—

1. *Divine*—relating to the manifestations which the Lord has made of himself to his creatures.
2. *Miraculous*—relating to the revelations which prophets and apostles have made.
3. *Magical and mesmeric*—relating to communications which the practisers of these arts have obtained with spirits, by means of impressible subjects.
4. *Electrical or galvanic*—relating to the communication which seems to be effected with spirits, by means of the interior forces of nature.

Of this latter class are the mysterious rappings.

“At the earliest period, angels and spirits ap-

peared to men, and always excited fear and apprehension. The presence of a spirit was a token of evil—voices speaking from the invisible world—visions of spiritual things—filled the minds even of good men with calamitous forebodings, while the evil would be utterly overwhelmed. Belshazzar, while drinking wine from the sacred vessels brought from Jerusalem, with his wives and concubines, and praising their gods, witnessed the hand writing on the wall, and trembled. When the Lord appeared to Adam in the garden, he was afraid. The usual commencement of the message of the angel of the Lord was, 'Fear not.' The word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision saying, 'Fear not, I am thy shield,' &c. The angel of the Lord called to Hagar, and said unto her, 'Fear not, for the Lord hath heard the voice of the lad,' &c. The Lord appeared to Isaac, and said, 'Fear not, for I am with thee,' &c. Moses said, 'Fear not, for God has come nigh to prove you,' &c. The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, and said, 'Peace be with thee, fear not, thou shalt not die,' &c. Gabriel appeared to Mary to make the annunciation, and said to her, 'Fear not, for thou hast found favour with God,' &c. Other passages from the New Testament were quoted to prove the fact as announced, that fear was common on the occasions of these communications. John of Patmos, was so addressed:

'Fear not, I am the first and the last,' &c. Within the last hundred years this fear has vanished; the visit of a spirit has now no terrors to any one; it disturbs neither men, women, nor children. All this is well; it shows at least that we are not afraid. Whoever he is that speaks from the night side of nature, we are not afraid of his voice. Angel, spirit, or demon, let him speak; we neither hide our eyes, nor shudder at his presence. On the contrary, we seek them out. We say, let them give us proof of their presence; let us hear their oracles. If they are divine, let us worship and adore. If they are miraculous, let us admire and wonder. If they are magical or mesmeric, let us see them. If they are galvanic or electrical, let us demonstrate them."

It will be unnecessary to follow Mr. Stuart though his exposition of the *first* form of communication, in which he referred to Biblical testimony in proof of his argument, that the power of spirit over matter had been abundantly illustrated in the days when the Lord of all things revealed himself to man.

On the occasion of Mr. Stuart's second lecture, in which he considered the *second* form of communication, he said:—

"In old times, times long ago gone by, it was common for angels and spirits to speak to the human race, and, by means of their messages, pro-

phets and apostles had communications with the spiritual world.”

After referring to the writings of Swedenborg, the lecturer continued:—

“ In the golden age, before the fall, the earth was the mirror of heaven; the objects here were in harmony with the laws there; hence the communication of angels with the men of that day was easy and complete. This condition of our race passed away with the fall, and was utterly removed at the flood as a general thing. With Adam—or the church called Adam—the communication was open and manifest—angels then were made the instructors and conservators of the human race, exerting their power in harmony with the laws of the human mind. Men sought the protection of heaven, and the angels, from their love of doing good, were glad to render this service to man.

“ When the human race turned away from the Lord, and relied on self, then the angels, finding men no longer in harmony with their life, withdrew from their presence. Hence the influx of evils and falsenesses that devastated and overwhelmed the golden age, and hence also the rise of a new church with the men who were called Noah and his posterity. In the decline of this church, or dispensation, the Lord established a covenant with Abraham, re-establish-

ing conjunction with heaven. The Abrahamic dispensation is strangely marked by miraculous communications with angels and spirits by means of inspired prophets."

The lecturer then cited the visits of the angels to Lot, in Sodom, who struck the people with blindness, "and did many things which men clothed in the material body could do, and vastly more. The fact that they were angels, was no hindrance to the exercise of their power among men. A man may work with a sledge hammer—an angel with the essences of the same, the galvanic and electrical attraction and repulsion; but which of these, even amongst men, is the more formidable—the hammer or the thunderbolt?"

"When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him, with a sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went unto him, and said, 'Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?' &c.

"Another remarkable apparition of an angel was during the pestilence sent upon Israel for the vanity of David in numbering the people, &c.

"From the account given us in Daniel x. 5—18, it is manifest that Daniel was reduced to a psychological state, far removed from the normal state, before he was made the subject of these visions. The doctrine is, that where an angel or spirit converses with a man, he is heard as plainly as one man by another, but by himself only. The

reason is, because the speech of the angel or spirit first insinuates itself into the thinking faculties, and by a secret passage strikes his organs of hearing from within; whereas the voice of one man passes into the atmosphere, and strikes the organs of hearing from without. Hence it comes to pass that the speaking of an angel or spirit is equally audible in many, inasmuch as the organ is affected in a like manner."

Instances were then given from the New Testament—the angel rolling away the stone from the sepulchre, and speaking to the women, the deliverance of the Apostles who had been cast into prison by the High Priest—also of Peter, whom Herod had imprisoned. "By what means, then, may angels exercise their power in this outward world? Evidently their power, however great, cannot flow down into ultimates without a medium. Then what is this medium of action? How do spirits act here?"

Mr. Stuart here advanced his own ideas on this subject, rather to excite investigation, as suggestive, rather than dogmatic. "It seems clear that an angel or spirit may see and feel the outward world by the transfer to himself of the sensation of one in the natural world, *provided the spiritual sight and perceptions of that one are opened, but not otherwise.* But even when a spirit does perceive the objects of this world, then how shall he get hold of them and move them? How can an

angel or spirit unbar a bolted door, or roll away a stone?

“In the transfer of mental impressions, the angel may possess himself most fully of all that the man has in his thought and in his memory. But neither thought, memory, nor emotion, will enable a man to lift a rock; then how will these enable an angel to do it? There are two worlds, the natural and the spiritual; angels and spirits are in one, men in the other. The natural world is the world of effects, the causes of which are in the spiritual world—are we not warranted in going one step further, and declaring that the essences of every object known here, and which in this world are hid, and even as Locke says, utterly unknown, that the essences are really the forms which the same objects have in the spiritual world? There is here, before us, a block of iron, wood, or stone. This is an effect—this is the form of some essence.

“The cause of this effect, and the essence of this form, are in the spiritual world. If this be so, may we not go a step further, and declare that the form this object assumes in the spiritual world, is as cognizable there as the form which it assumes in this world, and that the angel or spirit whose thought is directed to it, sees the one as easily as we do the other? Moreover, may not the angel handle and hold the essence, and the cause of

this *real* iron block, as readily and as familiarly as we do the actual iron block here ?

“As, however, the ideas of times and spaces in the spiritual world are not such as prevail in ours, the inhabitants of the former can exercise no power involving these ideas, unless the same medium that furnishes the idea, supply the power also. Therefore, although angels have power to move rocks, &c. &c., still the very idea of doing so cannot enter their minds, except by the perception of times and spaces. These natural ideas the angels or spirits may imbibe from man, while at the same time they retain their power over the essences and causes ; and by this means are enabled to exert themselves among the objects of this world as directly, and infinitely more efficiently, than men.”

Upon this ingenious hypothesis—the arguments in support of which I have been compelled greatly to condense, but which were listened to with the most eager interest—Mr. Stuart founded his second lecture.

The third lecture, embracing the *third* species of communication, the *magical and mesmeric*, was delivered on Sunday evening, January 5th.

Due allowance being made for sectarian views, some of Mr. Stuart's remarks are well worthy of consideration.

“*Magic*,” remarked the lecturer, “is the generic

term.* Communications with spirits and demons by witchcraft, soothsaying, sorcery, and magic, have abounded more or less in all ages of the world. Magic is the generic term. Magic is essentially *infernal*. Mesmerism always takes its quality from the intrinsic character of those who are engaged in it. It is infernal, and communicates with demons, if the mesmerists are of an evil genius; but if the mesmerist is in a good life—if he acknowledges and loves the Lord and exercises charity—then the spirits that ‘come from the vasty deep’ are of a similar character, and their utterances will be mingled with the leaven of truth. The same may be said of the trance and the trancee. Heaven and its glories are seen by some—hell and its miseries by others, while, to each, the *appearances* will, in the trance, accord, in a great degree, with his anticipations and his doctrines in regard to the future life.

“Upon the stage of the mesmerist, there are a dozen persons under his control. A magical spell destroys for the time the voluntary exercise of their *rationality* and *freedom*. They are swayed by the *word* or the *will* of the experimenter. A fantastic ship is seen in flames, the crew is heard to cry out. By phantasy a storm is made to arise before the enchained imagination, &c. They have no foundation in reality;

* For spiritual communications.

neither substance nor essence underlies the delusive form; and yet those who are impressed with it are made to believe that it has the most substantial reality. The magical miracles in Egypt may have been very similar to these phenomena; indeed, we are not able to see wherein they differ.

“In a French work, the Chevalier Marsham attempts to demonstrate that the school for magic among the Egyptians is the most ancient ever known in the world, and from thence it spread among the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, the Greeks, and Persians. St. Paul informs us, that Jannes and Jambres, famous magicians in the time of Pharaoh, resisted Moses. Pliny remarks that anciently there was no science more renowned, or more in honour, than that of magic: ‘*Summam literarum claritatem, gloriamque ex eâ scientiâ antiquitus et pene semper petitum.*’ In the sacred scriptures, the name *Magi*, or *Magus*, is never used in a good sense, or signifying philosophers who studied astronomy, except in one instance—the Magi who came to adore Jesus Christ at Bethlehem.

“Everywhere else they condemn magic and magicians. The prohibition in the Levitical law is very pointed: ‘Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them. I am the Lord thy God; and the soul

that turneth after such as have familiar spirits and after wizards, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people. Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.' The testimony of Scripture as to the reality and character of magic is unequivocal and full.

"Communications with spiritual realities by means of clairvoyant subjects are of frequent occurrence in our day, and indeed in our own city. It is a principle that facts are neither strengthened nor weakened by argument; facts are simply facts. Let every one examine, and then determine. In the temple where heroes and gods were enshrined, the oracle was once heard to utter—'There came here a wise man and a fool. The wise man investigated first, and then determined—the fool determined first, and never investigated.'

"In this day, wisdom and folly are much the same as then. It costs no labour to deny and doubt—it requires labour and perseverance to investigate.

"One thing is to be borne in mind, viz., that the oracles of clairvoyants must always partake, to some extent, of the same fallacies that abound in the persons making the experiments. Infallibility is never to be ascribed to them. It belongs only to the Lord."

The concluding lecture, on the *fourth* division

of the subject, the *electrical and galvanic*, applying, as it did, to the mysterious manifestations at that time agitating the public mind, was attended by an immense auditory, many hundreds having gone away unable to obtain entrance. Those who had been fortunate enough to do so, listened with the profoundest interest to the expositions of the intelligent lecturer.

The subject of the evening was divided into phenomena known as "mysterious knockings," the intelligence displayed in these phenomena, and the theories propounded for the solution of the mystery.

"Admitting the facts, for they are indisputable, still a variety of opinions will prevail as to the true explanation of the facts. A rational explanation of every fact and of every phenomenon is of vast importance, for some men deny even a fact, when they find it impossible to explain it in a rational light."

Mr. Stuart now examined the reality of the knockings, and came to the conclusion that the evidence is abundantly sufficient to establish their reality. The intelligence displayed in these phenomena indicates the presence of *mind* of no common order. He instanced the answer of the alleged spirit of Dr. Channing, as to the mode of the spirit-rapping, viz. :—"The sounds are, to a certain extent, produced by the control which invisible spiritual beings have over the electrical

medium of the nervous system. The spirits, by an effort of the will, make these sounds, and disturb the imponderable agents which pervade the objects and the localities where the sounds are heard." There is *mind* of some order and degree necessary in order to give forth this response.

The most interesting part of Mr. Stuart's lecture was on the third division, viz., the theories which are advanced to explain these mysterious manifestations. He mentioned two.

"The first teaches that the facts themselves are, in reality, only appearances wrought on the minds of those who see these things. It is claimed that, by a species of phantasy, the things mentioned only *seem* to take place—the table seems to move, the chairs to rattle, the blinds to open and shut, &c., and really these are the mere phantoms of the imagination, for no changes whatever take place in the outward world.

"This theory is the more plausible from the fact that many appearances in the outward world are *really* only appearances. These are the mesmeric or biological experiments which we often see. It would seem that almost any appearance is induced that the experimenter may please. The subjects under his sway see and hear a thousand things that have no reality in them. The cold wind blows, and they shiver as if in a winter storm, in the heat of summer, and *vice versâ*. They are made

to imagine the presence of serpents, and wild beasts, and similar objects. Now it is supposed that mischievous spirits, by means of their magical operations on the minds of the people there, produce these fantastic images on the interior sensorium, and move the brain and the external senses so as to give, in all respects, the same external *appearances* as though the external events were actual. But while some of the phenomena admit of this explanation, others do not; so the theory is insufficient, of which illustrations were given.

“The second theory is, that the volitions of these spiritual agents flow down actually into the ultimate plane of existence by means of the internal forces—the imponderable and invisible elements of nature. On every side we find strange mingling of extremes. Flowing into crude inanimate forms of matter that the foot treads upon, there are impalpable powers, imponderable agents, invisible substances. The spiritual world pours down its living powers into the forms of earth. Permeating every particle of matter, there are living forces along the enduring lines of which, the thoughts, volitions, and powers of spirits may glide and operate without contradiction or impediment.

“In the language of another, all power has its origin in mind. In the production of physical effects, mind acts through organic instruments or

by direct power over imponderable agents. The power of the human mind to produce electrical disturbances beyond the limits of its own organic medium, and beyond the sphere of organic existence, is beautifully evinced in the result of an experiment recently performed in Paris and Berlin, and reported to the French Academy of Sciences on May 21, 1849. By this experiment, deviations of the needle of a sensitive galvanometer are produced by volition. The oscillations of the needle vary from 30° to 50° , according to the power. All gross substances are pervaded by refined and invisible media. Heavy bodies move whenever the imponderable fluids pervading them are set in motion and disturbed. Thus science seems to show the mind of a man, while he has a sort of direct contact with the imponderable fluids that pervade all nature, and thus he may exercise some remote control over the kingdoms of matter. In this earth, the *laws of nature* are fixed and uniform, as a general fact; and, so thinking, we consider a *law* as having great power in it; whereas the laws of nature are only modes of manifestation; there is no power in the law, the law flows forth from the power, and what we see as the law—for example, the law of gravitation—is only a mode in which power acts. What, then, is the power? and where is the seat of that power?

“In the last analysis of every power, we arrive at Deity, but the mediums are innumerable through which Divine power flows; we call them the laws of nature and being; in every instance they are, in their inmost activities, spiritual beings in the human form. The law of gravitation and the law of cohesive attraction, and all other laws, rest back in the spiritual world, so that, really, the living forces of every *natural law* is found in the life of spirits and spiritual being.”

At the conclusion of this most interesting address, it was announced that Mr. Stuart would deliver a Supplementary Lecture, on the character of the supposed spirits, through whose agency the present manifestations were being made. Accordingly, on the evening of January 19th, another crowded auditory assembled. On this occasion, Mr. Stuart's remarks were, in substance, as follows:—

“It is supposed by many that whatever is disclosed by spirits who are in the other life, must be true; that spirits, good or evil, alike know the truth, and are disposed to speak it; that none are ignorant, none believe in lies; while all are capable of instructing the very wisest of the sons of men. In consequence of this erroneous belief in the wisdom, and even the infallibility, of spirits, great interest is felt in what they utter. People who regard not the wisdom of Solomon, or Socrates,

or Confucius, are quite obedient to *any* voice speaking from the spiritual world. There are those who will turn away from the sacred pages of the Holy Word, wherein are the arcana of the Divine wisdom of the Lord, to listen to messages that are reeled from the spiritual telegraph, whether the utterances are given from an angel, a spirit, or a devil."

The lecturer said, however, that he was glad these things had taken place, for he would confide in Divine Providence. "We might see for ourselves that we are gaining a most glorious result in the demonstrations of the spiritual world that are given to men of every class; for whether declarations of men who have passed into the other life are true or false, weighty or worthless, wise or nonsensical, *one* thing is gained by them. Henceforth the world shall know that death is neither a temporary nor an eternal sleep; but, when stripped of his mortal coil,

'A man's a man for a' that.'

From henceforth it shall be known that the sphere of immortal life is contiguous to the sphere of mortal life, and that millions of spiritual beings, unseen and unknown,

'Throng the air and tread the earth.'

He had seen much of clairvoyant communications

with the spirit-world, and had heard much of similar communications by means of rappings, and his deliberate conclusion was, that we may trust the spirit who gives utterances from within the veil, as far as we can see him; as far as we know the truth of what he utters from other sources; as far as we can confirm his testimony from other evidence, but no farther. We shall do well," concluded the lecturer, "never to surrender either our rationality of thought, or freedom of action, to the fantastic delusions that may be poured upon us from the spirit-world. Angels and spirits who speak to us, by permission of the Lord, never speak of anything that deprives man of the freedom of reason; and they never *teach*, for the Lord alone teaches man, through the medium of his Word."

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRESS.

Digressive—A few words on the Press—Vast increase—Use and abuse of the telegraph—Cruel hoax—Murder of the Prince-President—His resuscitation—General dissatisfaction—Cordial footing of the Press and Public—Christmas convivialities—Delicate dunning—Fugitive poems—Serials—Treatment of the manifestations—Squibs, &c.

It may easily be imagined that so excellent an occasion for sneer and satire was “improved” to the utmost degree of perfection, by the vigilant American press. A word or two on the subject of that vast organ may not be altogether irrelevant here.

Any attempt to classify the myriad of Heralds, Tribunes, Travellers, Couriers, Inquirers, Informants, Telegraphs, Democrats, Atlases, Republics, Picayunes, Bees, &c., &c., varying in price from one to three cents, would be perfectly futile. It was stated in an able lecture delivered at Toronto, in April last, by the Rev. Mr. Lillie, that the number of newspapers published in the United States, was, according to Davis’s “Half Century,”

| | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|------|
| In 1800 | . | . | . | 200 |
| 1810 | . | . | . | 359 |
| 1830 | . | . | . | 1000 |
| 1840 | . | . | . | 1400 |
| 1850 | . | . | . | 1600 |

and a recent calculation places the number in the present year, at the surprising number of 2,800! It is hardly necessary to remark that (setting aside those leading prints whose power, energy, and zealous patriotism, need neither description nor eulogy), no trifling portion of this mass of diurnal literature, may be fairly classed under the familiar title of "balderdash." A penny journal, relying for its support upon a circle of some three hundred and fifty unpunctual subscribers, can hardly be expected to provide first-rate talent, or widely-gathered information. Much amusement, however, may be culled from the pages of almost any American print; a species of coarse and rather colloquial wit being the predominant characteristic of the smaller fry. In most of these, a dozen lines dismiss the foreign intelligence; a column or so, the local; a few railway-smashes; half-a-dozen fires; the daily explosion of some racing steamer on the Western waters, fill up the greater portion of what remains; the "balance" being made up of *feuilleton* and personality.

The inconceivable rapidity with which news is disseminated, through the medium of this mass of

print, baffles calculation. The powers of its never-ceasing agent, the electrical telegraph, are taxed to the utmost, and frequently with the most happy consequence. In England, where no two points of intercourse can well be more than a few hours of railway-travel asunder, no true idea can be formed of the value and importance of this wonderful contrivance. One instance, which fell under my own notice, will illustrate its worth; as a second may prove to what vile purpose man will turn the greatest instrument of good.

During my stay in Boston a serious accident occurred, which seemed to create an unusual degree of interest and sympathy. The celebrated American actress and authoress, Mrs. M——, was riding with her sister through the town, when her horse suddenly reared, fell with, and rolled upon her, inflicting some severe injuries. This happened late one evening, but so zealously did the local agents of the press perform their accustomed duty, that the very next morning produced messages of eager inquiry from the numerous family connections and friends of the sufferer, many of whom resided several hundred miles distant.

An instance of the wilful misuse of this great engine, most disgraceful to such of the press as had not scrupled to connect themselves with it, was the notorious hoax played off in February

of the present year, having reference to the alleged assassination of the Prince-President. A telegraphic despatch, in the usual form, announced the arrival of an English steamer at Halifax, bringing intelligence of the murder, details of which were given, even to a stirring description of the fierce death-struggle between the Prince and his assassin, and the last disturbed moments of the unfortunate victim; the subsequent demeanour of the murderer, the state of Paris, &c., forming the subject of further observations. Every journal but one, in Boston, published the news as authentic; and, if certain of the cautious suspended their belief, at all events, the effects upon the money-market and commercial transactions generally were very severely felt, all business being, for a time, absolutely at a stand. It will scarcely be credited that the newspapers in question subsequently not only acknowledged the hoax, but justified it! It appeared that the majority of the Boston press had entered into an association to divide the expenses of the telegraphic intelligence. Two journals, finding the charge too onerous, had seceded from the engagement, but as these still contrived, by some means, to partake of the early intelligence, it was agreed to punish them by means of the hoax aforesaid; thus, for the gratification of a silly spite, disregarding the effect upon the general public,—and, no doubt, inflicting

upon many engaged in business, a very serious injury.

But let us hastily sketch a feature or two distinctive of the class of journal to which I have more particularly alluded.

How upon earth the editors of the 2,800 Citizens, Inquirers, &c., contrive to eat all the Christmas dinners to which it seems the fashion to bid them, it is difficult to conceive, inasmuch as almost every number, about that festive period, contains some such announcement as follows:—

“The editor will accept the invitation of Mr. Peter Sprauance to a Christmas dinner.”

Will he? How extremely obliging! Either the editorial “we,” is really, as it implies, a noun of multitude, or else the labours of the pen and scissors are extremely appetising, for, in a paragraph published the very next morning in the same paper, we read,

“The editor will assuredly occupy the seat reserved for him at the board of Colonel Pillicock, on Christmas Day.”

There is a haughty condescension about the following, which, while it must make the intending host fully sensible of the honour conferred upon him, nobly vindicates the dignity of the press:—

“We acknowledge the receipt of a note of invitation from Mr. and Mrs. M——, of H—— House, to partake of a Christmas dinner. *Turn up two chairs for us.*”

Another, apparently less popular, editor, with, so to speak, a sort of melancholy giggle, observes,

“We have kept ourselves disengaged, hoping, nay, expecting, a card from Mr. P. T——, but the post is *so* uncertain.”

How would this convivial system work in England? Conceive the illimitable Times, the polished Post (accompanied, perhaps, by the Signora Post), the trenchant Examiner, seating themselves at the Christmas board, and partaking, like mere mortals, of beef and pudding! Occasionally, it becomes imperative to remind subscribers that debts should be liquidated in other guise than through the medium of turkeys and squash-pies:—

“Subscribers to the C. will take notice that on receipt of the paper, enveloped in a *blue* cover, they will have been three months in arrear.”

A more delicate way of conveying a request to pay up, of imparting to the defaulter a hue somewhat similar to that of the threatened cover, could hardly be devised; and it might be imitated with advantage on our own side of the Atlantic. It is even susceptible of improvement. Various shades of blue, increasing in intensity, might be employed to indicate the march of indebtedness. Thus, your grocer, rising superior to vulgar modes of dunning, might enfold his little account in envelopes coloured as follows:—

| | | |
|------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Pale blue | . . . | Six months due. |
| Azure | . . . | Twelve do. do. |
| Prussian | . . . | Two years. |
| Indigo | . . . | Time immemorial. |
| Blue-black | . . . | { We resort to legal measures. |

Here is a touching little piece, worthy of the tame poet kept in Mr. Moses' back parlour:—

THE BEREAVED MOTHER.

She wept within her lonely room,
 And murmured "Never more
 Can I behold my darling's face
 As it appeared before
 Death's Angel closed her little eyes,
 And gave her spirit to the skies."
 The husband whispered—"Mother—wife—
 Behold her likeness now!"
 She looked and saw the daughter's face—
 The very lip and brow;
 Before her death, had Whitehurst won
 Those lovely features from the sun.

At his celebrated Daguerrian Gallery, No. 349, Broadway, corner of Leonard Street.

Carelessness of diction sometimes occasions remarkable portraitures. A Virginia paper announces—

"Run away, hired man John; *nose turned up five feet two inches.*"

Supercilious enough!

Turning to that interesting corner wherein are chronicled the leading events in the great human family, we find the union of Miss Priscilla Peters with Mr. Ephraim Rutkins, celebrated in the following epithalamic:—

“ May peace and joy descend upon this happy pair,
And, all of life, may *each the other share.*”

Amen, with all our hearts, to the *first* line; but why these unfortunates are to pass their entire domestic existence in dining upon each other, is a matter the poet alone can explain!

Glancing at the obituary, we find the record of children's deaths—sad and solemn enough in their simple announcement—made burlesque, by such strains as these:—

“ On the 8th inst., at D—, &c., &c.—

Although we take our leaves of thee in the papers,
We shan't so soon forget thine innocent capers.”

The *feuilleton* and versicular department of these journals—no less than those of the minor serials—are somewhat above the standard that might be expected, from the admission to their columns of such things as the above; yet even these are much below the usual range of periodical literature in England, and would scarcely find favour with the most indulgent editor. Whether the following specimen of that school, yclept the “*Rosa-Matilda*,” first saw the light in newspaper or maga-

zine, I am not, at this remote period, in a condition to affirm. Perhaps I am not wrong in referring it to the former, my impression being that you, my dear Sceptic, read it, in your mellifluous tones, from one of many publications with which you sought to beguile the passage of the Alleghanies. I give it as a fair specimen of the average of such contributions, appending, as far as I remember them, your murmured comments. The poem was entitled (though the word never occurs in the poem), "IF," and must have been written to the air of the celebrated jig—"O my kitten, my kitten!"

"IF.

O were I a billow—a billow,
 And thou my shore *should* be,
 I'd gather my measure of ocean-treasure,
 And *dance myself* to thee.
 I'd leave the winds aside,
 And lead the lagging tide;
 Resting never, and dancing ever,
 To fling my life on thee!"

Here are vigorous resolutions, indeed, for a billow of the softer sex! After collecting the stated allowance—"her measure"—of sea-weed, periwinkles, and other forms of *jetsom* and *flotsom*, ignoring the winds, her natural parents, as far too slow for her lively generation, and wholly inde-

pendent of the tide, she is prepared to fulfil the pleasing nursery-office of "dancing herself" towards her betrothed, for the sole purpose of flinging away her life; a sacrifice hardly to be expected from a nymph so gay and saltatory.

"O, were I a lily—a lily,
 And thou my charmed bee,
 I'd lure thee, and love thee, and close above thee,
 And ne'er would set thee free.
 The wrathful sun might pale,
 The scolding winds might rail;
 So, dying together, my leaves should wither,
 O'er thee, my love, o'er thee."

Rough usage, by George! for a lover—were he bee or biped! At all events, the charmed insect would be most unpleasantly disenchanting, when, in spite of the change of complexion on the part of the justly indignant sun, and the more active personal interference of certain shrewish winds, he finds himself hopelessly enveloped in the leaves of a lily in an advanced state of decomposition. One chance is left him, however: no lily of my acquaintance—unless it be of the tiger-species—is big enough to accommodate a bee!

"O, were I a willow—a willow,
 And thou my breeze should be,
 Still closer creeping, each small leaf steeping,
 Till all were filled with thee."

Or rise in wrathful gale,
 And roam through all the vale ;
 I'd fling adoring, my arms imploring,
 And bow, oh storm ! to thee."

Ah ! that's better. Far be it from any man of sense to disturb, with captious objections, a state of feeling at once so creditable to the amiable writer, and so calculated to secure the harmony of domestic life. May all young ladies "about to marry" be equally disposed to adapt themselves to the changing phases of the superior mind !

"O, were I a roselet—a roselet,
 And thou my sun should be,
 I'd gather the sweetness of June's completeness,
 In one red kiss for thee.
 My heart would stand a-swoon,
 For pure excess of June ;
 Till, flushed with fulness, athirst for coolness,
 It burst at last to thee !"

A startling—nay, a bewildering proposition ; and, emanating as it does from so diminutive a source—a "roselet"—a mere roselet—(*rose-bud* is vulgar)—one that might well induce the recipient to pause for a moment, and weigh the responsibilities. Assuming, for argument's sake, that the sweetness of June's completeness could, by hydraulic pressure, or any other gigantic power, be condensed into the proposed sanguine salute,

it becomes a question whether any mortal mouth, save Gargantua's, is capacious enough to accept it! Granting this, a consideration of a still more painful character suggests itself:—

“My heart would stand a-swoon.”

How, under these circumstances, the lady hoped to preserve the perpendicular, is a mystery I do not pretend to solve. “*Sink* a swoon” would have sounded more appropriate. But—stop! possibly we have altogether mistaken the signification. “Stand” has many meanings. If the sturdy peasant, after his daily labour, will “stand” a pipe or pot of beer with his neighbour, why should not a lady, on occasions of peculiar interest, “stand” a swoon or so?

“For pure excess of June.”

Had it been excess of “October,” this line would admit of no dispute; but June is not, to my knowledge, sacred to any particular description of beer. Excess, however, in all things, is objectionable, and coupled as it is, in the next line, with

—“Flushed with fulness”—

vividly suggests the idea of some corpulent civic dignitary, issuing from a turtle feast, panting, wearied, and,

—“athirst for coolness”—

wildly demanding iced soda-water.

“It burst at last to thee!”

in which case all I have to say is—*stand clear!* *

Now, considering that lucubrations of so mild a

* A painful but imperative duty compels me to dwell for a moment upon a circumstance at once affecting our national literature, and calculated to impeach the moral character of a deceased gentleman—a weak but worthy man) with whom almost every member of this and the last generation, must have enjoyed some degree of intimacy. I allude to Mr. Robert, or, as he was familiarly designated, “Auld Robin” Gray. Hitherto it has been the universal impression that, in spite of the *mésalliance*, the domestic relations of Mr. and Mrs. Gray were peaceful and happy; that the latter fulfilled her determination “a gude wife to be,” and the former was “sae kind,” as to leave nothing to be desired on *that* head. But no such thing.

Our transatlantic friends have learned from private sources, that, shortly subsequent to the ill assorted marriage, Mr. G. became extremely indisposed.

“He gaed intil his bed—”

And we shall be better prepared for the absence of any marked amendment, when we find, with regret, that

“—nae *phycic* wad he take.”

Be that as it may—his American biographers proceed to state, that the friends of both parties were shortly summoned to the invalid’s chamber, to hear a communication of grave importance. Among them came “Jamie,” who, by a remarkable coincidence, happened, at that critical period, to be on a visit to his aunt (Mrs. Harris), in the immediate neighbourhood, and is represented in an engraving commemorative of the painful scene, standing, with a most hypocritical assumption of grief, at the bed-side of his successful rival.

All being assembled, Mr. Gray, (so it is affirmed), pointed to his lady, and confessed—

“It’s sair to tell—

To force her to be mine, *I steald her cow mysel.*”

quality, fair specimens of their class, are deemed by editors sufficient to satisfy the literary yearnings of their subscribers, it is no great wonder that their columns should be readily open to communications upon a subject so new and promising as the spiritual manifestations—one, moreover, that opened at once an illimitable field for the indulgence of joke, prejudice, and personality. Accordingly, the whole weight of the press lent itself readily to the subject; almost every newspaper, either in the character of friend or foe, doing something towards its propagation. By degrees, journals of a higher class permitted themselves to be drawn into the controversy, and soon the press, fully awakened, absolutely teemed with notices and contributions on the subject in dispute.

These were, for the most part, condemnatory of

The audience probably exhibited some polite incredulity, for Mr. Gray proceeded to explain, that he

“Looed and sought to win her,” &c.

In short, that this unlimited “loo” had betrayed him into deviations from the path of honour, wholly incompatible with the existing state of the law.

“O what cared I for Crummie? I thought of nought but thee;
I thought it was the cow stood ‘twixt my love and me.”

Thought it was the cow? Thought it was a fig’s end! The whole story, I do not hesitate to say, is of the most apocryphal, the most suspicious kind. The charge of cattle-lifting is utterly irreconcilable with the man’s age, habits, and character.

“Stealed her cow himsel!”

I don't believe it!

the affair, and all connected with it—some writers denouncing it as a cheat and swindle, others taking higher ground, and attacking the so-called spiritual thesis, as dangerous and inimical to religion and manners. While, from the livelier class of publications, the shafts of wit showered, thick and fast, upon the luckless supporters of the manifestations—all these eager scribes, overlooking, in their enthusiasm, the fact that abuse and ridicule, vain alliance! must alike fail to disprove the existence of the manifestations, or to disclose their origin.

An example or two of the jocose style of attack, may be amusing. The *Georgia Chronicle* loq. :—

“*Spiritual Knockings Scientifically Explained.*—Of the laborious and difficult process by which the scientific correspondent of the *Cincinnati Commercial* arrived at the following conclusions, we can say nothing; but the precision, elegance, and lucidity of the explanation must make itself obvious to the ‘meanest capacity.’ In allusion to the tappings, this profound philosopher beautifully observes:—

“‘The only true and legitimate manner of accounting for the taps is the physiological defect of the membranous system. The obtuseness of the abdominal indicator causes the cartilaginous compressor to coagulate into the diaphragm, and

depresses the duodenum into the *flandango*. Now, if the taps were caused by the vocation of the electricity from the extremities, the *tympanum* would also dissolve into spiritual *sinctum*, and the olfactory ossificator would ferment, and become identical with the *pigmentum*. Now, this is not the case; in order to produce the taps, the spiritual *rotundum* must be elevated down to the spiritual *spero*. But, as I said before, the inferior ligaments must not subtend over the *digitorum* sufficiently to disorganize the *gtercicletum*.'

"A friend of ours, who graduated with 'distinguished honours' at one of the Northern Universities, says that he must dissent *in toto* from the idea that the 'depression of the duodenum into the *flandango*' could, by any possibility, cause the 'olfactory ossificator to ferment, and become identical with the *pigmentum*.' He says the thing cannot be done; and after quoting several learned authorities on the subject, winds up his argument by the remark, that:—

"The vibratory motion communicated to the *tunica albugenia* by the parturition of the *alveola* process, effectually disintegrates the *pericardiac* influences of the *epigastrium*, and produces a compound *corpuscular* movement of the *lymphatic* glands; which abnormal and *diagnostical* state of the nervous system deteriorates a *preponderance* of the *lacteal* fluid to the *posterior* portion of the

cerebellum, and predisposes the patient to preternatural distension of the auricular membraneous orifice; in which case, the rappings become painfully and distinctly audible.'

"Now, whether this is or is not so, we will not undertake to say, but will leave the whole matter in the hands of the learned *savans*, in the full confidence that little can be added to the above triumphant and incontrovertible exposition."

Another opponent of a more poetic turn, finds vent for his virtuous indignation in Hudibrastic rhyme.—From the *American* :—

"THE SENTIMENTS OF ISRAEL OF OLD, ON THE
SPIRITUAL KNOCKINGS.

O ! full of all subtilty and mischief ! who turn aside from the simplicity of the apostles, and follow after sorcerers, diviners, and soothsayers ! Look out for the tower of Siloam.

When knockers knock and snappers snap,
And spirits all begin to rap,
'Tis then that Christians should begin
To do away this nauseous sin :
' For then a child may understand,
The De'il has business on his hand ;
The Bible is the only guide
By which poor mortals can abide.
Arouse ! and real hope will glimmer,
In spite of every knocking trimmer,
Who dares not come out to the light,
For fear his raps will come in sight ;
Who in wet weather cannot rap,
Because the table will not snap.

Wake ! common sense, give them a flogging,
 And send them from this city jogging—
 Drive all these rappings from our State,
 And put their rappings out of date,
 Lest they should creep into our houses,
 And lead away some silly spouses.
 Go on then, knockers, knock away,
 Until your spirits leave your clay ;
 Then, should they light amongst the blest,
 Your souls might crave a little rest,—
 But, if your doctrine here is true,
 In heaven there'll be no rest for you,
 When knockers call, you must come back,
 To knock on boards of backmitack.
 I now to knockers bid adieu ;
 But, should you for more knowledge sue,
 Then I will state, if 'tis your pleasure,
 The more at large, when more at leisure."

* * * * *

In the communication of another wit, poetry
 and punning unite their forces, to the utter discom-
 fiture of the spirits:—

" Thus at the feet of Socrates
 In *rap-tures* we may sit,
 While list'ning to advice from Paul,
 Or Sheridan's rare wit.

And stores of wisdom we may glean
 From Newton, Franklin, Locke,
 While Washington and Robespierre
 Await their turn to 'knock.'

Who'd have believ'd this wond'rous tale
 A century ago ?
 And yet *sound* reasoning will convince
 That it can but be so.

After one *dies* tis plain comes *nox*,
This we have always known,
Although the 'medium' and the mode
The past few months have shown.

The midnight fears we oft have felt,
Despite all bars and locks,
Prove that if 'spirits' ever come
To mortals, 'tis by *nox*."

Ohe ! jam satis.

True, my dear Sceptic. Back to the spirits
themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

RATHER PERSONAL.

First experience of the manifestations—The knockings described—The circle—Results—A model believer—Second experience—Circle formed—Lady physicians—Music-loving spirits—An unwilling vocalist—Mrs. L.—Manifestations at last—Distressing incident—Explanations—Colonel Mark Fiske—Great cry, and exceedingly trifling amount of wool—The Colonel's departure—Pause—Circle described—Author's communication with the unseen intelligences—Alarm—Fraternal anxiety—Mr. John Browne—His cool reception—Persevering catechist—Disappointment—Explanations—Table-tippings—Remarks, &c.

IT was on my return from a visit to Canada, in March of the present year, that I first took advantage of an opportunity of making the personal acquaintance of these tricky spirits, and, although the experiences which followed may be both small in substance and scanty in detail, it may be as well, for the sake of preserving the order of date, to introduce them here, only premising that, at the period mentioned, I was rather inspired by motives of curiosity as to the *modus operandi*, than any interest in the subject itself, or confidence in the good faith of its promoters.

There was no difficulty in discovering a respectable *medium*, several, then practising in Boston, having cards for distribution, in this form:—

“Mr. and Mrs. B——, —— Street. *Spiritual conversazioni and manifestations.*”

It seemed more satisfactory that the meeting should take place elsewhere than at the *medium's* home; it was, therefore, arranged that the latter, a Mrs. H——, a lady of much respectability, married, and resident in Boston, should, accompanied by her husband, attend and take the chair at a “magnetic circle,” to be formed at the house of a friend of my own.

Long and familiar intercourse with the marvels wrought by that weird brotherhood, Messrs. Robin, Jacobs, Houdin, Anderson, &c., had prepared me to expect without anxiety, and witness without emotion, many things apparently inscrutable to the unmechanic mind, and, if I remember rightly, the predominant impression on *mine*, as I proceeded to the spiritual rendezvous, was one of regret at having been induced, by the fancy of the moment, to countenance a deception so absurd as that which I expected to witness. The reflection, however, came rather late, and one thing only is certain, that no one ever yet entered a “magnetic circle” in a less indulgent mood; with less will that the spirits, or their earthly representatives, should prove correspondent to command; a more

intense desire that the *wires*, and other portions of the machinery, should be out of order; and the whole thing eventuate in something supremely ridiculous. How far these amiable expectations were realised, we shall presently see.

I found the party, with the exception of the *medium* and her lord, already assembled. It consisted of only six or eight persons, all of whom I knew, and knew, beside, that they were all, excepting one, of various degrees of scepticism. In a few minutes the expected parties made their appearance. Mrs. H—— was a tall, and rather handsome woman, with a small fine head, and intelligent eye. With regard to expression, if I might be permitted to apply to a lady's countenance such a term as "wide awake," it would, perhaps, best convey my opinion. About her partner, there appeared nothing remarkable, except, indeed, that he wore cleaner linen and nails than is customary with the middle classes of his earnest and practical countrymen. He, however, clothed himself with a sudden and unexpected interest, by informing the circle, in a tone of solemn regret, that he himself had been a *medium*, although, since January twelvemonth, he had been unable to obtain any manifestations,—tabooed, in short, by his disembodied friends. For this phenomenon he would not pretend to account. It was strange, he might add annoying,—but it was

no matter. A well-bred murmur of condolence having passed round, followed by a sort of random hope from some one, bearing reference to that indistinct epoch known as "better times," it was proposed to form the circle, and go to business. Previously, however, we were urgently requested to examine the table. This was done, and the object in question was unanimously pronounced to be a simple dining-table, of the sexipede species, without drawers, of course, and capable of accommodating with ease, twelve individuals of ordinary breadth. It was innocent alike of castors and of oil, and was in complexion, dull, unhealthy, and cadaverous.

Around this table, then, we now arranged ourselves, and having thus already performed what, according to mathematicians, is an impossibility, *i. e.* "squared the circle," the proceedings commenced with a long pause, during which the faintly interesting crackle of a corset, whose fair wearer was evidently in a condition of considerable alarm, was the only sound audible.

Hark! a tap!

Was it?

No.

Everybody glanced interrogatively at the *medium*. *Medium* gravely inclined her head, as who should say—

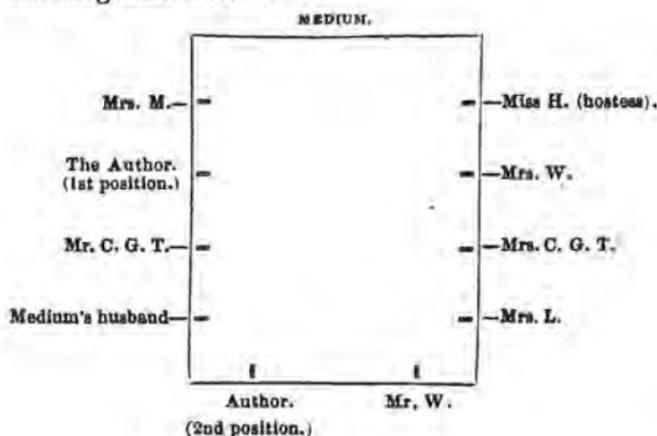
"Of course, my good friends. What else did you expect—say?"

Another tap! Nearer. No mistake about it now. Three rapid taps. Five! The spirits are here. (That corset will give way.) Hark!

These now celebrated sounds—be their origin what it may—are certainly of a novel and most peculiar character. Nothing that bears the slightest affinity to them—as mere sounds—has ever yet visited *my* ears. It is stated, and I had afterwards opportunities of observing, that the rappings are not always of a precisely similar kind, the *media* declaring that they can distinguish the spirits by the variations of sound (as a resident in London recognises a visitor by his knock); but the prevailing rap is of one especial kind, and can be, perhaps, described in no better way than by requesting the reader to fancy a bird, say, a pheasant—of considerable power of bill, confined in a strong wooden box, and pecking vigorously to get out. The working of the needles of the electric telegraph will, perhaps, supply the next approximate sound. These raps appear to possess no particular location. On and under the tables, by the walls, the fire-place, behind the stove, without the window, far or near, loud or low, the singular phenomenon puzzles and evades one—the very *ignis fatuus* of acoustics. Though styled *raps*, and approaching nearest, as I have said, to *pecks*, they are, in point of fact, neither raps, taps, knocks, pecks, nor any other recognised species of percussion. “Detonation” would

assuredly be the correcter name. One gentleman, writing on the subject, but without advocating either side of the question, has happily termed them *pulsations*—a word fully justified by the circumstance that, however soft and seemingly remote the sounds may be, by placing one's fingers on the table, a jar which seems to vibrate throughout the whole frame of that piece of furniture, is plainly perceptible. The idea of some electric influence is perpetually recurring to one's mind; and, although, on the present occasion, nothing transpired to favour that opinion, I am well assured that, on others, phenomena have been witnessed sufficiently indicative of the presence of that subtle and powerful agent.

The following interesting diagram will best explain the relative position of the parties forming the magnetic circle:—



The raps having now become both numerous and distinct, the *medium* opened the conversation by asking, in a slow clear tone, and as if addressing something enshrined in the table:—

“Is our circle properly formed?”

Dead silence.

“Do you wish any alteration?”

Rap (*Yes*).

“Is this right?” pointing to Mrs. M.

Rap (very loud).

“Is *this*?” indicating myself.

Silence, which (contrary to earthly etiquette) implies a negative.

“*This*,” it appears, had, in his desire to be near the fountain-head, unduly exalted himself, and had to withdraw, covered with blushes, to the lower end of the board, Mr. W. proceeding to the top, *vice* author, degraded. Certain other changes, however, disproved any idea of personality, and the only circumstance worthy of notice was, that the relative position of the *medium* and her husband continued unaltered—that is to say, they were separated by nearly the length of the table, several of the party occupying the intermediate space.

The conversation was then resumed.

“Are you satisfied?”

Many raps, from different directions, as in the affirmative.

“Are the spirits numerous?”

Rap.

“May we expect many communications?”

Rap.

One of the circle then took up the dialogue.

“What spirit, whom I knew in the flesh, is present?”

Five raps for the alphabet. This had been placed ready on the table, and, as the querist passed her pencil slowly along the line of letters, each, as it was needed, was indicated by a clear, distinct rap. The word thus spelled out was very short, “*Ida*,” and was the name of a sister of the querist, many years deceased.

The invisible respondent was then called upon to describe the personal appearance of the departed (herself), and did so, sketching a rapid portrait of a very beautiful *blonde*—long golden ringlets, bright complexion, blue eyes, &c., &c.

“Height?” asked the querist.

“*Three feet two inches*,” was the prompt reply.

The circle stared—a segment of it even smiled—for this sudden condensation of so many charms into the dimensions of a pocket Venus, scarcely harmonised with the image we had all silently conceived. But the questioner retained her gravity, and explained that her sister, *Ida*, whose appearance had, it appears, been described with the

utmost accuracy, died, while in Europe, at the age of *eight*.

Questions were then propounded by various parties, but as they had reference, in general, to local or family matters, it was not easy to test the accuracy or intelligence of the replies; and I only remember that the questioners frequently evinced considerable surprise. So far, however, nothing of what occurred had carried with it the slightest conviction of any preternatural agency, the sounds themselves constituting by far the most remarkable portion of the exhibition. These, it must be owned, were puzzling in the extreme. How, and by whom, were they engendered? If by the *medium* (who sat perfectly composed, with her hands visible), it was singular that, however distant from her the questioner might be, however rapidly the alphabet was run over (and, let it be added, the characters were of a size to be all but indistinguishable across the table), the raps never failed to indicate, with the greatest promptitude and precision, the required letter. If it be thought that the *medium's* husband lent his assistance, it is noticeable that, during some portion of the time, he, at the request of one of the circle, placed himself apart, in a position in which it was manifestly impossible for him to see either wife or alphabet.

During the questioning, I had been reflecting

in what manner to put to some satisfactory test the assumed preternatural intelligence of our spiritual visitors. And now, my dear Sceptic, in consideration of the perfect candour with which I have endeavoured to place before *you*, my friend, and the readers generally, both failure and success, both manifest absurdity and apparent wisdom, in reference to these same manifestations, let me hope the little I have now to relate may be accepted in its fullest sense, with the understanding that *you yourself* could not have been more completely on your guard, more anxiously suspicious, than was I, nor could the most zealous member of Sir Richard Mayne's "detectives" be inspired with a greater anxiety to unravel the woof of an ingenious fraud. Suffer me, Sceptic, to draw your especial attention to *this*, because, slight and simple as was the experiment, I date from its result the altered feeling with which I thenceforth regarded these phenomena, and the destruction (as far as my own opinion went) of the first of those three theories hereafter propounded, viz., that the solution of the rapping mystery must be sought for among the wonders of mechanic art. In short, as another apostate has written,—"*De ce jour, tomba mon incredulité.*"

I recollected that I had in my pocket a packet of letters, eight or ten in number, most of them

from Europe, and not of very recent date. They were secured with an Indian-rubber band. From these, without looking at them, I selected two of the smaller, the size and form of which had no effect in refreshing my remembrance as to the writers. On its coming to my turn to converse with the "powers invisible," I asked, as usual,—

"Will any spirit communicate with me?"

Rap.

"On any subject?"

Rap.

"Will you tell me the names of the writers of any two letters I have here?"

Rap.

Accordingly I placed the two letters on the table, the addresses downwards, and the seals removed, covering them besides with my hand, in such a manner as to conceal them entirely. With the other hand, I passed the pencil over the alphabet, and the raps spelled out—

"GEORGE HOLLAND."

Having no correspondent of the latter name (the former, I believe, proved to be correct), I passed, without comment, to the second letter, with every expectation of a similar result. The name now spelled out was that of a gentleman from whom, in the course of our acquaintance, I have certainly not received more than three letters, and these at

distant and irregular intervals. I turned the letter up. It was as the raps had indicated!

Now, granting that all present were cognisant of my acquaintance with the person in question, how could they possibly divine what I myself did not know? First, that I had the letter with me; and secondly, that I had selected it from eight or ten others? If this be guessing, it is of a nature too complicated for *my* comprehension. Granting *nothing*, here were *four* things to be decided correctly: the acquaintance, the correspondence, the possession of the letter, and its selection, two of which points were unknown to myself. Thus, the assumption that my mind might have been placed *en rapport* with that of the *medium*, would have been insufficient to produce this result. And the failure of the *first* reply only serves to make the mystery more mysterious, without neutralising the extraordinary success of the second.

It is too much the fashion among cursory inquirers to overlook the importance of what *is* done, in the failure of what is *not*. This is not fair. If you place twenty sealed letters on the table, with a different line written in each, and the "spirits," after failing in the first nineteen, read the twentieth, surely the wonder, in respect to that success, is as great, the mode of compassing it as unaccountable, as though nineteen failures had not preceded it.

It was next proposed that proof should be afforded of the power possessed by the spirits to move substances; and they were requested to exercise it upon the table. Every one drew a little apart, in such a manner that none of the sitters' legs should approach it, and, so far as could be observed, this condition was most honourably fulfilled. In a moment or two, the table, like Birnam Wood, "began to move;" and if my astonishment and discomfiture did not equal that of the deluded thane, it was because petticoats are redundant, and it was impossible not to feel how completely it was at the discretion of any zealous little foot to assist the spirits in their performance of this manœuvre.

Some one having expressed a wish that the *medium* might be put into the magnetic sleep, and become clairvoyante, her husband made the necessary passes, and in ten minutes the lady was conversing, eagerly and rapidly, with such of the party as appeared to place most confidence in her communications. *This* portion of the ceremony I take to be simple humbug, originating either in self-delusion or in wilful fraud. There was something absolutely painful, in witnessing the intense, the breathless interest, with which one listener hung upon every syllable that dropped from the lips of the "clairvoyante," as though that ingenious lady had been some Delphian priestess,

interpreting the fateful and infallible oracles of old. Upon every feature of the hearer's face (surely one of the sweetest nature ever moulded), there was written in the most legible characters, *I believe*. Her almost agony of anxiety lest the slightest noise or interruption should snap the fine thread which seemed to connect her, for the moment, with the invisible world, and stay the current of intelligence she was deriving thence—the changing expressions that perpetually flitted over her countenance like rays and shadows on a summer down, as each communication pained or pleased, made the appearance of the young neophyte one of the most painfully interesting pictures my memory can recall.

O would that Titian's pencil had been mine!—
Then should that smile be lastingly divine!

The circumstance altogether was to be remembered as a remarkable example of refined, exalted intellect, bewildered in its own longings for light, and led captive in darkness, at the mere caprice of a far inferior will.

A rapid journey through a portion of the States interrupted these spiritual researches. Although it was impossible to visit town or city, in any direction, without the matter being brought to one's notice, the difficulty of obtaining that personal knowledge of the parties which would give some

authenticity to the proceedings, prevented any indulgence of my curiosity until my return to Boston, where I had hopes of making the acquaintance of a very remarkable *medium*, of higher station than common, her husband holding an important municipal office, in addition to his eminent position in the mercantile world. In this, however, I was disappointed. The husband, dreading some ill effects upon the lady's nervous system, had positively refused to permit her to appear in a magnetic circle. Respecting this lady, the most extraordinary tales of any I had yet heard were circulated, and related to me by friends of my own, who had been eye-witnesses of the occurrences referred to. This, however, is apart from the purpose. I have merely to speak of the few *notabilia* that chanced to come under my immediate observation.

Much had been said, lately, of a certain *medium*, in the locality of L— Street, East Boston, at whose residence magnetic circles were formed daily, and were attended by great numbers of inquirers. To L— Street, East Boston, one sunny noontide, in the flowery season of May, I therefore repaired, in company with a trusty and not over trustful friend, who, albeit, like myself, in the transition state of belief, had witnessed enough in the other three-quarters of the globe, not to receive, with a child-like faith, everything

that was proffered for his acceptance in the inventive *fourth*.

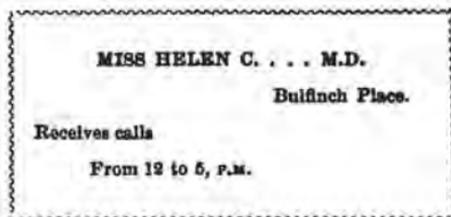
It had been arranged that three or four other parties, whom we knew, should attend the present meeting. One of these was an eminent medical practitioner of Boston. Another, a gentleman connected with American literature, whose name, could I give it, would be recognised as belonging not to transatlantic fame alone. Another was the son of an old and distinguished member of Congress, all persons not only of high character, but practised intellect. On reaching the house, we found our friends already arrived, and, after another addition or two to the party, the circle was formed around the dining-table in an inner parlour. The *medium* was an interesting looking damsel of about eighteen, and appeared to be under the *chaperonage* of an elderly lady of staid demeanour and snuffy habits, who sat, considerably apart, in a rocking-chair, and took no ostensible share in the proceedings. Sixteen persons, the *medium* included, formed the circle.

The table was extremely massive, somewhat swollen and gouty about the limbs, but, as usual, devoid of drawers or any other places of concealment, and appearing altogether as stolid and innocent a piece of household stuff as can well be imagined. Excepting the parties before men-

tioned, and two ladies, with whom I had a slight acquaintance, our co-members of the *cirque magnetique* were strangers.

May it be mentioned, quite parenthetically, and as having nothing whatever to do with the subject on hand, that one of the ladies aforesaid, wrote herself "M.D." (having, indeed, regularly graduated at a medical college), enjoyed a considerable practice at Boston, and was commonly addressed as—dare I mention it?—Dr. Harriet Hunt. That able and fearless vindicator of the rights of woman will, I am convinced, pardon this sly mode of proclaiming that I have the pleasure of her acquaintance.

At a later period of my visit to Boston, I had the pleasure, moreover, of numbering a Doctor Helen C —, among my acquaintance. It recalls a pleasant picture to my mind. Alas! that it should be but a dissolving view! This last disciple of Hippocrates was a remarkably pretty girl. I have her card (stolen) in my desk. Embossed and shiny—here it lies!



Who would not eagerly respond to such a challenge? *Who* would regard a rheumatism, who a quinsy, if endorsed with the qualification to call in Bulfinch Place, *any* time from 12 to 5 p. m.? But, alas! long, perhaps, ere this, some youthful valetudinarian, with præcordial disorganization, which refuses to yield to any skill but Helen's, has appeared in Bulfinch Place, and piped to a tune which has rendered imperative an alteration in the embossed and shiny card; now a mere memorial of what is not. Oh, Helen! if ——! We will proceed.

We had been seated some minutes, and no sounds had yet denoted the presence of our distinguished visitors. Everybody sat perfectly mute, and staring at the table in a manner that would have sufficed to put any less seasoned piece of mahogany fairly out of countenance. The sun was shining splendidly through the wide-open windows, and, as one glanced round the circle, and beheld fifteen individuals of mature age and tolerable education—children of the wondrous age—all seated like waxen figures around a table, on which the only article visible was, as though in gentle satire, the renowned child's alphabet, recording the chequered career of a certain "A-pple pie;" there began to rise inclinations very much at variance with the interests of the

magnetic circle, and the nature of the manifestations we were taught to expect.

The *medium* at length inclined her head, as though saying grace, and inquired if the spirits intended to be present.

No reply.

Another pause succeeded; and the pretty *medium*, as if to beguile the moments until something of greater interest should occur, commenced a narration of her first intercourse with the spirits. How that, years before, certain light taps at the head of her bed, apprised her that she was thenceforth to be a favoured recipient of spiritual communications. How that she was first astonished, then alarmed, then interested, then delighted. How that, when *alone*, she received communications almost at pleasure. And how, having grown thus familiar with her impalpable visitants, she, with true American sagacity, directed that excellent understanding to useful practical purposes, by making them perform those duties commonly assigned to an alarm-clock or memorandum-book. As, for example, if she wished to awake at, say *five* o'clock in the morning, she had only to —

Rap!

“Who is it?”

No reply.

“What do you wish?”

Alphabet.

The *medium* herself directed the pencil. All, however, could see and hear that the word spelled out was "SING."

"Does any lady or gentleman sing?" inquired the *medium*, looking anxiously round.

Nobody answered; but I observed the eyes of several of the party at once directed towards a little nervous man, who merely fidgetted, and looked as if he wished he had left his voice at home.

Alphabet again; and the peremptory spirits repeated, "SING."

Indignant glances were now freely levelled at the little man, as though to imply that *he* alone constituted the real barrier between two worlds, and that, under the peculiar circumstances, the feelings of the material portion were not to be toyed with; in fact, that he ought to be ashamed of himself. A *song*.

The little man, who seemed fully conscious of his growing unpopularity, cleared his throat with a "hem" of despair.

"What will the gentleman favour us with?" softly said the *medium*.

The little man simpered. "He knew but one melody; it was very—a—in short—it might seem a—a—eogh—"

"Yes?"

“Ole D—Dan T—T—Tucker—” hesitated the vocalist.

“I fear that will not do, sir,” said the pretty *medium*, with a slight smile. “It should be something of a nature to harmonise with the objects of our meeting; something more in character with those with whom we wish especially to communicate.”

The little man had probably formed no precise idea as to who and what these parties were, for he grinned nervously, and made no reply.

“Perhaps,” suggested a gentleman, bowing across the table towards the un-medical lady of my acquaintance, “perhaps, Mrs. L——.”

Now Mrs. L——, a scion, I believe, of a good but impoverished French family, had recently announced her intention of giving public recitations, an undertaking for which her deep but melodious voice, commanding presence, and, what was of yet greater importance, fine poetic appreciation, were no mean qualifications. The gentleman, it appeared, intended to suggest that, as no song was forthcoming, a speech might possibly serve; and this idea, though borrowed, one would imagine, from meetings of a more convivial character, was apparently received with approbation.

“If Mrs. L—— would recite—say—‘The Ship on Fire?’”

Mrs. L—— gracefully, but emphatically, declined.

What was to be done? Time was passing; the sounds had ceased; perhaps, after all, we might have no manifestations, and all because nobody would sing! That little man is a humbug! How comes he here at all? who asked him? has he paid? return his money by subscription, and request him to retire to ——! Hush! the *medium* herself will sing.

And sing she did, very sweetly and pleasingly—(Ada was her name; she is since married),—accompanying herself on a piano which stood in the front room.

She played a soft and doleful air;
She sang an old and moving story;
An old rude song,

embodying some reference (I forget the precise nature), to the spirit-sphere. This portion of the entertainment was one we could have greatly wished to prolong, and the strain was, as the opera critics say, loudly “re-demanded.” A few verses, however, had sufficed to establish an harmonious understanding with the spirits, for numerous plausible raps succeeded the song, and as the *medium* resumed her seat at the table, looks of congratulation were exchanged among us, as though the most desirable results might now be confidently expected. The bard of “Dan Tucker” recovered his composure. A gentleman who wore earrings, and exhibited indubitable evidences of a philo-

sophic disregard for soap, took from his coat-pocket a long paper, bearing very much the aspect of a tailor's bill of considerable standing, and smoothed it carefully out before him; it was a half-sheet of foolscap, doubled down length-ways. Meanwhile, the sounds recurred at intervals.

"Are many spirits present?" asked the *medium*.
Numerous faint raps replied.

"Are they the same who were present at the last meeting?"

Silence.

"Will *they* come to-day?"

Rap.

"Why are they not here *now*?"

"*Engaged elsewhere*," was the succinct and reasonable, but vague reply.

"Will you go and bring them?"

Silence.

"Will you *please* be so *kind* as go and bring them?"

(The polite style of address generally answers better than the *brusque*)—*e.g.*:—

Rap!

"When?"

"In ten minutes."

At this early stage of the conversation, a distressing interruption occurred. A strange lady, who was seated next to me on the right, and ap-

peared to be under the charge of the gentleman in earrings, burst into a violent flood of tears, sobbing convulsively, as though in the bitterest grief. As it seemed impossible to administer any greater consolation than what might be derived from a glass of cold water, this was duly "exhibited," and the man in earrings, who, from his indifference, was probably her husband, wound up the cure by saying, in a sepulchral tone,

"Compose yourself!"

The patient did so, with a degree of alacrity that engendered a passing feeling of surprise that she had not done it before, and then proceeded to apologise, in a sort of desultory speech, for the disturbance she had created.

"Her nerves," she remarked, "was never so strong as could be wished. Ladies and gents would be so good as remember the peculiar nature of this sittings. We wasn't" (with a glance at the author) "all of steel. She had lately had the misfort'n to lose her godmother. Tea was not injurious if took in moderation, which," continued the poor lady, with a touching confidence that acted as a timely check on any little disposition to smile conjured up by the elliptical form of her address, "which I've never been in such a solemn sityouation before."

In spite of a poke in the side from my left-

hand neighbour (who ought to have known better), as the unfortunate relative pronoun declared itself, I flatter myself I preserved a demeanour not ill adapted to the exigences of the scene, and, in a moment or two, business was recommenced by the *medium* addressing some unimportant question to her spiritual allies. This was responded to in a manner new to me. The character of the rappings suddenly changed; the strokes increased immensely in tone and volume, and now, instead of resembling *pecks*, sounded as though some one struck the table with his knuckles, drumming a sort of military quick-step. Those of the party most familiarised with such assemblies, listened without evincing any surprise; and the *medium* quietly remarked,

“Ah, the colonel! There’s no mistaking *his* rap. He always comes marching.”

“*What* colonel?” asked somebody.

“Colonel Fiske. *Now* we shall get answers enough!” said the *medium*, laughing archly.

And, as the lively march continued, the whole circle brightened with eager expectation. Alas, for the vanity of human hopes! The cartridge proved blank. The colonel, despite the pompous and flourishing manner of his approach—that colonel, from whose dashing gallantry and frank military bearing, so much was evidently expected,

broke down at the very first onset! Baffled by a question that a mere terrestrial schoolboy could have answered—so complete was the colonel's defeat, that, like a lion whose spring has failed, he grew sulky, and at once succumbed; nay, on being reasoned with, fairly turned, and fled; nor could the united arguments of the *medium* and the individual who had been his interlocutor, prevail to stay him. Though it cannot be truly affirmed of the colonel that he decamped altogether without beat of drum, still, as in the case of his brother-campaigner, "Captain Sword,"

The sound of his drums grew less and less,
Walking like carelessness off from distress;

and, as far as I know, this Parolles of the invisible world has been heard of no more. Nay, I am wrong; he *did* (and on this same occasion) essay one feeble effort to retrieve his laurels. At a later period of the "sittings," a friend-spirit announced that the colonel was "at hand"—(probably in the eligible position so much affected by Mr. Chevy Slyme, *i. e.*, "round the corner")—a declaration which the discomfited officer ventured to corroborate by a slight hysterical drumming. But the *ruse* failed. The *prestige* of his name had departed. The disposition to *cut* the colonel was so unmistakable, that the mortified shade finally withdrew. And let his terrestrial

prototypes—whereof there be many—take warning by his fate.*

This unexpected result of the colonel's visit seemed to throw a sort of gloom over the entire circle. The number and perseverance of the knockings, however, re-assured us, and our spirits rallied considerably when, in answer to a question from Mrs. L——, in her fine deep tones, which seemed to thrill the very table to which they were addressed—

“Have *I* a friend in the spirit-land?”

There came a chorus of raps that bore powerful testimony to the social esteem in which the amiable speaker had been held. These children of the mist, however, it must be admitted, were more remarkable for their multitude than their intellectual gifts, the replies, in every instance, smacking of the vague and indistinct, and, in their provoking generalisation, reminding one irresistibly of those clever companions for the winter evenings of our juvenile days, the “conversation cards.”

It was, I think, about this stage of the proceedings that a slight misapprehension was the cause, though for a moment only, of no trifling amount of consternation. The *medium*, with a smile, and such an expression as is usually

* It appears, however, from the letter of a correspondent (quoted hereafter), that I had, after all, under-estimated the colonel's audacity.

legible on the countenance of one who is about to communicate gratifying news, suddenly addressed a quiet female member of the circle as follows:—

“I believe, madam, that *you* will very shortly become a m——.”

The party addressed uttered a slight shriek, and became suffused with most becoming blushes, while Dr. Harriet Hunt, with a gentle professional cough, seemed to intimate that her services were ever at the command of her suffering sisters. The *medium*, however, somewhat shocked at the sensation created by her unfinished speech, hastened to quiet all alarms by announcing that the lady in question would shortly be developed as a *medium* only!

The extremely mild character of the proceedings hitherto afforded abundant leisure for observing their effect upon the various members of the circle. To begin on the right. The hysterical lady and her lord (he with the earrings and the tailor's bill) were evidently of a faith so mellow as to border on the imbecile. They listened to the *fade* and pointless communications of the spirits with an indulgent belief that, doubtless, worked out for itself three-fourths of every *tableau* suggested by the latter, shaping it to their own complete satisfaction. The next individual, less forward in the faith, and apparently somewhat

dissatisfied with the diluted style of response, was yet willing to hold on, in the hope of shortly arriving at something to which his common sense could grapple. Next him sat Dr. C——, a gentleman whose high attainments form a sufficient guarantee that the spiritual philosophy he has so sedulously studied, and to the reality of which his opinions incline, is, at all events, not undeserving the notice of the wise. By the side of her *confrère* of the faculty, sat my friend Dr. Hunt, regarding whose real persuasions I am not in a position to record my decided opinion—only remarking that circles, whether magnetic or otherwise—whether their object were manifestations or muffins, theology or tea, always appeared to find in her a cheerful and able promoter. A slumberous-looking person, who seemed incapable of any emotion whatever, occur what might, filled up that side of the table. On the other, were Mrs. L——, the little man that didn't sing "Dan Tucker," two other persons (strangers), and my friends. Of the latter I shall only say that one of them, whom I knew to have been a sceptic in the matter, but now, at all events, an anxious seeker for truth, afforded in his whole demeanour a favourable example of the spirit in which every attempt at inquiry into a subject of pretensions so illimitable, has claim to be conducted.

One or two of the party having waived their

right to converse with the denizens of the invisible world, it became my turn to take the parole. Accordingly, though without much expectation of a satisfactory reply, I inquired,

“Is there any spirit present to whom I am known?”

Rap.

“Who is it?”

The alphabet was demanded, and we proceeded.

“B R O”——

“BROTHER!” said some one, so hastily and emphatically, that it really made me start, and feel, for the hundredth part of a second, that I should like just to be assured, by the earliest possible steamer, that my brother still enjoyed the same ruddy health I had the satisfaction of seeing in his familiar face at parting.

The next letter, however, dissipated every shadow of misgiving. My friend proved to be a gentleman, recognised, while “this machine was to him,” as Mr. Brown—MR. JOHN BROWN.

Brown! The name is not unfamiliar, nor, to say the truth, hath it a peculiarly patrician echo. “The Browns,” in the opinion of a late poet—

The browns were for the clowns;
As the blacks were for the quacks;
And the yellows for the jealous;
And the scarlets for——

No matter whom. Poets, like punsters, will occasionally go considerable lengths.

"Had I," inquired the *medium*, "ever been personally acquainted with a gentleman answering to the name of Brown?"

"About fifty," I should say.

"Could I identify my friend?"

"I could *not*."

"Was one of them christened 'John?'"

"That was not impossible. The names had been noticed in connexion."

"But was I not intimate with one particular Brown?"

"I was *not*. In fact, the great majority of my Brown acquaintance, though of much respectability, and most admirable character as citizens, were (I believe with two exceptions) engaged in mercantile pursuits of a retail character—in English, *tradesmen*; in America, gentlemen who permit themselves to preside over the interests of a 'store.'"

"But the two exceptions? Surely *one*——"

"One of these was a parish schoolmaster, known, from his haughty bearing among the ragged urchins, as 'Cocky' Brown. The other was the clerk of an adjoining parish, who, for the latter years of his parochial career, had been universally accosted as 'Bull' Brown, from his having, by misadventure, announced during Divine service,

instead of a vestry meeting, a reward of three guineas for the recovery of farmer Grierson's brindled bull. I had no cause for the supposition that either Cocky or Bull Brown had any especial desire to communicate with me; and, indeed, such an idea would partake too much of the nature of the 'Cock-and-Bull' to render it worth while to speculate on the subject for a moment.

"But now, really and truly, was there *no* possibility of discovering *which* Brown it could be who was, all this time, patiently awaiting his identification?"

"Really and truly, I know of none—yet, stay; *one* other Brown there was, who rises in my remembrance superior to his fellows. Yet, again, 'tis not likely—eh? No."

"Of course! of course! Pray tell it! Who was he?"

"Well, in point of fact, a bootmaker! (you smile!) but, withal, of a very singular, excitable, I might almost add, *poetical*, temperament. Why, by the way, should *not* bootmakers be poets? It is a thoughtful, sedate, and sedentary profession. The imagination enjoys perpetual freedom. It—"

"Precisely," said some one across the table, with a satisfied nod. "Minds constituted as you, sir, have described, are, of all others, most readily susceptible of extraordinary influences; and I must beg ladies and gentlemen to listen to *this*,

as it illustrates most forcibly my own theory on this subject. You were remarking, sir——”

“Oh, nothing. Simply that the idea which seemed to possess poor Brown, to the latest hour of his existence, viz., that he invariably had a ‘heavy sum to make up’ on the succeeding Tuesday, affords one of the most remarkable instances on record of an over-active imagination. These hallucinations, at once interesting to the physiologist and embarrassing to the customer, are not, however, so unc——”

“I beg your pardon,” interrupted another of the party, “but perhaps, after all, the simplest course might be to interrogate this per——, I mean shade, himself.”

This was unanimously agreed to; and Mrs. L——, acting as a sort of oral deputation, waited upon Mr. John Brown, through the table, with a short, explanatory, and semi-complimentary address.

There was no reply!

The frigid reception had done its work. Brown was gone. And no wonder!

The hysterical lady, whose sobbing had subsided into a periodical sniff, though more familiarised with her extraordinary situation, was scarcely yet sufficiently serene to open a conversation on her own account. She therefore passed on the alphabet to her jewelled lord, who, again

smoothing out his immense paper on the table, commenced, as usual, by asking if any spirit would communicate with *him*.

“ Yes ; his mother.”

Thereupon he commenced, (very much in the tone of an Old Bailey counsel bullying a timid witness with the connivance of the bench, or as Mr. Toulmin Smith probably might the dying Madame Von Beck, had she not expired in the ante-room), a furious cross-examination of his parent, his—

“ *Now*, mother, answer this—”
sounding very much like,

“ Now, I tell you what, madam, you'd better mind what you're about ! Your ideas of truth were not always particularly clear ; but if, in deference to your years and garrulity, we permitted some degree of licence *here*, it's no use dodging now, and especially with *me*, who know your little weakness. So, speak up, and be careful, will ye ?”

It has been mentioned that the paper in this gentleman's hand, was doubled down lengthways. It now appeared that, in order the better to test the spiritual intelligences, certain questions (some forty or fifty), had been numbered 1, 2, 3, &c., and turned down, the column of numerals being alone visible, even to the questioner, who simply wrote the answer, as he received it, against the corresponding number, and did not refer to the ques-

tion to which it applied, until the whole were answered. The plan itself was certainly well devised, and the object sincere.

"Now, mother! what is the answer to No. 1?"

Rap.—(Yes.)

"To No 2?"

Silence.—(No.)

"No. 3?"

Silence.

"No. 4?"

Rap, &c., &c.

The list being concluded, the questioner turned up his *brief*, with an air of importance such as befitted one charged with promulgating the decrees of fate, cleared his throat, pulled up his collar, and began:—

"No. 1. *Ques.* Where was I born?"

Ans. "Yes."

"No. 2. *Ques.* In what county was Benjamin Franklin raised?"

Ans. "No."

"No. 3. *Ques.* Of what disorder was my great uncle, Colonel Silas Buffam, five years ill?"

Ans. "No."

"No. 4. *Ques.* In what month did Peter (you know who I mean), quit for the diggings?"

Ans. "Yes."

These truly oracular replies were received with mingled astonishment and mirth. It is needless

to pursue the list further. Not one of the answers chanced to fit;—the questions, whether by accident or design, having been so framed as to preclude the possibility of their being replied to either with a simple affirmative or negative. On being called upon to account for this phenomenon, the *medium* declared that, in certain cases, a spirit had been known to decline returning any other answer than “*yes*” or “*no*.” If that be so, it is obviously impossible to appreciate too highly the perseverance and politeness of a spirit who would thus devote itself to a series of replies, not only totally inapplicable, but calculated to bring considerable discredit on its own intelligence.

With a few table-tippings, to which, it must be confessed, I paid a very lax attention, the proceedings terminated. The magnetic circle then resolved itself into its natural elements, and, with a smile (and half a dollar per head) to the pretty *medium*, the party withdrew, variously impressed with what they had witnessed.

And what, my dear friend Sceptic, for whose especial benefit I have, incautiously, yet not unconscientiously, narrated this remarkable meeting, what is your impression of the matter? But why inquire? The key-note is already struck—*humbug!*

Humbug, indeed, sir! sheer, unmitigated humbug, from beginning to end. Ridiculous, and what is worse, because insulting, shallow humbug,

literally, "perilous stuff," which must be looked to quickly, or those charged with the moral *sewerage* of the community will be likely to incur a very serious responsibility.

Take breath, my friend. Compose yourself. Agreed. There is humbug.

And yet you devote many a serious page (who the deuce will read it, I wonder!) to circumstantial narrative, and earnest commendation to the notice of reasonable men—of these—psha!—you *own* it humbug. Come to supper.

Humbug, but *not*, as you say, "unmitigated." I esteem it perfectly possible, within the limits of fair argument, and in too painful accordance with human nature, that what has degenerated into folly and falsehood, had, nevertheless, its origin in truth.

Regarding what you have been describing as "truth," how can you justify that levity of tone, so unsuited to —

A spiritual atmosphere? Simply because no one circumstance of the meeting suggested the faintest approach towards a *suspicion*, far less a consciousness, of any spiritual presence whatsoever. An overwhelming sense of the ludicrous accompanied every stage of this remarkable *séance*, and even impaired the interest attaching to the inexplicable sounds themselves. Why should not these, the basis of the mystery, at

least, be genuine? The extraordinary failures really awaken almost as much curiosity as the success. Those who intend to make jugglery and deception their trade, generally perfect their tricks before inviting public scrutiny, or, should one of them fail, means are provided to cover the defeat. Here, not the slightest attempt is ever made to conceal or account for discrepancies. The *media* uniformly declare that the occasional confusion, the discordant and conflicting statements, are as puzzling and utterly unaccountable to *them* as to others. And of this, many persons of high intelligence and the coolest judgment, who were originally sceptical in regard to the whole matter, have, after rigid scrutiny, declared themselves fully satisfied.

But, to take the strongest *anti-medial* position, let us assume that acute and practised observation, and a generally shrewd intelligence, have supplied the means for furthering this deception, and turning it to profit, how far does that extend? Powers and gifts, so grand and godlike in their development, as to show almost like emanations from diviner spheres, and to command at once the instinctive reverence of mankind, have been prostituted to the basest and most earthly ends. Yet they are no less powers and gifts than before their fatal misdirection turned what might have been glory, into a snare.

No doubt, many *media* have not scrupled to avail themselves of these unexplained phenomena, by grafting upon them a system of deceit calculated, as they suppose, to heighten the impression made by these manifestations, and to increase the profits attending them. Still, this will not explain the mystery. It is *there*—unmoved. But, as a general rule, the fact is different. The *media* are sincere and trustworthy, and (as in the cases mentioned hereafter, as noted by Mr. J. Sargent in his recent travels among the Indians in Iowa), are as ignorant as ourselves in regard to the manner in which the sounds are produced. Nor do *all* the *media* themselves coincide in their leanings toward the supernatural. Among others, Mr. Cooley, of Springfield, a *medium* of celebrity, declares his belief that the phenomena are purely human and natural, though attributable to agencies hitherto undetected by science.

In short, to condemn sweepingly the whole body of persons to whose presence these phenomena seem appurtenant, as impostors or dupes, is idle and absurd. They may, indeed, be alike mistaken in attributing the cause to spiritual agency, and in accepting the communications as entitled to credit; but *of the genuine existence of the phenomena there can no longer be the remotest question.* Nor should the mind of the educated reader be wholly unprepared for such

an impression. The cases of Angelique Cottin and of Madlle. Clairon, with others mentioned in the first chapter, cannot all have passed unnoticed, and my attention has been drawn to a fact worthy of remark, viz., the extraordinary analogy between those mysterious occurrences which, in the days of witchcraft, established upon oath, puzzled the brains and warped the judgment of our fathers, and the phenomena now in progress of development in America. Sounds and movements of material substances were among the commonest of the facts recorded. That the unfortunate victims of the unphilosophic judges and juries of the time, frequently courted their own destruction by a strange misuse of gifts they could not comprehend, is probable enough. Still, as has been said, the phenomenon is *there*. A diamond, whether picked from a dust-bin, or plucked from a diadem, is of equal intrinsic value, nor can the use to which it may be turned, or the association in which it may be found, detract one single carat, in the judgment of the skilful lapidary, from its market worth.

So with regard to these manifestations. The admitted failures, the ludicrous, evasive, inconsequential character of the entire proceedings, are insufficient, of themselves, to disprove either the preternatural or philosophic origin claimed for the phenomena. Above all, the solution of the mys-

tery must be sought elsewhere than in the purposes to which it may be rendered subservient.

Meanwhile, dear Sceptic, and my friends in general, suspend your judgment; and remember only that when the aforesaid "spiritual philosophy," with its kindred mesmerism, clairvoyance, electro-biology, are taken from the hands of the mere charlatan, and delivered over to the careful analysis of the candid, truthful, disinterested, and philosophic inquirer, then, and then only, may you have leave to smile; for *then* we may expect the mingled mass of natural and spiritual phenomena now bewildering us, to yield up from its confused elements the true philosophy of the human mind, even as the noble science of chemistry was evolved from the alchymy of old.

CHAPTER IX.

DISCURSIVE.

Coaching—Adventures in Palestine—The Headless Major—Shakers—Railing—A wet evening—Rouse's most unpleasant Point—Montreal—One page of statistics—Barnum—Temperance—Sleighbing—Quebec—Montmorenci—Lorette, &c.—Wolfe—Back to the States—Kossuth at New York—At Cincinnati—Boston—Sceptic—"Mutual Admiration Society," &c.

ANY attempt to disguise the fact that the style of this treatise borders slightly on the desultory, were useless affectation. Conceding to it that characteristic, two courses are open, viz., to plead, in palliation, that the notes on which I had intended principally to rely for recollection of certain matters, both natural and spiritual, have fallen into inextricable confusion; or, to leave it at once to the candour and penetration of the reader to supply the connecting link always discernible to my own mind. You, my dear Sceptic, who have paid your money, have that indubitable privilege of taking your choice, I would be the last to dispute.

Meanwhile, you will at least recognise some

features of relationship with our subject, in the tale of the Headless Major.

It will be admitted, perhaps reluctantly, that the process of "falling asleep" is by no means that precipitate descent implied in the phrase. We glide, through the same infinitesimal degrees, into the realms of sleep, and though, no doubt, the celerity of that process may be greatly influenced by the conditions of the mind and body, there always remains a certain track of debateable land to be struggled through, like a conquered, but not pacified, country, of which the reason still reigns nominal sovereign; and this transition state, if prolonged, as is frequently the case, by any unusual mental excitement or outward interruptions, is one of the strangest and most analogous to the unhealthy, of any to which the sane mind is liable. To have a perfect recollection of time, place, and circumstance, and yet to admit among the latter *one* thing which is manifestly impossible, and reason quietly upon it, as though simply unusual, seems rather the result of faculties disordered, than merely dulled by approaching sleep, whose influence, like that of a deepening twilight, would naturally envelope all things alike. The circumstance, nevertheless, is far too common to be worth classing among mental phenomena; is chiefly noticeable, because in it may be discovered, no doubt, the germ of many a ghostly tale, and

bears affinity to the subject of these notes, only inasmuch as frequent witnessing and consideration of the rapping phenomena, at this period nearly new to me, probably induced that temporary excitement of mind which resulted in a sufficiently absurd hallucination of the nature referred to.

Whatever may be the summer aspect of Ohio, the scenery of that state during the months of snow, is wild and weird enough. Endless woods of beech and pine, bleak hills, dismal hollows, lonely, snow-suffocated huts, and straggling, lifeless villages, form the cheerful characteristics of that portion of the province to which the town-creating railroad has not yet penetrated. Possibly the toiling through a country like this, at a dark, tempestuous season, might have contributed in some degree to engender that peculiar condition of mind to which I have alluded; and which in the sudden, unhealthy impulse imparted to the imagination, probably bore some resemblance to that which is said to characterise persons whose lives are passed in lone and remote districts of the earth.

While staying at Cincinnati, a telegraphic missive announced to me that a lady, under whose protection I had hoped to return northward, would meet me at Xenia, a place some sixty miles distant. "Protection," I am fully aware, my dear

Sceptic, appears a singular term, thus applied. It is, notwithstanding, apt and well-chosen, and is, moreover, so easy of application, as to be almost convertible with its very opposite. For example, at the present moment, it means "recent legislation," or "Free Trade." Visit the States, however, yourself, and then dispute *my* use of it if you can. Any gentleman travelling in that country on his own purely individual "hook," is, without reference to aspect, manner, or means, received with that sovereign contempt so characteristic of the sovereign people, and so indicative of the vested rights of citizenship; is housed and fed very much as though his appearance at an hotel at all were an intrusion which might certainly be winked at, but scarcely forgiven; and, surrounded with reception-rooms blazing with velvet and gold, is condemned to pass his evenings in a frowzy "tap," unless to its fragrant atmosphere and refined society he prefers his own bed-room.

Under the wing of a lady, sanctified by her gracious presence, the scene is wholly changed—the guest acknowledged,—

Man, the hermit, pined, till woman smiled!

Landlords now smile also, nay, shake hands with you (they often do *that*—he of the New York Hotel grasped my hand with something almost like emotion, and of his four hundred bedrooms

assigned me the worst!)—dining and drawing-rooms fly open,—music, books, pictures, &c., are at your command,—you have but to ring, and, without a murmur, the waiter comes! Many things, my dear Sceptic, are *comfortable* in travelling through the United States of America—*three* are essential—clogs, patience, and a lady. Persons who are fastidious may add to these a waterproof garment, approximating as nearly as possible to the colour of tobacco juice; an ingenious statistician having affirmed, as the result of minute and laborious calculations, that one thousand tons of the liquid I have mentioned, are annually squirted over the face of American creation, while twenty tons of ivory are expended every seven years in preparing the same for distribution.

For Xenia, accordingly, I started, and, it being on a railway line, arrived there in about three hours. But haste was useless; my telegraphic correspondent, who was on her way from St. Louis to Philadelphia, and had, as I afterwards found, already travelled twelve successive days and nights, had not been heard of, nor could she and her suite arrive, except by travelling twelve miles *on foot*, until the next morning. So, after a slight ramble in the snow, I ascended to a chamber, and, having selected one of its nine beds, under a distinct covenant that no attempt

should be made to occupy the other eight,—I retired to rest at the primitive hour of nine. Did anybody ever go to bed at nine? The sensation is singular.

The rosy morn, and my no less roseate friend, arrived together. She was already escorted by two cavaliers, one of whom, Major R. (editor, pig-dealer, and officer of the — militia), was destined to be the subject of the extraordinary misadventure hereinafter described. Our homeward journey recommenced under very agreeable auspices, and continued pleasantly until our arrival at the railway terminus, a straggling village called Salem, built as though the houses had been thrown in a promiscuous heap, by Titans, or had quarrelled, turned half round, and were looking askance at each other over their shoulders. Here, however, the horrors of the “middle passage” began. Nineteen miles of deep snow lay between us and the next railway station—Palestine. All ordinary means of conveyance had been eagerly caught up by a previous batch of pilgrims, and, with the exception of wheelbarrows and an ox-cart, no available vehicle was to be found. A foraging party was sent out, however, and presently returned in great spirits, with a captive coach-proprietor, who, though distinctly pre-engaged, on being remonstrated with, and shown a two-dollar bill, consented to discover that he had

misunderstood the bargain, and considered himself at liberty. So far well, but on being introduced to my friend's baggage, consisting of twenty-two boxes, and weighing in all about two tons, the unfortunate man turned pale, and showed such imminent symptoms of "jibbing," as to render it necessary to recruit his system with an additional dollar. An hour later, amidst the tears, protestations, and maledictions of the disappointed lessees of the vehicle, we started for Palestine.

It was now three o'clock, and it was considered possible, accidents apart, that we might perform the journey by ten, that is, after the modest rate of two miles and a half an hour. The sanguine suggested *nine* o'clock, the experienced demurred altogether, and declined to be definite.

Jolt—rumble—tilt—dip—large hillock—sudden hole—ah—h! we're over! No! breathe again; all right! Jolt—rumble—here we do go! hold on! saved again! Jolt—rumble, &c., and, at last—halt!

"What's this place?"

"Colombiana."

"How far?"

"Half way."

"What's o'clock?"

"Seven."

The driver gets down, and drags open the door.

“Well, you fellows”—(remember, English friends, two of the party were women, one, accustomed to the refinements of society, the other, her fastidious English maid)—“Well, you fellows, do any of you want supper? I’m going to stop here, *I am*, to feed my hosses.”

Glad to ease their cramped limbs, the fellows (fair and otherwise), agreed, *nem. con.*, to face the horrors of a Colombiana supper-table, and descended with as much alacrity as the total absence of steps permitted. Seated in an intensely hot parlour, redolent of smoke, tobacco-juice, and frying sausages, we persuaded ourselves we were hungry, and were really glad when a whitey-brown girl dashed open the door, announced “supper” with a nervous shriek, and instantly took to her heels, as though to escape the human torrent she evidently believed would follow. The banquet would not have satisfied Lucullus. A coach-load, at least, of earlier “fellows” had preceded us, and, like a cloud of locusts, devoured all that was green,—that is, *fresh*,—in Colombiana. The company (for some twenty strangers joined us) were, to a man, eating with their knives and employing the same individual instrument to carve the dishes before them. An extremely dirty and scantily attired infant, having no seat, the mistress of the house lifted from a shelf an enormous loaf, upon which the child was perched, and amused itself

by kicking its dangling heels into the sides ! The whole thing was so disgusting, that we gladly resumed our seats in the vehicle, and tumbled on towards our destination ; reaching that desired spot at half-past ten. Palestine !

And what is Palestine ? This nobly named city, my dear Sceptic, stands at the corner of a wood, near an embryo railroad station, and consists of five small tenements, and a pig-hutch ! Inn there is none, but the lady of one of the aforesaid tenements condescends to receive and entertain the wearied traveller, and, should there be many pilgrims, passes on the surplus to her next neighbour—a canny Scot, who sells worsted-stockings, candles, and, in cholera season, plums. Chilled and cramped to death, we descended at the former house, and demanded beds. Not one was to be had, but we might sit round the fire, if we liked. Much obliged. If we could but get twelve miles further, all would be well. Would the coachman put to, and proceed ? No. But there was a cart in the yard, the miller had a pair of horses, and the canny Scot an old coach-harness. It was put to our fair friend whether we should bivouac by the fire, or proceed through the cold dark night ?

“Push on,” said the heroine, still unconquered. But push on we could not ; the farmer refused his cart, the miller his horses ; and, as it became

clearly evident that nothing could be gained by "pushing on," inasmuch as, by taking the train next morning, we should arrive in much the same time as though we started now by the road, it was decided to remain at Palestine, and throw ourselves upon the hospitality of the Scot, to whose domicile we accordingly proceeded in a body.

Mr. Sandy Macpherson had retired to his couch, and the inhospitalities of the house were being performed by a lady of shrill voice and savage aspect, who demanded our pleasure, as though we had demanded *her* purse. *Pleasure!* the phrase is absurd, but, in fact, we require beds. Can't have none; there an't but two rooms, and two gents has bespoke the biggest. The gents were appealed to, and at first demurred, but, being shown the lady, instantly succumbed, and made over the bigger room to her and her attendant, contenting themselves with the lesser. The Major, Mr. N——, and I, established ourselves in the parlour, around a fire which, immense as it was, made small impression upon the bitter cold with which that freezing apartment was impregnated. The wind blew through it like water through a sieve! With the assistance of cloaks, umbrellas, blankets, &c., we erected wigwams in the most eligible corners; hung curtains over the doors, and kept up a conflagration rather than a fire.

But all would not do; the frost was victor. At length, Mr. N——, with considerable architectural skill, built himself a regular mansion with six chairs and half at able; thatched it completely with every flat thing he could discover; crept in at one end, and, taking advantage of a lull in the tempest that swept through the room, stopped up the entrance!

Major R—— mixed himself up, in some inexplicable manner, with two feather beds; and I threw the cape of my Canadian cloak over my head, and sat scowling at the “ineffectual fire.”

A snore from the thatched house: acknowledged by the feather beds! Happy innocents! they sleep. I, too, am conscious of a—sort of—as it were—but I know where I am! Oh, perfectly! Rendsburg! Schleswig Holstein! “sea-surrounded.” There are my two military friends, gallant but smoke saturated, whose barrack-room I share, and who have promised that I shall, on the morrow, see the reverses of Idstedt avenged. Will the Danes fight? Hark! is that a trumpet? No, it is only the wailing wind; and here I am, wide awake, not, as erst, in warlike Rendsburg, but in peaceful Palestine. Let me try, by catechistic process, whether I *am* awake. Where am I? In Palestine. What is Palestine? Remote village of the United States. What State? Don't remember. Season? Depth of winter.

Object? Nothing particular. Companions? Major R——, Mr. N——. Upstairs? Charming American, vigilant maid. All perfectly satisfactory. Now let us look round and see what is to be seen. Eh? what? By George! you don't mean *that*? Well, if this is not the most extraordinary circumstance! I must make a note of this.

-And what, my dear Sceptic, do you suppose it was? The feather bed, which formed the (if I may so express myself) upper crust of the major, had rolled off, and the gallant officer lay, with his whole manly figure exposed to view, but—*headless*. I give you my honour that, though awake, I was under the full impression that the head was missing. And it is illustrative of the singular transition state of which I have spoken, that a circumstance, which at any other time would have struck me with horror and amazement, only now awakened a sort of cordial interest. The major reclined upon his remaining feather bed in a half-sitting posture, but, as has been mentioned, *headless*! His high shirt-collars stood sharp up, with alarming distinctness, but nothing between them! The body was in its shirt-sleeves, and was well defined upon a large dark-green umbrella, which formed the back-ground of the picture. The strange part of the story is that, while I was perfectly conscious of everything around me—even

noticed a snoring from the thatched house—I yet fully believed that the major had lost his head, and only wondered what the deuce had become of it! A gentleman in one of Dickens's stories is perpetually offering to devour that organ, but never explained the manner in which he proposed to accomplish the exploit.

“He finds that cap did no good,” I reflected, “and no doubt took off his head to keep it warm. But where has he put it? Probably under his arm, like a gibus hat. No, he hasn't; it won't squeeze. Rolled away, perhaps? Certain I am he had it on when he lay down, yet I don't see it on the floor! How odd, now, if he should have mislaid it! By Jove! he'll miss it—in the morning. No matter; it's no business of mine to look after people's heads. There's a smell of burning! If it should be toasting at the fire, it would be only civil to turn it for him! No, it's not that; it's my fur cloak, with a coal upon it. There's a slight elevation at the foot of the feather bed; of course it's there—keeping warm—ah”—I slept.

At least, I fancy I did; for I remember playing at chess with my cousin Cecilia, and was in the act of giving her check-mate with a bishop habited like Dr. Pusey (whose body kept opening, and displaying a Roman Catholic oratory, stuffed with flowers and lamps), when, with a slight shiver, I found

myself in Palestine. There was a shrill echo—

St. Peter's bird did call.

And well he might, poor frozen fowl! for the intense cold of that room of Palestine will our pilgrim party long remember. "In that Jerusalem did Harry (very nearly) die;" for the zephyrs which circulated through the apartment, blowing, like their Homeric ancestors, from every quarter at once, appeared to have selected my head as a common centre or rendezvous, and occasioned a severe rheumatic headache, which lasted two days.

The major, however, had recovered his head. The thatched house, like an egg under the influence of the hydro-incubator, broke, and delivered up its tenant, three-parts fledged; and it remains for you, my dear Sceptic, to explain, in your forthcoming work on Somnolism and Psychology, how it was that I, fully awake, as I again declare, to every other impression, should have permitted myself, for full twenty minutes of calm reflection, to believe, not only in the major's temporary decapitation, but to yield a tacit consent to such an act, as being, under the circumstances, both natural and expedient!

It was remarked in the first chapter that manifestations analogous to those now attracting so much notice, have been for many years recognised

among the sect of Shakers ; but, although that fact is generally admitted, I have been unable to trace the particular details, the number or method of the communications, or the degree of faith accorded to them when obtained. A friend, who very recently paid a visit to one of the Shaker haunts, gives a curious account of these singular people :—

“ We drove over, one day, to Lebanon, a village in N. Y., owned by the Shakers, or “ Shaking Quakers.” It is the head-quarters of the sect, and the burial-place of Ann Lee, its founder.

“ They exhibit the most singular specimen of fanaticism it has ever been my lot to witness. They are Fourierists, or rather Communists, with a religious principle grafted on, or, more properly, as the basis of, the communism—and practising celibacy. Their dogma is that the Messiah is male and female, Ann Lee being the female prototype ; and that, should all persons preserve celibacy, the continuation of the species would be effected by Divine dispensation, as with our first parents. Their possessions are immense, they being the best agriculturists in that part of the Union ; besides manufacturing among themselves all that they need for food and raiment. Their internal government, vested in certain elders, is the most complete system of spiritual despotism that can be conceived. Their religious services, which I witnessed as long as I could endure the

scene, consisted in singing hymns to very extraordinary tunes, and then dancing.

“Imagine four hundred women, dressed like corpses, and wearing the old-fashioned high-heeled shoes, on one side of an immense hall, and as many men, in their shirt-sleeves, on the other, moving backwards and forwards to a monotonous droning kept up by some dozen elders! They beat the dancing dervishes hollow! It struck me as curious that, although the women have abundance of out-door exercise, and live in the purest air, I could not detect the slightest colour in the cheeks of one of them, though ranging from the age of ten to that of seventy. The absence of all inducement to continue this unnatural mode of life is the most remarkable feature. Mormonism is supported by appeals to the sensual principle—to the desire of worldly advancement, &c.; and few organizations, however singular, but acknowledge some encouraging principle. Here, and here only, there is none.”

It would seem that colder climates are less favourable to the development of the spirit-manifestations. At all events, the further I travelled northward, the less frequent did they become; and, if I remember rightly, Albany was the last place of note, on the route to Canada, at which they came under my notice. Here, indeed, there were rumours of a *medium* of such extraordinary

power (a lady of the highest respectability), that I was induced to remain for one day longer than I had intended, in the hope of obtaining an introduction to her, and thus forming some definite opinion on the subject. The time I could spare, however, proved insufficient for the purpose.

And now, my dear Sceptic, you can either disport yourself for a few days longer at the noble city of Albany—where sleighing is excellent, and Mrs. Warner is performing at the Museum—or accompany me a little further on the way to Quebec.

“To Quebec? And why? There are clearly no more spirits in this direction.”

I am not so certain of *that*; nay, I will almost undertake to *promise* something of interest on the subject of spirits generally.

“I hate railway travelling in America. That chewing and ——”

Nonsense! Come.

We went; and, as ill luck would have it, were in for as damp an evening as I think I ever remember. No sooner had we entered the carriage than expectoration commenced with vigour, and the dripping well of Knaresborough presently became a mere jest in comparison. In a short time, Sceptic's voice broke out in a tone of impatient remonstrance—

"I say! I beg your pardon—but—really—*hang* it, now!"

"Wal, I know I spits free. Guess I ken do it without touching *you*, though. Thar, now!"
(Example afforded.)

Growl from Sceptic.

"Why, 'twarn't nothing—say?"

"No, I don't say it touched; but why do it at all?"

"Wal, I expect, when you go down west, you'll get over them prejudices. You'll *have to*. Yes, *sir*."

Perhaps it is superfluous to mention that our friends "down west" are in the habit of emphasizing the "sir," and even augmenting that emphasis by adding a syllable—"sir-ree." The latter form, however, must as yet be regarded as mere slang; at least, I remember the introduction of it into a burlesque of Hamlet, at Boston, provoked considerable laughter:—

Bernardo. *Qui vive!*

Francisco. *Qui vive yourself! Hold—answer me—*

Is that my friend, Bernardo?

Bernardo. *Yes, sir-ree.*

It is due to my friend to say that he did not complain without some reason. He was unhappily placed. Each carriage, on an American railway, contains seats for some fifty persons, arranged like the free seats down a narrow church-aisle;

and I observed that the gentleman who sat directly in the rear of my friend, having, by his persevering expectoral exertions, so completely flooded the floor as to inconvenience himself, had lifted his long legs from the ground, and quietly placed them on the back of the bench before him, one on each side of Sceptic's head ; thus placing him in a sort of cleft stick !

I shall not soon forget the horror and surprise of the latter's countenance, as the huge damp boots almost took the curl out of his " educated whisker." Fortunately, this journey, *à la fourchette*, was not of long duration.

Such, and a thousand such incidents are inseparable from American railway travelling ; and, however familiar one may become with these *désagrémens*, the marked amelioration in manners which takes place as soon as the Canadian frontier is passed, must be welcomed by the least fastidious traveller.

" Rouse's Point," where one's baggage is " visited " by the simple process of giving a kick to-piece to the smaller articles, and rattling the locks of the bigger,—and now—what time do we start for Montreal ?

" Guess you don't start *this* day."

" The deuce ! And why ?"

" Cars stuck in the snow."

So here, in this largest, coldest, and dreariest

of hotels, we must sleep, instead of getting comfortably on to Montreal (only thirty miles) to dinner; having, moreover, to turn out, in all probability, about six A.M. to-morrow, in total darkness.

“What time do the cars leave in the morning?”

“Five o'clock!”

Pleasant! delightful! What a hateful place is this! It grows momentarily less endurable—crammed with the *détenus* of three blocked-up trains. The landlord is busily engaged in “rooming off,” as he calls it, his particular friends; and what sort of accommodation *we* shall get. . . . Hang Rouse! and confound his “point!” What a pitiful vanity—what a ridiculously paltry feeling of self-exaltation—must have suggested that name! What did the person mean? Why be particularly proud of his “point?” The selection was not so vastly judicious, if you come to *that!* The winter aspect of Lake Champlain does by no means vividly suggest ideas of Paradise.

And, after all, who *was* Rouse? When we quitted England there was a fashionable street-saying, apparently of universal application—“*Brayvo Rous!*” As the immediate object of these laudations (who would seem to be perpetually indulging in popular clap-traps) is equally doubtful, perhaps some of those literary beagles, who correspond with “Notes and Queries,” will hunt

down the respective Rouses, and make them the subject of a brief communication.

We take a light refection of strips of gutta-percha, (jocosely termed in the *carte* "beef-steak,") and retire to bed,—Sceptic in a small apartment, I in a kind of saloon big enough to accommodate a squadron of Life Guards,—cold as Wellington Sound. The huge stove at one end is only now getting slightly warm, and, it being too cold to think of waiting till the frost has melted out of the logs, and left them susceptible of fire, I toss everything movable upon the great cold bed, and creep under the mountain so prepared. But it is impossible to cover one's head, and upon *that* the frost fixes with spiteful tenacity. Never did I ever feel anything approaching to the coldness of that night. One's very eyes ached. Thank goodness! no getting up for six hours at least—six—hours—*Eh!*

"Four o'clock!" growls the surly black porter, who has never been known to go to bed, bursting open the door, and tumbling over a chair.

"What's the weather?"

"Snows."

"Can I have some hot water?" (It need hardly be observed that every liquid thing, even to the hair-oil, is a cake of ice.)

The man simply growls, lights a sputtering

candle, and withdraws, never, as I truly suspected, to return. What a wretched light! The deuce (or the frost) is in the candle! If it goes out, I am lost. I know there is no bell. Matches I have none. As to going out into that corridor, and shouting for assistance, I'll do no such thing. The candle languishes — revives . . . shall I get up? I may save it yet. No, let it take its chance. I resolve on *this*. The fate of that candle is as yet uncertain; it, or the frost, may still prevail. If the former, I will rise, dress, and travel. If the latter, I will turn round and go to sleep. The cars are at liberty to start.

The strife that ensued was really by no means uninteresting. It was like watching a tournament, in the event of which one had, like Rebecca, a direct personal interest. At length the gallant "dip" gave forth a triumphant flare, of which, taking it for a presage of victory, I took advantage, to ascertain the locality of the more striking and essential portions of my wardrobe. The precaution was useless! With a sickly sputter, the defeated wick wavered, succumbed, expired! —Darkness!

Five hours later, I wake and descend to breakfast. Sceptic is dawdling over his cold coffee, with an injured expression on his countenance.

"Well, my dear fellow, how did you sleep?"

"*Vilely*. So cold! The brutes made me get up at five o'clock. Swore the cars were going at six—and—"

"What! are they *not* gone?"

"Didn't you know it? No, they don't leave till *half-past-ten*. There's a drift on the line!"

My poor friend! his indignation was justifiable, the circumstance he mentioned having, it appeared, been perfectly well known to the house authorities the previous night.

At half-past ten, then, we step, as the conductors call it, "aboard," and, five miles on, come to a sudden halt. A train approaching on our line! It stops, and *both*, with needless courtesy, back completely out of sight of each other. After waiting an hour in a siding, and no appearance of our friend, a boy stumps forward through the snow to reconnoitre. Another hour, and he returns, accompanied by three impatient passengers. The train has backed into a siding, *and* a drift, and wants assistance from our engine. It is despatched, and fifty stout fellows besides, armed with huge shovels, whom it appears the contractor had engaged and brought with us, in anticipation of some such casualty.

Another tedious hour to be whiled away. Sit still we must, for, outside, the snow is everywhere above our knees. What is to be done? A mild

old gentleman in a corner suggests "riddles," and, being smiled upon, leads off with—

"As I was going to St. Ives—"

"Thank you. We know. Heavens and earth! Is the wit of this young country thriving upon our oldest conundrums?"

A gentleman volunteers a song. By all means. Will it annoy the company? On the contrary—delighted.

The intention, however, considerably transcended the execution. It was indeed, to speak frankly,

"— music

Enough to make Mozart the Jew, sick."

The air was of the Ethiop school of composition, with a chorus, in which all were required to join—

"O carry me back to old Virginney,
To o-o-old Vir-gin-ney!"

and really, so far as vocal interests in the North were concerned, it seemed a matter of perfect indifference how soon the minstrel's request were complied with.

We subsequently executed what was unquestionably intended for the "*Mistletoe Bough*," but as nobody knew the precise words, and few the melody, the effect was rather singular, than harmonious. "Young Luvvle," as he was called,

seemed to be perpetually coming in where he was not wanted, and ended by hanging himself "in the castle hall," in lieu of the mistletoe. Slight allusion was also made to an "old oak-log," which induced a suspicion that somebody was surreptitiously warbling the burlesque of this celebrated ditty. Just as we were concluding the chorus,

"O ! the mistletoe bough !—
O ! the mistletoe bow—wow—wough !"

the engine happily returned. We proceeded, crossed the noble river in sleighs, and here we are in Montreal.

A fine, growing city, is it not, Sceptic? Frenchified in feature, doubtless, but changing daily for the better. Conflagrations, those costly improvers, will work wonders for Montreal. Whether the French portion of the population will or will not, hereafter, prove a benefit to the city, is a doubtful question. On the one hand, they are as a body, easy, indolent, averse, or at least indifferent, to progress; a circumstance the more striking, considering who are their southern neighbours, and how contagious is the principle of "go-ahead." On the other hand, they are peaceful, loyal, heartily well affected to British rule, and in the event (happily, most improbable) of any troubles arising with their republican neighbours, would, in all probability, show themselves their country's most reliable defenders.

But, albeit, I have used the term "averse to progress," dream not, my dear Sceptic, that the Canadas, as a country, lag *far* behind their rushing rival. It may be the fashion in the States to decry their progress, and to institute comparisons most unfavourable to the latter, in all those points which are the strongest tests of national advancement. Let us see. It wants ten minutes to dinner, and though, on my word, I did not intend to give you a dish of statistics, I cannot help showing, with the able assistance of the Rev. Mr. Lillie, how in the three important items, population, property assessment, and education, we can venture to try conclusions with the States.

According to the *American Almanac*, the free population of the United States was, in 1806, 5,305,925; in 1851, 20,250,000.

The population of Upper Canada, according to the Board of Registration and Statistics, amounted in 1811, to only 77,000. The return for 1850 is 791,000. Lower Canada has risen during the same period, from 423,630, to 791,000, a precisely similar number.

Compare the rate of increase.

The population of the States is, in 1850, hardly four times what it was at the beginning of the century, while that of Upper Canada has increased *tenfold* since 1810 !

The assessed value of property in Canada was,—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|
| In 1825 | 2,256,874 | 7 | 8 |
| 1835 | 3,880,994 | 13 | 6 |
| 1845 | 7,778,917 | 9 | 6 |
| 1847 | 8,567,001 | 1 | 0 |

Of these returns it is to be observed that they show only the relative increase of value; and not, except about the earliest period, its true amount.

Shall we compare cities? Toronto against New England's noble capital, Boston. Boston contained,—

| | Inhabitants. |
|-------------------|--------------|
| In 1790 | 18,038 |
| 1810 | 33,250 |
| 1820 | 43,298 |
| 1830 | 61,391 |
| 1840 | 93,000 |
| 1850 | 135,000 |

—(World's Progress, 212,694.)

Thus, its population of 1850 is eight times, or nearly, that of 1790: Toronto being in 1850 over six times what it was eighteen years before, to wit, in 1832; more than 75 times what it was 49 years before, or in 1801. The recent census makes the increase, between 1842 and 1852, 100 per cent.

New York, the emporium of the New World,—a city that for its age, will, we suppose, vie with any on earth—numbered,—

| | Inhabitants. |
|-------------------|--------------|
| In 1790 | 33,131 |
| 1810 | 96,373 |
| 1830 | 202,548 |
| 1840 | 312,710 |
| 1850 | 517,000 |

—(World's Progress, 444,701.)

Its increase thus stands, as compared with Toronto, 16 times in 60 years against 75 in 49.

In education, one of the first interests of a community, a progress highly satisfactory is being made, as the following particulars derived from the Chief Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Ryerson's, very valuable Report for 1850, demonstrate.

The grand total in attendance on educational institutions was, in 1842, 65,978; in 1846, 101,912; and in 1850, 159,678.

The following particulars are derived from the *American Almanac* for 1851:—

In Ohio, with a population over two and three-fourths ours, there were in 1848, 5,062 schools with 94,436 pupils, sustained at a cost of 224,801 dollars, 44 cents, or 56,200*l.* 7*s.* 3*d.*; of which 149,205 dollars, 44 cents. were from public funds, and 75,596 dollars from other sources. (P. 277.)

Illinois had, in 1848, 2,317 schools, with an attendance of 51,447 pupils, supported partly by the proceeds of a school fund and partly by tax.

With a population a fourth over ours, Illinois

had, in 1848, 271 fewer schools than we had in 1846, with only about half our number of pupils; about one-third our number of pupils in 1850, with 742 fewer schools.

Ohio had, in 1848, with a population two and three-fourths ours, about double our number of schools, with 7,476 less than our number of pupils in 1846; considerably under two thirds our number in 1850. The amount paid for their support came short of ours, in 1846, by 11,706*l.* 11*s.* 10½*d.*

The number of schools in the State of New York in 1849, was 13,971—a little more than four and one-half ours for 1850, with a population about four and one-twenty-secondth. Of pupils in attendance, the number was 778,339; exceeding ours, according to population, in a proportion somewhere near four and one-fifth to four and one-twenty-secondth. On the support of these schools the sum expended was 1,115,153 dollars, 62 cents, or 275,788*l.* 7*s.* 7½*d.*,—under three and one-fifth ours. For our population then, we have in 1850 spent a considerably larger sum on common schools, than did the State of New York in 1849.

Let us to dinner. Hays' House. The board is laid for twelve, all of whom are forthcoming but one. "Where is he?" "Won't he come?" "How annoying! I came on purpose," &c., were the remarks passing round. Disappointment was depicted upon every face. Who can it be? The Go-

vernor-General travelling *incog*. The folding doors fly open, as though one leaf might not admit the dignity about to enter, and, lo! a gentleman of middle age, frank and pleasant mien, frizzled hair, and stout person. Surely, I have seen that face before, though perhaps in dreams. It is, it must be,—Barnum!

And very agreeable did he prove. He was not above his business. He spoke of his various successes with such an easy candour as Napoleon might have evinced in chatting with Gourgaud at St. Helena, on the subject of Jena, or Friedland, or the more pacific triumphs of Schönbrunn.

He ran through his whole list, during dinner, without the slightest reserve, or desire to mislead our youthful and inquiring minds. He was Barnum, and he knew it. *E. g.* :—

“His mermaid, he admitted, was a ‘sell.’ That freak of nature was, in fact, a simple box, and an intelligent boy.”

“But it dived—and remained under water several minutes?”

“It did. And without inconvenience. Valves. At the bottom of the cistern, existed a mechanism so constructed as to supply the gasping Nereid with the necessary air. So eager, however, became the interest of the populace, so sharp their curiosity and umbrellas; so numerous the prying pokes bestowed upon the ribs of the amphibious

creature by the canes, and even sword-sticks, of visitors, that, to prevent a possible homicide, the original vital principle of the mermaid was removed, and a cat substituted !”

“The living skeleton ?”

“Was a genuine bag of bones !”

“Woolly horse ?”

“What it seemed.”

“Horse with the snake in his eye ?”

“Eye, false ; snake, a lively leech !”

The hero of a hundred shows further informed us that there was probably no instance of *lusus nature* in the States, that had not, at one time or other, been submitted to his critical judgment. Monsters of every description were in the habit of leaving cards, almost daily, and placing themselves and their varied peculiarities at his disposal. Only yesterday, a gentleman had waited upon him with an inquiry, whether he happened to be in want of a “man-fish ?” The curiosity in question was introduced, and proved to be a youth afflicted with some cutaneous disorder, which imparted a scaly appearance to the skin. This piscine phenomenon, though, no doubt, possessing much interest in the eye of medical science, Mr. B., as prudently as politely, declined.

Barnum is a child of temperance, and, since last in Scotland, where the fascinations of whisky-toddy (and, probably the effect of evil example),

proved too much for his constancy, had never tasted wine or spirits. The Maine liquor law had now recently been passed, forbidding the retail of any intoxicating liquors, and Massachusetts was about to pass a similar enactment. Mr. B. considered the opportunity a good one for spreading his opinions on the subject, and resolved to give Montreal the benefit of them. Hence, accompanied by his Circus, and Tom Thumb (now a well worn, middle aged man), his present visit.

Whether you, my dear Sceptic, considered a lecture on "spirits," a sufficient redemption of my pledge to you at Albany, I cannot say. At all events, you accompanied me with the most amiable alacrity to the scene of action, the Hall Bonsecours, and even assisted my notes of the discourse.

Mr. Barnum mounted the rostrum :—

"He felt gratified that he was able to throw in his mite into the cause of temperance. He hoped the respectable audience before him were interested in the cause—it was their duty to be so. We all felt personally interested to have the murderer arrested, and if half a dozen of our citizens were murdered, it would create a great excitement—(cheers)—why not so in the temperance cause? Most people seemed to think it was a matter of no personal interest to them. (Murmurs.) He did not know how many such

personages were before him; probably the majority came to hear him from motives of curiosity, or to see the man who engaged Jenny Lind, to say nothing of the 'woolly horse,' 'the mermaid,' &c. If so, he (Mr. Barnum) was just the man to cater to their curiosity. That was his business. And now, having gratified their curiosity, he hoped they would reciprocate by listening to what he had to say in favour of temperance and the Maine law. He feared, however, he would be found dull, but felt confident that every one had an interest in the abolition of intoxicating liquors and the rum traffic. He would make a proposition, which was, that there was not a lady or gentleman present, who could place his or her hand on their hearts and say that they did not or had not suffered, in consequence of the use of intoxicating liquors. (Dubious murmurs.)

"No one could rise and deny the proposition that intemperance was an universal evil. Every one was interested to put it down, for no one could say absolutely that he would never die a drunkard—chances were against any one who would not altogether abstain. It was the best class of men that suffered most, and were most likely to fall. The most benevolent, the most social, and the most talented in the community, were generally the victims of alcohol.* Of course, there

* Hitherto, both Sceptic and myself had been impressed with

were exceptions to this rule, as with others, but was not the remark common, 'What a clever man is Mr. So-and-So! He is the best natured man in the community—what a pity he drinks?' He felt assured that intemperance was most created by the love of society and friendly habits. Man does not like liquor naturally, no more than he does tobacco, and many other such acquired tastes. He was not acquainted with the statistics of Montreal, but in the United States, on examination, it was proved beyond a shadow of doubt, that 150 millions of dollars were annually expended in the idea that active mental labour rendered temperate habits a necessity. On the contrary, it appears that there is something in such exertions, especially in a legislative career, rather calculated to lead to intemperance and dissipation. But Mr. Barnum's opinion is corroborated.

Says the *Richmond Whig*, "As a general rule, most of those who spend a few winters in Congress, if they escape becoming sots, and are not ruined at the gaming-table, acquire habits which render them discontented with, and disqualify them for, the dull pursuits of ordinary life. More commonly, they become regular toppers and inveterate gamesters. It is not a rare occurrence to find pious elders at home the frequent attendants of the tippling shops and gaming-tables of Washington.

"The effects of this kind of life are not confined to Washington, though there they may be more conspicuous than elsewhere. They are more or less visible in every legislative assemblage. Even on the contracted theatre of Richmond, within our own time, we have seen those who were called promising men, fall victims to the seductions of city life."

We did not know before how completely the interests of a great country may be swayed by its alcohol.

toxicating liquors,—a sum of money, which, if placed at interest, for thirty years, would purchase every acre of real estate in the United States. He would engage, however, to enter into bonds with the mayor of this city, that if he was allowed one-half, for twenty-five years, of the amount of money laid out here in intoxicating liquors, he would agree to pay all the taxes—provide teachers for as many schools as the people wished—discharge also all public expenses, and then make more money than he did on Jenny Lind.

“Now what effect or equivalent have we got for this expense? None whatever. The truth is, we give a peculiar privilege to the rum-seller. The baker, shoemaker, and every other trader rendered you an equivalent for your money, and they made something for society by their industry; but what did the rum-seller manufacture? Why this,—*he made drunkards, criminals, paupers, and jail victims*; and you had to pay the expenses of arresting them, and supporting them. Did any man gain health by drinking? did he succeed in business by this tipping? did ever any man who commenced business with fair prospects not go down hill by intoxicating liquors? If he (Mr. Barnum) found a man who succeeded in life, and was a tippler, he would exhibit him at once in his museum. He would be the greatest curiosity he had ever exhibited.

“Some were very fond of saying that the doctor recommended liquor to them, and such people appeared almost to love the doctor, and often they became their own doctors. One would think that all they wanted was a large drug shop to provide them and their families with all the necessaries of life. Why not, if they intended to give a splendid dinner, send for ipecacuanha, senna, and rhubarb, and finish with a desert of Brandreth’s pills, because the Dr. recommended such drugs? He would say that God never made intoxicating drinks; it was man who distilled it from grape, barley, &c.; this poison, alcohol, a poison which always affected the lungs, heart, brain, and destroyed all the membranes. The effect upon the system was well known. When he was in Ireland, he observed that the very children, in some of the lowest families, liked the taste of strong liquor, because they had imbibed it with their mother’s milk, and thereby acquired a taste for it.

“He had shown that every legitimate or proper calling was of some benefit to the community; and that the rum-seller was the only man who produced no benefit to society. He knew there were many engaged in this traffic, respectable men, but they did not consider the evil influence of the traffic. They would say, ‘Oh! I never sell to drunkards;’ but they did ten times worse, they commenced to make drunkards, and then handed

them over to the lower grog-shops to finish and complete them. My friends, I would not like to say hard things of any class of men, but what was the difference between the rum-seller and the highway robber? It was this: the one placed the pistol to the breast of his victim, and said, 'Your money *or* your life,' and the other gave the glass, and said, 'Your money *and* your life,'—was it not so?

"Liquor could not be sold under the Maine law, except for medical and mechanical purposes.

"The good effects of the Main law were incontrovertibly proved by facts. There were, on an average, from fifteen to twenty drunkards arrested nightly, under the influence of rum, before the law was passed; now, ten days would often elapse before a single person was apprehended, and the last report stated that the watch-house was now used to keep all the liquor seized. They thus seized the liquor, instead of the drunkard; this was certainly a great improvement. In old times they locked up the walking demi-John *with* the liquor, now they lock up the *liquor* and let the man go free. Of course there was a great cry raised about the destruction of property, this emptying the liquors into the ditches; but was it not better to empty out the liquor into the gutters than allow both men and liquor to be emptied therein? Were not dogs property? yet you

will not permit them to run about, at certain times, unmuzzled. Why? Because they may become mad, and the lives of your families would be jeopardised. Had not the people then just as good a right to destroy the rum which made men mad? So it was with gunpowder; it was especially taken care of, and put out of the city. Should one of his large tigers break loose into your streets, would men hesitate one moment to shoot it down, in order to preserve the lives of hundreds? Yes, and he (Mr. Barnum) would be immediately arrested for having such an animal not properly secured; but the rum-seller, who is slaying his victims, must be protected, and enjoy peculiar privileges. He concluded with the hope that the cause of temperance and the Maine law would soon triumph everywhere, to the great praise and glory of God."

Immense applause follows the descent of the talented lecturer from his rostrum, and the crowded and thirsty assemblage rapidly disperses in the direction of the nearest and most popular "taps," there to drink, in flowing cups, success to temperance. Frequent allusion to pleasant beverages had made us all so dry, that I was not surprised when you, my dear Sceptic, the most abstemious of men, confessed to me, *sotto voce*, that you never felt so much inclined for a stiff tumbler of brandy-and-water in your life!

Two days are enough, in this season, at Montreal. On to Quebec. Two hundred miles sleighing.

Rolled in furs—ears, fingers, and toes well covered—we are packed into a tandem sleigh, the driver standing in front, and off we go at the rate of ten miles an hour, over a road totally independent of the usual tracks, and only indicated by small trees and poles fixed in the snow.

Over woods, high rocks, and mountains,
Over hills and misty fountains,

I am *sure* we flew. Whether over

— steeples, towers, and turrets—

seemed, at least, doubtful; for I perfectly recollect being repeatedly flung—sleigh, boxes, Sceptic, and all—into the air, by some pointed thing resembling a church vane, and cleaving the atmosphere, as in a fairy car, for a space of some yards before we again descended upon our common mother. *Why* we always happened to do so, right side uppermost, I could never clearly ascertain. It was probably the result of certain extraordinary gymnastics performed by the driver, who, before and during these aerial excursions, repeatedly flung himself in and out of the sleigh, clinging, as the mounted Indians do in flying, by foot and hand.

Sleep at Trois-Rivières, half way, and next

evening, at six, are rushing into Quebec. Sword's Hotel.

In the morning, Sceptic, who has grown extremely metaphysical of late, and has evidently been secretly brooding over my promise to show him a few Canadian "spirits," moots the question of a *medium*. "One," adds Sceptic, technically (a good sign for proselytism), "one of more than average power."

"We will; ask Sword, or stay, suppose while I finish this letter, *you* go and explain our wishes."

Mr. Sword is at his post. To him, Sceptic.

"Pray, sir, have you a *medium* in the hotel?"

"Certainly, sir; several. Hot or cold?" inquires the ever-ready Sword.

Sceptic, slightly puzzled, explains that the precise temperature is a matter of little moment so the "*power*" be good.

Mr. Sword affirms, with just pride, that any one of *his* can be filled at boiling heat, in the space of one minute and a half!

Sceptic remembers that the Delphian priestesses of old were wrought up to the proper amount of ecstatic furor by being seated on a tripod, under which something was seething; but, not considering the process of filling a *medium* with boiling water sufficiently analogous, discards the idea, and explains to the astounded Sword, at considerable length, the doctrine of manifestations.

In vain, however. Benighted Quebec clearly knows nothing at all about the matter. "Rappings," indeed, are rife; but they are chiefly incidental to outer doors, and are such as indicate the advent of youthful "spirits," still clothed in what the poet, indeed, rudely calls the "muddy vesture of decay;" but which I, and those who have seen French-Canadian beauty in all the freshness of that transparent clime, must acknowledge to be a very fair and pleasant garment, entirely free from "mud" or any other soil whatsoever.

It is evident we must resign ourselves to fate, and be content with such consolation as may be derived from merely mortal society; the ball, the dinner, the concert, the charade; last, not least, the banquet or *conversazione* at the residence of the amiable and most popular Governor-General, whose continued presence gives life and impulse to all that is agreeable in the fine city.

But, since this is not a book of adventure, or of accident,—since, moreover, three British tourists have, within these few months, ransacked the treasures of the States and Canada, and imparted their experiences to the British public, why should we dwell on these things? Why dilate upon the grand features of city and country, cathedral or citadel? Or upon the exhilarating sleigh-flight, with some merry friend, who beguiled the way with

brief biographies and piquant anecdotes of individuals whom you did not know from Adam, but with one and all of whom you were thereafter to be upon the most intimate footing of friendship? Or upon the gay dinners at the hospitable mess of the —, whereat the feast of intellect was not wanting, inasmuch as, at dessert, we read a play of Shakspeare's, which went admirably, until six of the characters, including Hero and Beatrice, fell asleep, with their extinct cigars still between their lips, and the prompter finished the play by himself! Or upon the beautiful falls of Montmorenci, with their winter mountain of emerald, created by the frozen spray, sometimes growing to the height of a hundred and twenty feet, and even then not reaching to the waist of the gigantic fall; whither I was fortunate enough to proceed in society most calculated to add pleasure to that lovely scene. Or upon the excursion, with the Sleigh Club, to Carouge, whither, once a-week, the beauty and fashion of Quebec galloped, as though Quebec had been taken by assault, and nothing but their horses' heels could save them. Where, once arrived, the President of the day recited (poor soul!) a poem of his own composition, satirising the events of the last meeting, and indulging in the most personal reflections, on *its* President, his particular friend; in doing which the gallant officer evinced considerably more un-

easiness and trepidation than he would have shown in walking up to the mouth of a French battery ; where, after dancing, eating, and drinking, we galloped home, rather faster than we came, usually leaving, on an average, six, out of the thirty sleighs, in the snow-drifts and ditches. Or upon fair Indian Lorette, old haunt of the warlike Hurons, once our bitter enemies, now a quiet, peaceable people, Christians, and sworn disciples of Father Mathew. Abler pens have described the beautiful broken river, with its falls and rapids ; the pretty, quaint village, and the magnificent woods that girdle round, and half conceal the quiet little community from the bustling world beyond. What pity that one small dark spot must ever intrude, one melancholy thought ever mingle in the contemplation of scenes at once remote and beautiful ! The probability that this particular sense of pleasure will never know renewal ; the certainty, that, should we in these days of easy locomotion, ever revisit such pleasant scenes, it will be to view their unchanged loveliness with altered, world-worn eyes ; and who knows with what accordant taste and feelings ? these suffice to account for both spot and shadow, and make us agree with the poet, who ranks, as the last and worst of his forebodings, that—

From our hearts the sense of beauty may,
Ev'n like these bodily gifts, have passed away.

The more gratitude is due then, to the kind friends who imparted to this brief visit so many agreeable features; pleasant memories, such as, happily, no changed feelings can affect. Very delightful is Quebec, with its cheerful semi-French habit and manner; and greatly has it profited by the continued residence there of the able head of the Government; to whose firmness and conduct, in times which demanded not a little of that courage, both moral and physical, of which none possess a greater share, is, perhaps, owing in a great measure the preservation of this noble appanage to the British crown. Always personally, and now also politically, popular, the noble lord's *prestige* has extended into the States, where (I believe, during the fêtes at Boston, to which he had been invited, and which were marked by the most cordial and gratifying feelings on both sides), his frank yet dignified demeanour so captivated his American entertainers, as to induce one (slightly elevated) gentleman to assure him of his election to the Presidency, could he be prevailed upon to come forward frankly "on the democratic ticket!" The noble lord's allegiance remained unshaken. Still, as the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire is said to have valued the coarse compliment of the dustman, who requested leave to light his pipe at her eyes, above the insipid murmurs of the drawing-room, so his Excellency

might recognise in the speech of the warm-hearted American the most magnificent prospect the imagination of the latter, at least, could conceive.

But Sceptic is impatient. Back to the States and spirits; one visit first—one that no Englishman is privileged to omit. Along the *Grande Allee*, towards Cap Rouge, to the plains of Abraham, the left of the battle-field, the death-scene of Wolfe.

“HERE DIED WOLFE VICTORIOUS”

is the terse inscription, marking the spot which added this magnificent page to the military annals of Britain. Not Sidney, nor Bayard, present a more glorious version of the soldier's glorious death; nor easily can the brief, immortal story be too often told. But Bancroft, its latest and best narrator, has left neither room nor need for present record; and purely selfish must be the interest with which we gaze upon the scene of *his* triumph, whose memory was first consecrated to our juvenile reverence through the medium of a ludicrous old song! Think what we will, these humble nursery melodists are the enduring laureates of mankind. Many and many a pœan of victory by finished bards, has been chanted and forgotten, while the “Malbrouk,” and the “Bold General Wolfe,” fire the youthful fancy, and direct its impulses powerfully as ever.

In gratitude to the nameless poet whose strain

has already nearly lived its century, let us endeavour, for one generation more, to preserve it from that oblivion which can never be the lot of him it celebrates. Except that this lyric exhibits certain slight evidences of having emanated from a military pen, no theory respecting its authorship has ever, to my knowledge, been attempted. Adaptable to various tunes, it has usually been found to go most kindly to that known as the "Five Pound Note," played in extremely slow time.

GENERAL WOLFE.

A.D. 1759.

I.

Bold General Wolfe unto his men did say,
 "Come on, my lads, and follow me,
 And climb the rocks that are so high,
 All for the honour of our king and coun-te-ry.

II.

"The Frenchmen are upon the mountains high,
 While we, poor lads, in the valleys lie;
 I see them fall like the notes in the sun,
 Through smoke and fire,
 Through smoke and fi-i-i-ire,
 Through smoke and fire from our English *gun*!" *

* The remarkable accuracy of the poet is evinced in the fact that one single 6-pounder gun comprised the whole of the artillery used by the English in the action.

III.

The very first volley they gave to us
 Wounded our General in his left breast ;
 Yonder he sits (for he cannot stand) ;
 " Fight on so boldly,
 Fight on so boldly,
 For while I've breath I will give command !

IV.

" Here's fifty guineas, all in bright gold,
 Take it and part it, for my blood runs cold ;
 Take it and part it," General Wolfe did say,
 " You lads of honour,
 You lads of honour,
 You lads that scorn for to run away.

V.

" When to Old En-gen-land you do return,
 Tell all my friends that I am dead and gone ;
 And tell my aged old mother dear
 To grieve not for me,
 To grieve not for me,
 Since I died the death that I had a wish to share."

Once more in Boston. And now, my dear Sceptic, improve your opportunities among the spirits as rapidly as possible. Two excellent *media*, at least, are at hand—Misses Kezia Schoonmaker, and Ada Hoyt (Ada for choice); and while you transport yourself to an unknown sphere, "ourselves will mingle with society" in *this*. In plain terms, I have business in New York, and will, in a page or two, rejoin you here.

With such an understanding, we parted, and I alighted in New York, in the midst of an indescribable tumult.

KOSSUTH had arrived! That bewitching demagogue was absolutely safe in American waters! and, although denounced by his *compagnon de voyage*, Madlle. Lola Montes, as a "humbug," was entitled to all such sympathies as America could afford to the man who had "bothered" an emperor. New York, in the handsomest manner, and at a moment's notice, went mad. Bills, flags, illuminations, bands, transparencies; one hundred thousand citizens; two hundred and thirty-five regular troops, fully armed and accoutred; huge brigades of firemen; Barnum, ever foremost, exhibiting a gigantic cartoon representing the young Sultan of Turkey as a patriarch of fabulous age, and with a beard three feet in length, standing over prostrate Hungary, and spitting Russia and Austria upon a half-hoop, typifying a scimitar!

Thirty thousand Kossuth hats were sold in one morning; and brother Jonathan certainly fulfilled for once, to the letter, his oft-repeated national threat of "sticking a feather in his cap." How it became him is another question.

Kossuth came, spoke, and (at first) conquered. What eloquence! And what a mien of melancholy beauty! Clad in an elegant *pardessus*, or *basquine* (is that the word?) of blue velvet, which

seemed to belong rather to the wardrobe of his lady—(if we may believe that un gallant Görgei, she not unfrequently, in a metaphorical sense, borrows in return), and girded with his trusty sword, Kossuth handled his tropes in a manner that would have discomfited Mark Antony himself; and must, at any rate, have caused the head of the house of Hapsburg to tremble in his yellow boots, as the wide waves of the Atlantic reverberated the sound.

And then his inexhaustible local knowledge!—his perfect intimacy with the very smallest hero! Could it be otherwise than gratifying, for example, to the inhabitants of Pilwaukie, to learn that their celebrated townsman, Jabez Bobson, had been chosen by the noble Hungarian, from his earliest youth, as example and guide?

But talent, like success, is sometimes a snare. The orator, in the full glow of the excitement he had evoked, was only preparing the way to failure. He did not perceive that the impression he had created was artificial and transitory—a tribute due to unquestioned ability, and eminent agitative power, rather than to the intrinsic worth of the cause he affected to plead. In his case, at all events, vaulting ambition justified the poet's warning, and fell very considerably "on the other." He did not convince, but dazzle; and, in their minds, men refused to accept Louis Kossuth either

as the representative of Hungary's wrongs, or the hope of her future.

On his side, our champion of liberty accepted the ovations of a monster-loving populace as the deliberate verdict of a nation; assailed the government which would have interpreted to him that voice aright; challenged the doctrines of Washington; was rude and captious in regard to Henry Clay; affronted magistrates; bullied corporations; and, with two words, alienated the sympathies of an entire people. And what were these? *Material aid*. Thenceforth the huge pockets of the velvet *pardessus* opened with more frequency than the lips of its wearer. With what success, need not be recapitulated, for it certainly is far beyond the scope of these notes to trace the "Beggar's Progress," or comment upon the extreme celerity with which sagacious Jonathan let fall this exceedingly "hot potato" the moment its increasing caloric affected his fingers. The single circumstance of the hero's visit to Cincinnati will illustrate the whole.

He arrived at that fine city, the "Queen of the West," at a time when the attention of her occidental majesty had been warmly attracted, in the intervals of business, by that which forms the subject of these notes—the spirit-manifestations. Nor are the two themes so widely disconnected as the impatient reader may at present surmise.

I am indebted to a lady-resident of Cincinnati for the precise circumstances of this portentous event:—

Kossuth's own account of his many invitations hither is curious and graphic enough.

"Gentlemen," said he, to the last deputation, or committee, which met him in Columbus, some few miles from the Queen City, "I do not at all understand. I come to Cincinnati as fast as your railroads will carry me, yet everywhere I meet somebody asking me to come to the Queen City. When I reached New York, I met a committee, the chairman of which invited me to come to your city, and gave me a dollar, with some sentiments worthy of your Washington (which, when I die, will be found engraved upon my heart); and I told him it was my warmest hope to come to Cincinnati.

"I go a little further, and another committee waits upon me, and says, '*Come to Cincinnati.*' At Pittsburg, I receive twenty-six letters, all saying, '*I invite you to Cincinnati.*' At Cleveland, some gentlemen wait on me to escort me to Cincinnati. At Columbus, these honourable gentlemen invite me again. Gentlemen, the sympathy of Cincinnati for my bleeding country pours balm into my wounded heart. And I AM COMING; but why do you invite me so often?"

Poor fellow! he did not understand that, where

the people are sovereigns, every club of young men that wished to bring itself into notice—every private citizen who wanted an excuse to shake hands with him—every demagogue or office-seeker who intended to run for the next city election—took leave to invite him on his own account.

Well, the great day arrived, and the streets through which the procession was to pass, were crowded early in the afternoon. Four, five o'clock struck, and no hero. The streets grew dark, and the people tired. At last the sound of cannon announced him, and he rode past in the direction of the Burnet House. He came out into the balcony.

“Gentlemen! I cannot speak to you——”

“Lights! lights!” shouted the crowd. “Let’s see him!” And the arrival of the lights elicited a shout that promised a hundred thousand dollars at least.

Next came the banquet, the tickets for which had been sold, for weeks, at five dollars a piece; but Kossuth declined appearing: he would not be shown for money! It was in vain to say that such arrangements were customary; that the money was not paid to see *him*, but to defray the expenses of the dinner. The patriot was not to be caught.

“Let them go without the dinner, and give the

five dollars to Hungary," was the uncompromising answer.

But the hotel-keeper had expended two thousand dollars in preparation ; so the banquet must go on. Still no compliance ; so, by a patriotic dodge, the banquet was given to Washington, and Kossuth invited to attend. "He was only too happy to do honour to the memory of the immortal Washington."

But how was the world to hear him *speak* ? Another dodge was necessary. Tickets were sold to the amount of one thousand dollars, and then he was waited upon, and told that a Hungarian Association had been formed, and wished to present him with a thousand dollars. He was then led off in triumph to give audience to the imaginary body in question. The assembly was as brilliant as Cincinnati could show ; but the orator seemed unprepared, and only uttered a few words. His English was so bad, that, in hunting for his words, he forgot his ideas. He felt the warmest interest in their Association — would advise monthly meetings, &c. After which, the meeting separated, never to come together again — for Hungary !

Then came the great mass-meeting, when twenty thousand people assembled to shout, and chew, and sway about like the waves of the sea, while Kossuth vainly attempted to make himself heard,

and, after reading a few sentences, put his speech in his pocket. Next, the ladies took him in hand, under the same plea of an association, which they, at least, were honest enough to keep up. Warned by experience, the orator had his speech prepared : it was heard with vast applause ; after which Madame Kossuth was loudly called for, and lifted on a table by her husband, to be looked at. While she was waving her handkerchief, and shaking her funny little black cap, Kossuth was smuggled out to meet the clergy in another room, who gave him—their blessing.

The remainder of Kossuth's time in the Queen City was passed in private committees, small deputations, schools, &c. ; five, ten, or twenty dollars, being the usual amount of the subscriptions ; till, in despair and disgust, he appointed a grand meeting of all the associations, that he might receive their subscriptions and bid them farewell. But where *were* the associations ? They had never existed, save in name. The committee of management advertised that any, wishing to become members of association, might obtain certificates to that effect by calling and paying. The morning of the meeting arrived. Not a soul had come forward. The intangible associations were decidedly out of favour. The committee, in despair, distributed tickets gratis, and collected about twelve hundred people in a building capable

of holding ten thousand. Kossuth made his farewell speech, and came home, a wiser man than he went.

The next meeting between him and the committee was not of the friendliest. At any rate, he who, a fortnight before, was welcomed to the city by the population, *en masse*, went to the Louisville boat unattended save by a few stragglers; and leaving his hotel-bill, of six thousand dollars, to the care of the corporation.

It is distressing to add that the aforesaid "little account" remains yet unliquidated. It probably awaits the regeneration of Hungary.

From Cincinnati to Boston, a thousand miles or so, at a jump. Where is my friend? At the Revere. Sceptic meets me with a serious joy. After the first greetings, I inquire,

"Well, my dear fellow, what news from Hades?"

"A little less levity, sir, would better suit this subject."

"Eh! What the deuce——"

"Not at all; at least, that is not clear."

One thing, nevertheless, *is*, viz., that my friend's bearing in regard to the spirit-question is changed. He was a grub; he *is* a chrysalis. Either Queen Mab, or Dr. Harriet Hunt, has "been with him," and made him pliant and teachable as any child!

"*Que sais-je?*" said Montaigne, discontentedly.

"*Je ne sais rien*," says Sceptic, in utter despair.

In a few days, he will be prepared to discuss the spirit-controversy in that frank, dispassionate tone so indicative of the true philosopher. Meanwhile we will glance round, and bid farewell to, the good city of Boston. If, three or four centuries since, the Paxton of the day had submitted to public judgment the plan of the future city, it would have been pronounced simply impossible; not, indeed, for its extent, but for the almost superhuman ingenuity which would be required in the construction of so complicated a labyrinth. By little and little, however, the city has been "done;" the generations of workmen (guided by the sacred instinct of home) finding their way to their respective domiciles without much difficulty; and, even at this day, the stranger, thanks to Tremont Street and the evening star, may frequently regain his hotel in safety.

In this, notwithstanding, most pleasant city, Sceptic and myself enact the part of *flaneur* for some days with considerable success. Rising early, we—but why describe a Boston day? why dilate upon its agreeable society and excellent dinners—its morning lounge in drawing-room or studio—its evening opera or *conversazione*? One only qualification were we conscious of, that every soul but ourselves wore on his countenance a look of *business*. It is always annoying to think that, in so vast a hive, *we* are the sole representatives

of droneship. Let us to some colossal book store (favourite resorts, about this breathing-time of day), and there affect the literary. Here is T.'s.

“ Well, Mr. T., anything new ? ”

Why does Mr. T. smile? The question was surely pertinent. He cannot possibly have divined, as *yet*, that we are not Dickens and Thackeray, or Milnes and Macaulay, themselves.

The question has recalled to Mr. T.'s mind a circumstance, which, new to us, may probably be so to our English readers. With it we will conclude.

Among the literary circles of —, there is (said to be) one especial *clique*, the members whereof, deeply, and not unjustly, impressed with each other's merits, neglect no fair opportunity of eulogising each other's works, publishing each other's jokes, and quoting each other's opinions. Hence the brotherhood in question hath been long popularly known as the “ Mutual Admiration Society.” The habits of the Association (one not without its parallel on our shores) have occasionally, however, been productive of quaint and singular results, of which the following, thrown into a semi-dramatic form, may serve as a specimen :—

Scene.—Mr. T.'s, the eminent bookseller.

Epoch.—Immediately after the publication of *In Memoriam*.

Mr. T. at his desk. To him, Professor L., calm, philosophic, gentlemanly.

"Well, Mr. T., any news in the world of letters?"

"I presume, sir, you have already seen *that?*" pushing over a copy of *In Memoriam*.

"Indeed I have."

"I should like to know your opinion?"

"You shall have it, T. *Tennyson, sir, has done that for friendship, which Petrarch did for love.* Good morning."

Exit Professor, and, in ten minutes, enter H., another member of the Mutual Admiration Society. H. was quick, vivacious, flippant.

"How do, T.? What news? What's this? eh—ah—Tennyson!"

"May I ask you what you think of that work, Mr. H.?"

"Tell you in ten words. *Tennyson's done for friendship what Petrarch did for love.* By-bye!"

An hour later, enter P., slow, staid, and thoughtful.

"You have, I perceive, Mr. T., given us an edition of *In Memoriam*."

"I have, sir; and I wish very much to know what opinion you have formed of that work."

"I have perused it, sir, with singular interest; yet, at the same time, with a mingled feeling, one that I have taken considerable pains to analyse.

I will confess to you, T., that this was no easy task; but, after careful and repeated reading, and, let me add, reflections of no ordinary depth, I have been at length brought irresistibly to a certain conclusion. I think it is a satisfactory one. I think it is a sound one. I think, moreover, that it is susceptible of happy expression, in these terms,—*Tennyson has done that for fr——*”

Mr. T. burst into an irrepressible fit of laughter, and before he had recovered himself sufficiently to explain, P., who had at once divined that he had been forestalled in his criticism, quietly took his departure.

This little circumstance, a real fact, unluckily got into one of the B—— journals, which, announcing, at the same time the marriage of the laureate, wound up the matter by observing that “our readers will perceive that Tennyson, in addition to all that he has done for friendship, has done more, *for love*, than ever Petrarch did.”

But, really, we are digressing.

CHAPTER X.

LATEST INCIDENTS.

Present state of the subject—Curious instances of alleged manifestations—The Indian doctor—New York Conferences—Singular communications made thereat—Prophecies—The spirits' testimony to their truth—German seers—Margaretha Stoffell—Singular passage in *Lactantius*—*Les Previsions d'Orval*—The Jesuit priest—The Rev. Robert Fleming—Moreau—Interesting letter from a member of the Shaker community—Dr. Harriet Hunt—Her protest—Recent authenticated phenomena, &c.—Correspondence from Boston, Baltimore, &c.—Recent manifestations in England—Mrs. Hayden, &c.

It has been seen that the march of the rapping mystery, unchecked by opposition either open or covert, never for an instant stayed its progress, but, on the contrary, advanced in an increasing ratio, until every town of importance in the Union possessed not only its *medium* (one or more), but its regular circle or assembly of spirit-seekers, which, meeting at fixed intervals, communicated to other circles, and especially to a weekly meeting, or "Conference," established in New York itself, whatever circumstances of interest from time to time transpired. By these means, and through

the instrumentality of the press, many extraordinary narratives (revelations, as they were called), were given to the public, and if they did not, in every instance, obtain credit, at all events compelled a curious attention, awakened as much by the life-like particularity of their details, as the unexpected corroboration afforded them by succeeding events. Many of these, complete in every feature as the elaborated fictions of De Foe, have already become almost matter of history in the States in which they respectively occurred, and whatever may be the result of the spirit movement, will be remembered by the present, and passed down to future generations, in company with those celebrated traditions to which we also have once yielded our implicit credence, and a helping hand.

Scarcely a week elapsed, without some circumstance like the following attracting notice; but pursuing the plan hitherto observed, of selecting an illustration or two of the most authentic character, and passing to the narration of facts of a different kind, the annexed examples will suffice.

Mr. D. J. Mandell, in a letter to Mr. Brittan, communicated and vouched for the fact, that, in the middle of July last, a letter had been received in the neighbourhood, from a gentleman in Iowa, in answer to a communication, announcing to him the death of a beloved brother, resident in Ohio.

This was the earliest intimation of his loss that had emanated from any *earthly* source, but, with reference to *spiritual* information previously given, he writes in the letter in question :—

“About a fortnight since, as we were conversing with what professed to be spirits, the chair began to move rapidly. We asked the agent to write its name through a *medium* present. She took the pen, and it wrote ‘Lysander H. Knight’ (the deceased brother’s name), and said he had been dead several weeks. But I could not consider it a truth till I received your letter containing the sad tidings.”

Mr. Mandell added another circumstance, of his own experience, which, in combination with the former, had, at all events, satisfied *him* of the action of a superhuman intelligence.

In Winchester, N. H., last spring, a lady died suddenly, of the measles. Just previous to her death, she had presented a little token of remembrance to a female friend who was about removing to Greenfield, Mass. Not long after, the friend thought she would take advantage of an opportunity to send the Winchester lady some little gift in return for her’s; but it rained, and she could not conveniently go abroad to purchase it. She therefore delayed it for the time being. That very day was written out to her by the hand of a *medium*: “*It was well you did not send it, for I was*

dead and gone before it could have reached me."

Few of these histories, however, excited greater interest, or obtained more satisfactory authentication, than that of the "Indian doctor." Confused and garbled statements having appeared from time to time, in reference to this really curious story, it may be as well to give it here, disentangled from those of a not dissimilar nature with which it had become mixed up, and do so in the words of one generally allowed by the investigators to be a reliable source, a gentleman resident in the county referred to:—

"Morrow County, Ohio,
June 28th, 1852.

"DEAR SIR.—In compliance with your request I will give you a correct, though very brief account, of some of the most material circumstances connected with the recent efforts to find the body of a certain Indian doctor, whose sudden and mysterious disappearance from his place of boarding in this county, in the fall of 1849, gave rise to suspicions that he had been murdered.

"Some time in the early part of last February, one of the citizens of the neighbourhood where the missing doctor had boarded, was witnessing the spirit-rappings, as the phenomenon is termed, and made some inquiries relative to the doctor's disappear-

ance, when he was informed that he had been murdered, and was buried on the premises where he had boarded, in a field, on the south side of the road. Other persons made similar inquiries of the spirits through other *media*, and received the same information in relation to the matter. This aroused the latent suspicions of the community, which had been slumbering for more than two years, and was followed by a general uprising of the people, with a determination to find the remains of the doctor if possible. A large number of persons assembled and proceeded to make examinations; but, instead of searching on the south side of the road, as indicated by the spirits, they examined several old wells on the north side, thinking it more probable, if a murder had been committed, that the body had been deposited in one of them. Nothing, however was discovered.

“After this, other *media*, who had never before heard of the Indian doctor or of the suspicion of the murder, and residing some six miles from the place of the suspected crime, were impressed to go to that neighbourhood, and there say that the remains of the doctor were still in a well or excavation, about six feet deep, on the premises where search had been made, covered with stumps, logs, sticks, and earth. This statement was corroborated by three or four clairvoyant *media* who

stated, while in that condition, that they saw the bones as above described, each agreeing with the others, although some of them were entirely ignorant of the statements of the others. Some of the *media* stated, while in the clairvoyant condition, that they saw all the circumstances of the killing, the persons perpetrating the deed, the weapons used, the number of blows struck, and the process of burying the body; and two of them actually recognised the man—whom they saw, while clairvoyant, committing the deed—when they afterwards met him in company with a number of others, although they had never before seen him, except in the interior condition.

“Subsequently to this, examinations were made on the south side of the road, and some excavations made as near the place described by the *media* as could be determined in the absence of landmarks sufficient to decide its precise locality; but without making any discoveries. It is worthy of remark that the most decided opposition was made to each and every attempt to investigate the matter, by menaces and exhibition of fire-arms, and even personal violence.

“Soon after the examination on the south side of the road had been made, one of the *media*, while in the interior condition, said that an excavation had been made very near where the dead body was deposited, and that by digging a little

in a certain direction at the bottom, some of the covering would be found which would lead to a discovery of the body. No further search, however, was afterwards made.

“Not long after the last attempt at digging, a *medium* who had previously had few, if any, impressions in regard to this matter, was impressed to say, while in a family circle, at about eleven o'clock on a stormy, sleety night, that the remains of the Indian doctor were then being taken up, and that certain persons whom she *named*, were engaged in digging in the hole or pit made by those who made the last search. The *medium*, together with the family, sat up until one o'clock in the morning, during which time she reported the progress they were making; that they had dug under at one side and at the bottom of the hole; she reported when they reached the bones; when they got them out, and deposited them in a box, which was placed in the chamber of a house.

“At a period subsequent to this, the same *medium* was again impressed to say that the remains of the doctor were removed a distance of five or six miles, and placed in a hole dug under the side of a large tree, which had been blown down near the margin of a small swamp, surrounded by trees and underbrush, and that they were then and there engaged in burning them up.

“A week or two after this, she was again im-

pressed to say that if some persons would accompany her, she would be directed by the spirits to the spot where the remains had been burned. They accordingly proceeded with her, as she was led, a distance of about two and a half miles, and actually found the swamp and tree, as she had described, and, under the side of the tree, a hole that had been recently dug, in which were ashes and a quantity of thoroughly burnt bone!"

A specimen of the mode in which the New York "Conferences" were conducted and reported, may be properly introduced here. They were, it appears, commenced in the spring of the present year, assembled weekly or bi-weekly, for the purpose of making reports and receiving communications (not of a spiritual or clairvoyant character), and were attended generally by from sixty to seventy persons, including such of the leading advocates of the spirit-doctrine as entertained no aversion to the publication of their names. These, however, were comparatively few. Swayed rather by commercial, than conscientious, scruples, all true-bred members of mercantile circles held aloof, and, however deeply interested in the proceedings of the Conference, gave only their tacit countenance, or second-hand support.

The following report is taken from the columns of

the principal organ of the Spiritualists, a cleverly-conducted serial, called the *Spiritual Telegraph* :—

“NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

FOR THE

“INVESTIGATION OF SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

[WEEKLY REPORT.]

“Friday Evening, June 18, 1852.

“Present: Chas. Partridge and wife, Wm. Wood and wife, L. R. Case and wife, S. K. De La Vergne and wife, Jno. A. Buffum and wife (Lynn. Mass.), Wm. Fishbough, Dr. R. T. Hallock and wife, Mr. T. Cromwell and wife, T. Kipp Tompkins, J. N. Stebbins, D. H. Jacques, Melancton B. Ackerman, J. Rehn (Phila'), Dr. Jas. Darrab (Phila'), Martin Langdon, E. D. E. Greene, W. H. Dannat, Wm. B. Tilton, Chas. H. Jackson (157, Grand-st., N. Y.), J. T. S. Smith, Joseph T. White, Dr. H. E. Schoonmaker, Dr. C. Barnes (N. H.), H. C. Billings, Dr. C. Knapp, J. B. King, and twenty-five others.

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

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

“Dr. Darrah, of Philadelphia, said the manifestations commenced at his house in December last. At that time he resided in Bucks Co., Pa. His wife, much to her surprise, had a long and interesting communication. He had not enough of faith at the time to excite inquiry. Subsequent facts have wrought a great change in his mind. He removed to Philadelphia some two months afterwards, where a medical *medium* (the daughter of Peter Osborne) came under his notice. She is intelligent and sensitive; is literally under spiritual medical tuition, and has given the most undoubted proofs of the fact. As a test, he presented to her a boy whom he knew

* A later account fixes the number at three hundred.

to have an organic disease of the heart. After being impressed, she called for a piece of paper on which she sketched a diagram of the heart, &c., with great accuracy and precision, and then pointed out the existing difficulty in one of the ventricles, with all the care and composure of a professor of anatomy. Several neuralgic patients, who had been introduced to her by himself and another physician, had been relieved at once. They would come hobbling into her presence, and go away walking like other persons. Several other instances of medical cure and relief were detailed.

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

“Dr. Hallock related a case of physical manifestations which took place on the Friday evening previous, at the house of Mr. Partridge, after the conference had adjourned. Mr. D. D. Hume was the *medium*, and the circle consisted of Mr. Partridge, wife and daughter, Wm. Taylor and wife, S. B. Brittan, and himself. On the table around which we were seated, were loose papers, a lead pencil, two candles, and a glass of water. The

table was used by the spirits in responding to our questions, and the first peculiarity we observed was, that, however violently the table was moved, everything on it retained its position. When we had duly observed this, the table, which was mahogany, and perfectly smooth, was elevated to an angle of about 30° , and held there, with everything remaining on it as before. It was truly interesting to see a lead pencil retaining a position of perfect rest, on a polished surface inclined at such an angle. It remained as if glued to the table, and so of everything else on it. The table was repeatedly made to resume its ordinary position, and then its inclination as before, as if to fasten upon us the conviction that what we saw was no deception of the senses, but a veritable manifestation of spirit presence and of spirit power. They were then requested to elevate the table to the same angle as before, and to detach the pencil, retaining everything else in their stationary positions. This was complied with. The table was elevated, the pencil rolled off, and everything else remained. They were then asked to repeat the experiment, retaining the pencil and everything else upon the table stationary, except the glass tumbler, and to let that slide off. This was also assented to, with the like result. All the articles retained their positions but the tumbler, which slid off, and was

caught in the hands of one of the party, as it fell from the lower edge of the table. Then the table, after being restored to the natural position, was moved strongly to and from the *medium*, and to and from different individuals in the circle, as they would request. After this had been repeated several times, and while a corner of the table was inclined into his lap, Mr. Taylor asked if the spirits would lift it clear of the floor while in that position. Assent was signified, and the table, after much apparent effort, though probably only apparent, was lifted clear off the floor as requested. Dr. H. said he was led to the conclusion that the effort was only apparent, because, while we were watching it closely, with a light upon the floor, so as to see the slightest motion, the table in the meantime resting upon one castor on the floor and one corner of the leaf in Mr. Taylor's lap, was raised perhaps about one inch, after having been literally tumbled about the circle, sometimes upon one castor and sometimes upon two, the leaf resting first in one person's lap and then in another. But when the foot of the table was finally raised as described, he, to make sure that they were not mistaken in the fact, got down upon the floor to observe more closely. While looking, the foot of the table, instead of being raised a doubtful inch or so, was thrown up, clear of the floor, six or eight inches, as if all former attempts had been

mere playful efforts. We then asked if they could move the table with a man on it. They replied, "Yes, with two men on it." Mr. Partridge and myself then seated ourselves, back to back, upon the table. Our combined weight is a little over 350 pounds; but, notwithstanding, the table was moved as easily as when nothing but the candlesticks, &c., were upon it. We were rocked backwards and forwards, to and from the *medium*—the table was tipped from the *medium*, and held stationary in that position, with us upon it; and, finally, we remarked playfully, 'When you get tired of rocking us, throw us off.' It was done—the table was tipped strongly and rapidly *from* the *medium*, and we were thrown on the floor.

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

a lighted candle on the floor under the table. Some solemn sceptic may call them trifling. But are they trifling—those palpable manifestations of invisible intelligence and power? If so, what would be serious? What intelligence below man could thus answer to the intelligence within man, comply with our wishes and grant our requests?

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

“Many other very interesting facts were stated by different individuals with a request that they should not be reported, in deference to the wishes of the parties concerned.

“Adjourned.

“R. T. HALLOCK, Secretary.

“Friday, August 27, 1852.

“Present: Mr. Charles Partridge and lady, Miss C. Fox, Julia Taylor, W. W. Woodruff, Hon. J. W. Edmonds, Benj. Ellis, Paul Hammond, Geo. Freeman, M. Perkins, O. Johnson, H. E. Schoonmaker, W. P. Taylor, T. O. Cutter, Sarah Martin, O. H. Wellington, John Sutton (Peoria, Ill.), Mrs. C. A. Paul, do., Dr. John F. Gray, A. C. Hoffman, John T. S. Smith, R. T. Hallock, and ten others.

“Judge Edmonds read a very interesting cor-

respondence which took place between an inquirer residing in a distant State and himself, on the subject of spiritual facts. His correspondent had been sceptical as to immortality, but his replies had produced a happy change of opinion upon that point.

“Dr. Hallock stated that a Mr. Rouse had called on him during the day, informing him that he was a *rapping medium*, and that the spirit of his mother had communicated through him, and had prescribed for his sister, who had been out of health for some time. The mode of treatment advised is botanic, and directions for preparing and administering the medicine are given through the raps. In one case an external application was directed by the spirit, and the identical page in a botanic treatise on medicine was pointed out, where a recipe for its preparation was to be found.

“Mr. Partridge read the following note, from a lady, acknowledging the fulfilment of a communication made to her by the spirits, nearly a year prior to its accomplishment:—

““MRS. PARTRIDGE,—About eleven months ago I was at your house, at a circle. Mr. Fowler was the *medium*. It was communicated to me that during the next session of Congress (meaning the one now in session) my son would get an ap-

pointment in the United States navy. During last week he received an appointment in the navy. You will excuse the liberty I have taken in addressing a stranger, but I wanted to inform you that spirits do sometimes foretell future events; perhaps you remember the time, if not, your husband will.

“ ‘ M. C. B.’

“ Mr. Ellis supposed that much of alleged spiritual foresight belonged to the sphere of clairvoyance.

“ Dr. Hallock said, the remark of Mr. Ellis had prompted him to offer a few observations on that point. To his mind, clairvoyance is neither more nor less than spiritual seeing. It is in itself a spiritual manifestation. It is emphatically a phase of spiritualism, and instead of offering a satisfactory solution of the varied facts of spiritual manifestations, *spiritualism includes the only rational explanation of it.* Clairvoyance is the spirit looking out of its earthly organization independently of its external senses. It shows how superior to those senses the spirit can be; for, in its far reaching flights of vision, it leaves its body in utter unconsciousness of its whereabouts, and sees, and knows, and reasons, while the organs of the external senses are steeped in forgetfulness. It is a manifestation of the spirit in its rudimental state, essaying its mighty powers, and giving

earnest of the still higher sweep of its adolescence.

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

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

“Dr. Hallock said he had often heard them speak on that subject prior to any intimation of the kind by Davis. He had heard them speak in raptures of seeing the beautiful angels who hovered about the couch of the dying, waiting to conduct the departing spirit to heaven. In one case a pious woman, a member of the Baptist church, became clairvoyant, in the course of medical treatment, and when in that state, if not watched with the greatest care, would pass into a rigid, trance-like condition, wholly beyond his control for a time. The first time this occurred, he asked what it meant, and where she had been? (feeling

rather impatient and much exhausted from a half hour's active exercise of his will to get her back to the ordinary place of clairvoyance). She answered, 'I have been talking with my mother.' 'Where is your mother?' 'She is in heaven.' 'Have you been there?' 'Yes; to be sure, and I did not want to come away either.' Being at that time wholly sceptical as to the possibility of such a fact, and doubtful of the existence of spirits, either in or out of the body, he ascribed the whole thing to her religious prejudices reflecting their shadows upon her mental state; and endeavoured to repress all such flights of the imagination, as he supposed them to be. Still they recurred several times, always with the same rigidity of muscle, the same difficulty of restoring her, and the same averment as to where she had been and what she had been doing. It gave him great annoyance at the time, as well as much physical exertion. Subsequent experience has convinced him that what she said was literally true.

"Dr. Gray said that, some years since, while conversing with a clairvoyant, she said 'Stop! there is another person present—a lady. She is one to whom you have been very kind.' He objected to conversing on that subject. 'But,' she said, 'I will describe her to you.' She did so, and the description was perfect. The person described

had been a patient of his, who had died some two years before, and was never known to the clairvoyant. She remarked, 'She has been with you before; she comes when she sees you inculcating a useful truth.' He was very much surprised at the time, but is satisfied it was a clear case of spiritual sight. He thinks clairvoyants have often seen departed spirits but have generally kept it to themselves, in consequence of the ignorance and prejudice so often manifested by our own conceited wisdom.

"Adjourned.

"R. T. HALLOCK, Secretary."

Such was the nature of the communications made at these assemblies of the "faithful," and they might be multiplied by hundreds, nay, by thousands, were it not more satisfactory to pass on to other testimony and opinions less open to the charge of partiality. On occasions like the above, when every one was expected to come provided with some new and encouraging development of the infant philosophy, it were almost vain to expect literal accuracy of narration, or to rely upon a sufficiently searching pre-examination of the circumstances adduced.

But before quitting the New York Conferences, one subject connected with them is well worth attention. I believe I am correct in stating that

it was through the medium of one of these meetings that general notice was first attracted to the remarkable prophecy of Margaretha Stoffell.

Mr. Horace Dresser, a talented member of the New York circle, on one occasion brought the subject of this and other prophecies more prominently before them, and as it appeared that the "spirits" inclined to bear testimony to their truth, engaged to furnish such further extracts from the works in question as were of interest and importance, pointing out, as he did so, the verifications already accomplished.

Whatever additional weight may be given to these prophecies by the spirits' witness, they are sufficiently singular in themselves to merit attention, and to insert here at greater length than is given in the lecture of Mr. Dresser, who possibly had not all his materials at hand.

The fact that the point of time towards which these various auguries converge is the *present*, and their principal object France, imparts to the subject its chief feature of interest.

Professor Gregory prefaced an interesting paper on German popular prophecies, in *Blackwood*, with the remark, that, although prophetic traditions have no doubt arisen from that species of "prophecy" which succeeds the event, it appears evident that genuine prophecies have likewise appeared, and become traditions *before* the

events took place ; and he instances the Sibylline books, which there can be but little doubt contained actual prophecies of the future fate of Rome.

Germany, assuredly, is by no means behind-hand with her seers. The professor mentions, among the rest, Joseph Von Görres, who died in January, 1848, before the last French revolution, and, on his deathbed, lamented the misfortunes about to come on Poland, described Hungary as appearing to him one huge field of carnage, and wept over the approaching downfall of the European monarchies. The events of February and March, 1848, the insurrection in Posen, the devastations committed by the Prussians in suppressing it, and the war in Hungary, would appear to be the events to which he referred.

There was, moreover, Jaspers, the Westphalian shepherd, a simple-minded, pious man. In 1830, soon after which he died, he publicly predicted as follows :—“ A great road will be carried through our country, from west to east, through the forests of Bodelschwing. On this, carriages will run *without horses*, and cause a dreadful noise.”

These words, as well as others, referring to other events, have, much to the surprise of the natives, been fulfilled. The railway from Cologne to Minden has, since his death, been carried through the very district he mentioned

in 1830, before the first English railway had been opened.

Jaspers' prophecies refer to dates still future. When asked as to the future of Prussia, he maintained an obstinate silence, saying only that King Frederick-William IV. would be the last."

A man named Pottgiesser, in Dortmund, long since dead, drew up a genealogical tree of the royal house, in which he says of the present king—to whom he gives no successor—"He disappears."

"The German empire," said Jaspers, "shall choose a peasant for emperor. He shall govern Germany a year and a day."

The regency of the Archduke John (who married a Styrian peasant, and adopted the costume and manners of the class) lasted but one year.

Anton, the "youth of Elsen," Hermann Kaplemann, &c., contribute curious prophecies, which, in touching on the fate of nations and communities, remarkably corroborate each other. But let us to the more recent seer, Margaretha Stoffell.

The history of the book speaks for itself, and if, as there is every reason to believe, that history, as supplied by the translator, Mr. Elias Schneider, is correct, the remarkable verification of the first part of these predictions it professes to embody, is deserving attention.

The pamphlet, written in German, was entitled

"Nine Years of the Future," and several copies of it were in the hands of a number of persons in Pottsville before the revolution of 1848 broke out in France. No importance was attached to this prediction at the time, and the pamphlet was thrown aside as unworthy of notice.

"It was made," says M. Schneider, "on Christmas, in 1847, by Margaretha Stoffell, of Ehrenthiel, in the Tyrol. The whole is to be fulfilled between 1847 and 1856. It was reduced to writing by Edward Brann, physician of the royal imperial Austrian Court of Justice. Its publication was, however, suppressed in Austria, but circulated in Switzerland, where it was read by Dr. Huber's lady, who now lives in this place. Afterward it was published in Philadelphia, by L. A. Wollenweber, who informs me, in answer to a letter addressed to him, that he received a copy of the pamphlet from Germany in the month of February, 1848. This gentleman's evidence, and that of several persons in Pottsville, who declare that they read it before the French revolution was heard of here, is ample proof that the prediction was made just at the very time when all men thought that the thrones of Europe were most strongly fortified, and when no revolution was thought of.

"PROPHECY.

"The year 1847 is past—a year which pro-

duced many a tear, and in which many a fountain of tears was also dried up, and many an unbelieving heart was taught to look up to Him who turneth the hearts of men as the rivers of the earth.

“The barns have been filled, the casks are full of sweet wine, and the heart of man rejoiceth; but repent, for the night cometh when no man can work.

“Soon the cholera will rage in Europe, and more destructively than ever. And there will be no want of signs in the heavens at this time, calling, as the Holy Scriptures declare, men to repentance.

“Great changes will take place up to the commencement of the year 1850, and many a mortal will be swept away through war and pestilence, even when he least expects it.

“A great revolution will break out in France. The king and his family will be driven out of their country, and a war will commence against the nobles and the wealthy; their palaces will be burned, and their wealth will be sufficient to protect them no more. Many capitalists will leave France, where an attempt will be made to destroy the power of money, by declaring all usury abolished. The Jews shall also suffer much at this time, and the wealthiest one among them will become a victim of the enraged multitude. There

will arise a governing power of the working class; but, after a short continuance it will, however, disappear, and in the midst of war with foreign powers. Then a conservative party will reach the summit of power in the country, under whose direction France will again recover, but only after bloody confusion. From thenceforth there will be no kings in France, but a certain Prince will, at this time, make yet another attempt to erect for himself a throne; he shall, however, atone bitterly for his foolish undertaking, and will lose his life thereby.

“Belgium will unite itself with France, and, in other respects, will share the same fate with it.

“Spain and Portugal will be rent and distracted by bloody civil wars; one party will succeed another in the government, and each one will act more violently than the preceding. Then a man, gifted with intellectual powers, such as are but very rarely bestowed upon one person, will come suddenly upon the arena of life, and give again unto these distracted people the blessings of peace; the parties will compose themselves, the names of Portugal and Spain will disappear, and the States, united under the name of “Pyrenean Republic,” will become great and powerful both on land and sea.

“In Great Britain the distress of the working classes will increase continually more and more.

Great Britain, the world-mistress of commerce, will receive a shock from which she will never recover. Her great possessions in America and Asia will declare themselves independent; her fleets will be annihilated in a great sea-fight, and after many vicissitudes, foreign wars, and domestic revolutions, she will again become tranquil, but will not be any more powerful than other nations. Royalty will be abolished—later, however, than in the other European States.

“In the midst of all these storms and revolutions, Switzerland will rejoice in an undisturbed rest. She will increase powerfully under a new constitution; and, after a short political agitation, commerce and industry will develop themselves within her more than ever.

“A great revolution of affairs will also occur in Italy. An unusual storm will pass over the land, before which the Austrians will disappear like chaff. Then the different States of Italy will unite themselves into one great nation, and Rome will become the capital of the Italian Republic; for here, also, princes will exist no more.

“At this time, the Christian religion will have to contend much against atheists; men will pronounce it a worn-out thing, and faith in a divine Saviour will decay as it were. Finally, however, a new defender of God's honour will appear, and the worldly power of the Pope will be destroyed

for ever, and the really Christian Church rise in influence and power.

“Germany will be the scene of the most fearful events. A destructive war will rage from one end of the land to the other, until, at length, the triumph of being inhabitants of a free German Fatherland will be secured to the long oppressed people of Germany. Nations living far in Asia will be called forth by a German monarch to assist him, and then a great slaughter will commence, in which neither women nor children, young nor old, will be spared. Other nations from the West and South will then rise up, and draw near to fight these barbarous hordes; and, in a terrible battle on the banks of a large stream, the Asiatic multitude will be vanquished, and only a few of them escape entire destruction. A large German city, like unto the once mighty Babylon, will be burnt to the ground; upon the place where it stood, men will scatter salt, and no living being will live there any more. Poland will rise again, and its growth will be more formidable than that of any other nation. The Vistula, stained with the blood of Poland’s oppressors, will flow for many days like a stream of blood towards the Baltic, and cast over its banks dead bodies enough to fatten all the ravens of the world during a space of one hundred years.

“Similar events will occur in Hungary, where the bondman will avenge himself terribly upon his oppressor. A person of humble birth will arise and cry out aloud, saying, ‘Woe unto him who is against me, for in my hands I carry the sword of justice.’

“The kings of Denmark, Sweden and Norway will lay down their crowns voluntarily, and thus guard their lands against the storms which will visit all the rest of Europe at that time. These kindred nations will unite themselves into one brotherhood, without any acts of violence, under the title of Scandinavian Republic; they will assist in hastening the overthrow of the Russian emperor. For about this time all nations will rise up against the Czar of Russia. Thousands and thousands of combatants will advance toward the North, where the Czar will have brought together his Asiatic hordes for the purpose of once more inundating Europe. Upon a plain, from whose centre the eye can see no limit to it, these combatants will rush upon one another, and their bloody slaughter will continue for the space of eight days, when the nations of Europe will, at last, come off victorious. It will be the greatest battle ever fought, and also the last, for then the kingdom of God will commenee upon the earth. But the kingdom of God is the kingdom of love

and justice, and in the name of both these virtues, all nations of the earth will bind themselves in one brotherhood."

Whatever may be thought of the foreshadowings of this German *Scherinn*, the following passage from Lactantius, "De Vita Beata," lib. vii. c. 16, has a no less remarkable bearing upon the events of our time. The translation of Mr. D. C. Sturges runs thus; but as he did not give the original, I will do so, in order that the classic reader may judge for himself:—

"Then will be sowed the seeds of civil discords, nor will there be any rest or pause of wasteful and ruinous wars, while the soldiery, kept together in immense standing armies, the kings will crush and lay waste at their will, until at length there will rise up against them a most *puissant military chieftain, of low birth, who will have acceded to him a fellowship with other sovereigns of the earth.* This man will harass the civilised world with an insupportable despotism; he will *confound and commix all things spiritual and temporal.* He will be for ever restlessly turning over new schemes in his imagination, *in order that he may fix the imperial crown over all in his own name and possessions.* He will change the former laws; he will sanction a *code of his own*; he will contaminate, pillage, lay waste, and

massacre. At length, when he has succeeded in the change of *names* and *titles*, and in the transfer of the seat of empire, there will follow a perturbation of the human race; and then there will be for awhile an era of horror and abomination, during which no man will enjoy his life in quietness!"

ORIGINAL.

"Quomodo autem id futurum sit, ne quis incredibile arbitratur, ostendam.

"In primis multiplicabitur regnum, et summa rerum potestas per plurimos dissipata et concisa minuetur. Tunc discordiæ civiles in perpetuum serentur; nec ulla requies bellis exitialibus erit, donec reges decem pariter existant, qui orbem terræ, non ad regendum, sed ad consumendum partiantur. Hi exercitibus in immensum auctis, et agrorum cultibus destitutis, quod est principium eversionis et cladis, disperdent omnia, et comminuent, et vorabunt.

"Tum repentè adversùs eos hostis potentissimus ab extremis finibus plagæ septentrionalis orietur, qui tribus ex eo numero deletis, qui tunc Asiam obtinabunt, assumeter in societatem à cæteris, ac princeps omnium constituetur. Hic insustentabili dominatione vexabit orbem; divina et humana miscebit; infanda dictu et execrabilia molietur; nova consilia in pectore suo volutabit, ut proprium sibi constituat imperium, leges commutet,

et suas sanciat; contaminabit, diripiet, spoliabit, occidet.

“Denique immutato nomine, atque imperii sede translata, confusio ac perturbatio humani generis consequentur. Tum verò detestabile atque abominandum tempus existet, quo nulli hominum sit vita jucunda.”

That curious work, *Les Previsions d'Orval*, or *Certain Previsions revealed by God to a Solitary, for the consolation of the Children of God*, made its appearance in the year 1544, and was by tradition ascribed to Philip Olivarius, a monk of the Abbey of Orval, in the diocese of Trèves, on the frontiers of Luxembourg. In Cahagnet's work, *The Celestial Telegraph*, a curious report is given of a conversation purporting to have taken place between the author, Cahagnet, and a M. Mallet, or rather the spirit of the latter, he being deceased, and his answers being expressed through a clairvoyant medium. This M. Mallet had, it appears, in his lifetime, become extremely interested in the *Orval Previsions*, and to this subject Cahagnet led the conversation.

“The Orval predictions, as they are termed, in which you had so great faith when on earth, that you even had them reprinted in 1840, what do you think of them now? Do you still believe in them?”

"Yes."

"Can you foresee whether the events, of which they make mention, will come to pass?"

"Yes; but those predictions are exaggerated."

"Those concerning the destruction of Paris, will they take place?"

"Yes; but not to so great an extent as is predicted."

"When will that happen?"

"I cannot answer your question."

"By what scourge will it happen? Fire or war?"

"By a revolution." * * *

"What government will reign then?"

"It is then that it will be said, '*Come, young prince,*' as the prediction says."

"Do you know whether the son of Louis XVI. is dead?"

"No, he is not dead."

"Do you know him? Is the Baron of Riche-mont this son?"

"I don't know."

"Do you think that it is the people alone that will cause all the disorders predicted?"

"The people and the foreigner."

"For my personal safety, I should like to know when this will happen."

"The events preceding such catastrophe will be a sufficient warning."

“ Will the banishment of the priests take place ?”

“ The priests will escape from France.”

“ The end of the world, announced in eighteen years, will it take place ?”

“ You will not then be on earth ; wherefore trouble yourself about it ?”

“ So you look upon these prophécies as true ?”

“ Yes, in the main, but not in the exaggeration. There will be mischief enough without making more of it.”

Mr. Dresser has remarked that Cahagnet conceals, under asterisks, part of Mallet's communications, relative to the time and circumstances of the fulfilment of the predictions. This he might have done either for his own safety or the public good. At all events, so much of it as has seen the light, corroborates, in the main, what the Solitary declared shall come to pass.

THE ORVAL PREVISIONS.

The following is believed to have relation to Napoleon Bonaparte :—

“ At that time a young man come from beyond the sea into the country of Celtic Gaul, shows himself strong in counsel. But the mighty, to whom he gives umbrage, will send him to combat

in the land of captivity. Victory will bring him back. The sons of Brutus will be confounded at his approach, for he will overpower them and take the name of emperor. Many high and mighty kings will be sorely afraid, for the eagle will carry off many sceptres and crowns. Men on foot and horse, carrying blood-stained eagles, and as numerous as gnats in the air, will run with him throughout Europe, which will be filled with consternation and carnage; for he will be so powerful, that God shall be thought to combat on his side. The Church of God, in great desolation, will be somewhat comforted, for she shall see her temples opened again to her lost sheep, and God praised.

“But all is over; the moons are passed. The old man of Sion cries to God from his afflicted heart; and, behold! the mighty one is blinded for his crimes. He leaves the great city with an army so mighty, that none ever was seen to be compared to it. But no warrior will be able to withstand the power of the heavens; and, behold! the third part, and again the third part, of his army has perished by the cold of the Almighty. Two lustres have passed since the age of desolation; the widows and the orphans have cried aloud to the Lord, and, behold! God is no longer deaf. The mighty, that have been humbled, take courage, and combine to overthrow the man of

power. Behold, the ancient blood of centuries is with them, and resumes its place and its abode in the great city; the great man returns humbled to the country beyond the sea from which he came. God alone is great! The eleventh moon has not yet shone, and the bloody scourge of the Lord returns to the great city; the ancient blood quits it. God alone is great! He loves his people, and has blood in abhorrence; the fifth moon has shone upon many warriors from the East. Gaul is covered with men, and with machines of war; all is finished with the man of the sea."

The following is said to designate the Bourbon dynasty and its rule, to and including the reign of Louis Philippe, during eighteen years:—

"Behold again returned the ancient blood of the Cap! God ordains peace, that his holy name be blessed. Therefore shall great peace reign throughout Celtic Gaul. The white flower is greatly in honour, and the temples of the Lord resound with many holy canticles. But the sons of Brutus view with anger the white flower, and obtain a powerful edict, and God in consequence is angry on account of the elect, and because the holy day is much profaned; nevertheless God will await a return to Him during eighteen times twelve moons. God alone is great! He purifies his people by many tribulations; but an end will also come upon the wicked. At this time a great conspiracy

against the white flower moves in the dark, by the designs of an accursed band; and the poor old blood of the Cap leaves the great city, and the sons of Brutus increase mightily."

The following is said by some to mean no other person than the Emperor of France, Louis Napoleon, and to relate to his times:—

"Hark! how the servants of the Lord cry aloud to Him! The arrows of the Lord are steeped in his wrath for the hearts of the wicked. Woe to Celtic Gaul! The cock will efface the white flower; and a powerful one will call himself king of the people. There will be great commotion among men, for the crown will be placed by the hands of workmen who have combated in the great city. God alone is great! The reign of the wicked will wax more powerful; but let them hasten, for, behold! the opinions of the men of Celtic Gaul are in collision, and confusion is in all minds.

"The king of the people will be seen very weak; many of the wicked will be against him; but he was *ill-seated*; and, behold! God hurls him down. Howl, ye sons of Brutus! Call unto you the beasts that are about to devour you. Great God! what a noise of arms! A full number of moons is not yet completed, and, behold! many warriors are coming!"

Does not the following indicate Henry V., the

last bud of the white flower, or lily of the Bourbons? Is he not the "Young Prince" spoken of below, and is not England intended by the "lion?"—this country having a lion among its national insignia, and its arms being surmounted with the figure of that animal:—

"It is done! The mountain of the Lord hath cried in its affliction unto God. The sons of Judah have cried unto God from the land of the foreigner; and, behold! God is no longer deaf. What fire accompanies his arrows! Ten times six moons, and yet again six times ten moons have fed his wrath. Woe to the great city! Behold the kings armed by the Lord! But already hath fire levelled thee with the earth. Yet the faithful shall not perish. God hath heard their prayer. The place of crime is purified by fire. The waters of the great stream have rolled on toward the sea all crimsoned with blood. Gaul, as it were dismembered, is about to reunite. God loves peace. Come, young prince, quit the isle of captivity. Listen! from the lion to the white flower! come!"

The following concludes the words of the Seer of Orval:—

"What is foreseen, that God wills. The ancient blood of centuries will again terminate long struggles. A sole pastor will be seen in Celtic Gaul. The man made powerful by God will be firmly

seated. Peace will be established by many wise laws. So sage and prudent will be the offspring of the Cap, that God will be thought to be with him. Thanks to the Father of mercies, the holy Sion chants again in her temples to the glory of one Lord Almighty. Many lost sheep come to drink at the living spring. Three kings and princes throw off the mantle of heresy, and open their eyes to the faith of the Lord. At that time two-third parts of a great people of the sea will return to the true faith. God is yet blessed during fourteen times six moons, and six times thirteen moons. But God is wearied of bestowing his mercies; and yet, for the faithful's sake, He will prolong peace during ten times twelve moons. God alone is great! The good is passed away. The saints shall suffer. The Man of Sin shall be born of two races. The white flower becomes obscured during ten times six moons, and six times twenty moons. Then it shall disappear to be seen no more. Much evil, and little good, will there be in those days. Many cities shall perish by fire. Israel then returns entirely to Christ the Lord. The accursed and the faithful shall be separated into two distinct portions. But all is over. The third part of Gaul, and again a third part and a half, will be without faith. The same will be among other nations. And, behold! six times three moons, and four times five moons

and there is a general falling off, and the end of time has begun. After a number, not complete, of moons, God will combat in the persons of His two just ones. The Man of Sin shall carry off the victory. But all is over! The mighty God has placed before my comprehension a wall of fire. I can see no more. May He be blessed evermore. Amen."

The second prophecy to which the attention of the Spiritual Conference was drawn by Mr. Dresser, was attributed to a priest of the Jesuits, who died at Bordeaux, towards the close of the last century. It seems to have been considered that the greater part of the following extract had reference to the revolution of 1793. The application, however, is by no means clear, and many regard it as a distinct allusion to events now actually impending.

THE JESUIT PRIEST'S PROPHECY.

"Then shall come disturbances in France; a name hateful to the country shall be placed upon the throne. It will not be until after that event that the counter-revolution shall take place. It will be done by strangers. But two parties will first be formed in France, who will carry on a war of extermination. One party will be much more numerous than the other, but the weaker shall prevail. Blood will flow in the great towns,

and the convulsions shall be such that men might think the last day to be at hand. But the wicked will not prevail, and in this dire catastrophe shall perish of them a great multitude. They will have hoped to have utterly destroyed the Church; but for this they will not have had time, for the fearful crisis shall be of short duration. There will be a movement, when it will be supposed that all is lost; but still all shall be saved. The faithful shall not perish; such signs will be given them as shall induce them to fly the city. During this convulsion, which will extend to other lands, and not be for France alone, Paris shall be so utterly destroyed, that when, twenty years afterwards, fathers shall walk with their children, and the children shall ask, 'Why is that desolate spot?' they shall answer, 'My children, here once stood a great city, which God destroyed for its crimes.' After this fearful convulsion, all will return to order, and the counter-revolution shall be made. Then shall the triumph of the Church be such that nothing like it shall be ever seen again, for it will be the last triumph of the Church on earth.

"These events shall be known to be at hand, by the sign that England shall begin to suffer throes of pain, even as it is known that the summer is nigh when the fig-tree puts forth its leaves. England shall experience a revolution, which will

be of sufficient duration to give unhappy France time to breathe. Then it shall be by the assistance of France that England shall be fully restored to peace."

Why not, by way of postscript add the terse prophecy of Montesquieu:—

"*La France se perdra par ses gens de guerre.*"

The prophecies of the Rev. Robert Fleming, Scotch divine, in his *Discourse concerning the Rise and Fall of Papacy*, have attracted too much attention to make it necessary to dwell much upon them here. The work in question was published, as will be remembered, in 1701. A new edition has recently been published in the States by the American Protestant Society.

Among these seers, the destinies of vast America seem to occupy a place wholly inadequate to their importance. Let us conclude the subject of prophecy with the "prevision" of one who, though not "among the prophets," has achieved a celebrated name—General Moreau. A gentleman, Mr. O., whose acquaintance was a source of much gratification to me, in New York, informed me that, in the year 1812, he chanced to meet the renowned general, then returning from a complete tour of the States, and travelled in his company for two days. During this period they had much conversation, Mr. O. questioning with the eager-

ness of an active and inquiring, but youthful, mind, and Moreau as frankly propounding his ideas and anticipations.

Much of this interesting discourse had naturally passed from my friend's memory, but one remark, as taking the form of prophecy, made a more than usually profound impression.

"Will the country flourish as a republic?" asked the younger politician.

"Not permanently," replied Moreau, with emphasis. "As a growing country it may, but when it has arrived at a population of from fifty to an hundred millions, a change is all but inevitable. This vast increase of the population must comprise that for which *we* have no politer name than 'canaille.' This said 'canaille' is the rude but only material of which standing armies are formed. The material being thus on hand, the *need* of a standing army is not so long a step as may now appear to you. Questions may arise among yourselves—foreign relations become complicated—your augmented importance justifies a change of attitude towards powerful, perhaps encroaching, neighbours. A standing army is decreed. This, in its turn, creates ambitious leaders; nay, is, in itself, so great an organ of strength, that the temptation to grasp, seems almost to create the genius to wield it. Death, thenceforth, to the true republican principle. Monarchy, the mere embo-

diment of a power to which the national will has already yielded, is the inevitable result."

"And within what period can one prognosticate so vast a population to be assembled in these States?"

"Within fifty years," said Moreau.

Although it wants ten years of that period, and the increase of population has exceeded Moreau's or any man's calculation, no standing army hath yet been decreed in the States. But then, as Lord E . . . , to whom the anecdote was mentioned, remarked, "He forgot *annexation!*"

In a note appended to page 39, it was mentioned that a letter from a member of the community of Shakers was on its way hither. It has fortunately arrived in time, and needs no apology for insertion here:—

"Shirley Village, October 21st, 1852.

"ESTEEMED FRIEND,

"I cheerfully embrace the earliest opportunity to comply with your request in furnishing you with the information required. To be *definite*, then, demonstrations called *spirit-rappings* were *not* known to us until we learned of them by the newspapers. But the *impression* that we have been familiar with them can be easily accounted for, by the fact that our community have been interested in them from their commencement, and,

through that means, a knowledge has been diffused abroad, that spiritual manifestations of a higher order have long since been enjoyed by us.

“Our church being built on *revelation* it is but reasonable to suppose that *inspiration*, variously manifested, will always be to us a fruitful source of joy and peace, a foretaste of the joys of heaven. Yet, although the *founders* of this community were greatly gifted in this respect, in so much that the world of spirits was as clear to their view as this mundane sphere, yet there have been seasons (there was one in the days of my childhood and youth) when Zion seemed to languish for her wonted sustenance.

“But in the year 1837, a work of this kind commenced at W, N. Y., and thence spread through every branch of our community, which was marvellous and powerful beyond anything ever known on earth before. At least so it was esteemed by those who were the subjects of the heart-searching power which accompanied it. The *manner* of its manifestation was so various that a description would be difficult, yet all contributed to confirm the reality of the presence and influence of the spirits of the departed.

“You have heard me, I think, relate some particulars respecting my cousin, M. L. H., whose testimony is in the Sacred Roll. She deceased in the year '44, bearing witness with her latest

breath to the presence of angels and departed spirits. Her last effort was to communicate their will to us. She used to say to me that the spirit world, its inhabitants and scenery, seemed more real to her than the things of earth, and this without her being *carried away in spirit*, as was more frequently the case with *media*, or, as we have termed them, *instruments* for the spirits.

“Some, without having their spiritual sight at all developed, have been inspired to speak or write for the spirits, with a power and eloquence evidently superhuman. With some, all the spiritual senses were developed, so that the delightful scenery, angelic music, delicious fruits, and fragrant flowers of heaven, were all enjoyed by them. Indeed, the number is not large of those who have enjoyed *no* manifestation of this kind, and I may say there are none who are faithful that have not *felt* a sensible inspiration from the Spirit land.

“These things were, by Divine injunction, kept as secret as possible within our community until the year 1843, when the Sacred Roll was published to the world by the command of Him who gave it, and subsequently the Divine Book of Holy Wisdom, which you have in your possession, has been given to the world by the same authority.

“During this late *manifestation*, as it is termed by us, it has frequently been predicted that a

similar work would go out into the world, while it should measurably cease with us. Of course we were much interested in the rapping demonstrations, and although it had not been revealed to us in what *manner* it would commence and proceed, yet we at once recognised the hand of the Lord in it, and could readily perceive that *to operate upon inanimate matter was better calculated to arrest the attention of the masses* than any other demonstrations spirits could make ; but we rejoice to see that manifestations more interior and elevating are in progress.

“We shall look for much error, hypocrisy, and delusion in this work, having learned by experience that every effort by the power of Good to reclaim man from darkness and degradation is sure to be met with antagonism by the power of Darkness, which claims a place in the heart of every unregenerate son and daughter of Adam. Hence *false Christs and false prophets* may be expected. But the Lord has begun his great and strange work, blessed be his holy Name !

“I would add, concerning the rappings, that we have had enough of it with us to test its reality, but we do not feel that this is for us to any great extent. We have had our portion, with which we are satisfied ; a power which enables us to conquer the *man of sin* within our own hearts, and a light by which the way is made so clear to

us, that 'the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.' Yet we are deeply interested in every movement which has a tendency to pull down the strongholds of error and delusion, for we are confident that this *must* be done ere mankind can be prepared to build on that foundation that cannot be shaken.

"We know that this is but the dawn of day, but 'as the lightning (or 'bright shining,' as it might with propriety have been translated) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, even so shall the coming of the Son of man be.' Slow, yet sure, in enlightening the dark and polluted earth, even as the hand of the Lord hath ever wrought.

"I have said enough to answer your request, and more than I meant to say; but you know it is hard for me to restrain my pen when writing on this subject.

"I would remark that the testimony of my cousin, mentioned in this letter, is in the second volume of the Sacred Roll, which has not been sent to England. It was not complete at the time required for sending the *first* volume. And as the government of England, like that of all other nations to which it was sent, has neglected to obey the requirement of the Lord, in giving it publicity, it has not been deemed necessary to send the other volume. Nevertheless, should

your correspondent desire to obtain that or any of our publications, we would send them to him. Perhaps he could obtain one of the copies sent to the government of England. We should like to know what notice has been taken of them. But, perhaps, his interest is confined to the rapping demonstrations, and, if so, this will suffice.

“Please accept the love of your friends here, all as one, as I am in haste, and, by all means, that of your true friend,

“ROXALANA L. GROSVENOR.”

For the above characteristic communication, I am indebted to my kind friend (hereinbefore referred to) Dr. Harriet K. Hunt, the indefatigable vindicator of the rights of women. Gratitude compels me to add a few words on the subject I conceive to be at this moment nearest that lady's heart.

It will be remembered that, some two months since, *The Times*, in one of the longest leading articles in the memory of its most “constant reader,” made copious extracts from a report of the Woman's Rights Convention, holden at Syracuse, U. S., and poked a considerable amount of fun at the abettors thereof, a large portion falling to the personal share of my friend. The details given in *The Times* are stated, I know not how truly, to be replete with inaccuracies, and, at all

events, to lend an aspect to the proceedings in question far more grotesque and undignified than they really deserved. Hence, Dr. Harriet has deemed it fit, in justice to herself, and to those associated with her in the "movement," to embody her views in a brief "protest," addressed to the treasurer and assessors of Boston, a copy of which, on the last occasion of paying her taxes, she presented (*with* the money) to the astonished "publican."

As the tone of this document is both calm and reasonable, and its exposition forcible and clear; as, moreover, my friend has proffered me the strongest guarantee that in urging the "GREAT WOMAN MOVEMENT," it is the emancipation of *her* sex, not the subjugation of my own—that is the point at issue,—I think I may venture to append her very noticeable remarks.

"TO FREDERICK U. TRACY, TREASURER, AND THE ASSESSORS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES OF THE CITY OF BOSTON, AND THE CITIZENS GENERALLY,

"Harriet K. Hunt, physician, a native and permanent resident of the city of Boston, and for many years a tax-payer therein, in making payment of her taxes for the coming year, begs leave to protest against the injustice and inequality of levying taxes upon women, and at the same time

refusing them any voice or vote in the imposition and expenditure of the same. The only classes of male persons required to pay taxes, and not at the same time allowed the privilege of voting, are aliens and minors. The objection in the case of aliens is their supposed want of interest in our institutions and knowledge of them. The objection in the case of minors is the want of sufficient understanding. These objections certainly cannot apply to women, natives of the city, all whose property and interest is here, and who have accumulated, by their own sagacity and industry, the very property on which they are taxed. But this is not all; the alien, by going through the forms of naturalization, the minor, on coming of age, obtain the right of voting, and so long as they continue to pay a mere poll-tax of a dollar and a half, they may continue to exercise it, though so ignorant as not to be able to *sign* their names, or *read* the very votes they put into the ballot-boxes. Even drunkards, felons, idiots, or lunatics, if *men*, may still enjoy that right of voting, to which no woman, however large the amount of taxes she pays, however respectable her character, or useful her life, can ever attain. Wherein, your remonstrant would inquire, is the justice, equality, or wisdom of this? That the rights and interests of the female part of the community are sometimes forgotten or disregarded, in consequence of their deprivation of

political rights, is strikingly evinced, as appears to your remonstrant, in the organization and administration of the city public schools. Though there are open, in this State and neighbourhood, a great multitude of colleges and professional schools, for the education of boys and young men, yet the city has very properly provided two High Schools of its own, one Latin, the other English, at which the *male graduates* of the Grammar Schools may pursue their education still farther at the public expense. And why is not a like provision made for the girls? Why is the public provision for *their* education stopped short, just as they have attained the age best fitted for progress, and the preliminary knowledge necessary to facilitate it, thus giving the advantage of superior culture to *sex*, not to mind? The fact that our colleges and professional schools are closed against females, of which your remonstrant has had personal and painful experience, having been in the year 1847, after twelve years of medical practice in Boston, refused permission to attend the lectures of Harvard Medical College,—that fact would seem to furnish an additional reason why the city should provide, at its own expense, those means of superior education which, by supplying our girls with occupation and objects of interest, would not only save them from lives of frivolity and emptiness, but which might open the

way to many useful and lucrative pursuits, and so raise them above that *degrading dependence*, so fruitful a source of female misery.

“Reserving a more full exposition of the subject to future occasions, your remonstrant, in paying her tax for the current year, begs leave to *protest* against the injustice and inequalities above pointed out.

“This is respectfully submitted,

“HARRIET K. HUNT.

“Green Street, Boston, October 18, 1852.”

Return we to the branch of the subject we were considering, *i. e.* the more recent manifestations.

The narrative following is given in the words of a party who had been one of the bitterest enemies of the spirit doctrine, and had omitted no opportunity of holding it up to ridicule. In a commendable spirit of candour, he gave equal publicity to his altered views, and announced that the phenomena which had so deeply impressed him, had been likewise witnessed by gentlemen in whom there was every reason to place implicit confidence, and whom the community would readily acquit of any disposition to deceive. He alluded to two eminent members of the bar, men of deep sagacity and clear judgment.

“No one was present at this interview except the gentlemen named, Mr. Cooper, Mrs. Cooper,

and her young child. The cloth was removed from the table. The company then seated themselves around the table, so far removed therefrom as to preclude the possibility of its being moved by any one of the company unobserved by the rest. When commanded to move, the table would move in the direction required, a distance of six, and in some instances, of twelve inches. One of the gentlemen then desired *mentally* that it should be thrown over, and it was promptly done. All these things were done with no human power operating upon the table. The gentlemen then took a book, and placing it under the table, requested the spirits to write therein. The leaves in the book soon began to rustle; soon after, the pencil was thrown upon the floor, and then the book was violently pulled from the hands of the party holding it. One of the gentlemen, in whose hands the book was torn and written in, declares upon his veracity that he knows it was done by some agency invisible to human sight. When the party was at a distance from the table, in answer to a request that some manifestation might be made which should be entirely satisfactory, the table was thrown over with so great violence as to break the rim thereof in several places. That the phenomena detailed above were actually witnessed, it were the extremest folly to deny. The testimony

establishing their genuineness can in no manner be shaken."

The attention of every person in the slightest degree interested in the matter, is now earnestly called to a very recent communication from a gentleman of high literary attainments in the United States. Press and mercantile connexions, as usual, render it unadvisable that his name (far from unknown in literary circles here), should be given at length. And so long at least as such subjects of discussion are liable to be tainted with that personality which is the besetting sin of American journalism, this reason must be allowed its full force.

"Gloucester, Mass., July 18th, 1852.

"DEAR SIR,

* * * *

"With regard to the rapping phenomena, I can only say they continue to excite the wonder and speculation of inquirers, philosophical and unphilosophical. There is no abatement as yet in the frequency and extraordinary character of the manifestations, although a person who has the candour to say he has heard and seen such and such things, is still distrusted by the public as a visionary or a dupe. * * * I am inclined to refer these phenomena to the same group with

those which puzzled the English public some years since, at the Rev. Edward Irving's chapel. I think also that they will be eventually admitted by physiological science, together with many of the facts in witchcraft, supposed now to be exploded, but which are as well attested as any historical facts of their age, and which were fully credited by grave and intelligent men. Here is something that appeals directly to the material senses, requiring no stimulus of the imagination, no abandonment of one's coolest judgment, to see, hear, and feel. It is now upwards of two years, that I have been personally familiar with these phenomena, missing few opportunities that I have had of seeing them. I have witnessed them under various circumstances, and in the presence of various *media*, seven or eight in all. All these are females, but some of the best *media* have been males. My interest has been confined to the purely physical phenomena, to the peculiar 'rappings,' and other sounds, the violent and extraordinary movements, the tippings of tables, &c. The tests of spiritual presence, apart from these material manifestations, so inexplicable and singular, have always been to me unsatisfactory; not that they were not at times very extraordinary, but because I had, many years since, repeatedly been familiar with phenomena in mesmerism and clairvoyance of the same kind. The questioning

and examining of the supposed spirits have always been to me exceedingly tedious; and knowing the inconsistencies, absurdities, and palpable delusions, which the uncharitable might call audacious falsehoods, which, side by side with many extraordinary revelations or *hits*, were in the habit of being uttered on these occasions, I have made no account of them whatever, although they doubtless have their weight in a philosophical consideration of the subject. But when I have seen tables moving about, or balanced on two legs, and keeping most perfect time to music, when I have felt the most unmistakable vibrations, *pulsations* I might call them, in the wood; have heard loud, various, and inexplicable noises, and have seen, felt, and heard these things under circumstances when, with every wish to detect imposture, with (originally) a strong aversion to the establishment of the phenomena,—when I and accompanying friends have witnessed these things under circumstances which precluded the belief in imposture, or trick, or mechanical apparatus, or concealed magnets,—when I have the testimony of thousands of trustworthy and unprejudiced persons from all parts of the country, attesting to phenomena precisely similar,—I am compelled to the conclusion that it cannot be said of them,—‘there is nothing in them.’ Our scientific people ignore the subject, because they cannot pre-

scribe conditions. For instance, one says 'Let me put a needle uuder a bell-glass, and if your *medium* can cause it to vibrate, without moving the table, I will believe.'

"What if he were to say to a nervous patient, 'I don't believe that you feel so and so, because you don't feel so *now*, when I am by, and holding your hand.' It strikes me that the test is not a final one; and I do not see why I should disbelieve I have seen a table move, because I do not see a needle do the same.

* * * *

"S."

The next communication—of still more recent date—is from the hand of a gentleman of Baltimore, who, at the time of the writer's visit to Boston, was staying at the latter place, and apparently paying no further attention to the "rappings" than such as one might consider due to an ingenious hoax. It will be seen that his opinions—not lightly formed nor lightly changed—have nevertheless undergone considerable modification.

"Baltimore, Maryland, Aug. 10.

"MY DEAR S.,

"The position of affairs with respect to the manifestations, remains unaltered by any *new* developments, since your departure from Ame-

rica ; but the number of telegraph lines to the other world, or *media*, are multiplying in all directions with a rapidity truly wonderful ; and, to many, somewhat alarming. I find, by an item in this morning's paper, that a convention of ' Spiritualists ' has been held at Boston, and resolved into a permanent organisation.

" This really curious subject, as you rightly term it, is cutting a wide swathe through the established common-sense experiences of our people, and leaving behind it insanities and hallucinations of a most distressing character ; not unfrequently productive of results of far too grave a nature to be referred to a cause so shallow as mere charlatanism, or trickery of designing persons.

" My own experience is limited to three visits to a house in East Boston ; the *medium*, Miss Ada Hoyt (not, I believe, the same you visited), when the phenomena exhibited were merely those common to all such performances, namely, tap-pings, spelling out sentences, either in answer to questions, or in voluntary communications, answered by the signs of *yes* and *no*, and movements of the table. *I am satisfied that they are phenomena ; that they are not produced or controlled by any agency on the hither side of nature.* I am more inclined to call them *sub-natural*, than *super-natural* ; but certainly they lie out of the jurisdiction of an established code of physical laws. The

tappings or knockings, were *not* produced by any material substance striking against the table. This we demonstrated by laying the ear *close upon* the table, under which circumstances the sound was no greater, (rather more dull), than when listened to from above the table. On the other hand, a very faint tap with the finger-nail, scarcely audible to a person beside me, was heard, much augmented in sound, by an ear laid against the table at the other end. At one time the tappings appeared to *cover* the entire under-surface of the table, as though all of us had been drumming with our finger-nails at the same time. *The table was lifted from the floor, and moved aside*, while four of us (Dr. C, the two Messrs. O, and myself) were grasping it firmly, and pressing it *directly downwards*. We held communications with the unseen intelligences, but I am sorry to say their contributions to our desire for knowledge were of no substantial value. Indeed, with a few slightly indicated exceptions, the set we had fallen in with seemed to have little respectability to commend them. They were, in truth, a shabby crew. They would lie, and the truth was not in them. They would seldom have the decency to confess their ignorance of any subject on which they were questioned, but answered generally very promptly. Occasionally we *detected* one passing himself off for another whose name he had assumed. The

most entertaining of the party was one 'Colonel Mark Fiske' (so he announced himself), of Derry, New Hampshire, who resigned his commission in the State militia, and his country farm, some twelve years ago, and departed for 'the other side.' His *individuality* was really brought out with a *wonderful* distinctness in the conversations we kept up with him; his conduct was remarkably and consistently characteristic throughout. He would drum upon the table to music whistled, sung, or played upon the piano. On one occasion he asked me for a song, by beating its peculiar measure upon the table, so that it was instantly recognised by several at once."

Another correspondent (I believe I may venture to name my friend, Dr. Coale, of Boston), writing an account of this manifestation, in ignorance that I had received one from another source, observes:—

"Another thing worthy of note was the loudness of the raps given by a spirit who calls himself 'Colonel Mark Fiske.' These were as loud, if not louder, than I would like to give with my knuckles on a table. They jarred the whole table, making the leaf fly up! They were also distinctly (so much so as to leave no doubt of the fact) made on different parts of the table, sometimes before me, sometimes another of the company, as requested. Once, a mere gentle tapping

was heard, and the *medium* spelled out the message privately; then, colouring deeply, remarked to her mother, that it was 'William.' . . .

"The movement of the table was, however, very remarkable. Three of my friends present, all able-bodied men, and of good weight, tried to hold the table down, while I also did my utmost to keep it firm. It was, however, raised from the ground, and swayed to and fro, the *medium* remaining perfectly passive, and laughing at our ineffectual efforts to resist the movement."

My former correspondent continues:—

"Perhaps the most unlooked for and startling communication, made to me directly and spontaneously, was the name of a gentleman, Dr. —, of —, who, four years ago, was one of a party with whom I passed a day in the harbour, fishing. I was particularly charmed with him, and during the sail back to the city, we sat on the deck together in the stern of the yacht for an hour or two, in very entertaining conversation. I never saw him before or since. He was a young physician of remarkable talents, and son of a wealthy resident of —. A few months subsequent to our meeting, while suffering from mental derangement, induced by private troubles, he drowned himself in the harbour, going out alone, in a small boat, for the purpose. His name was most unexpectedly spelt to me (the spirit having an-

nounced himself as a friend of mine), but his communications went no further than the statement that we had last met in Boston, in the month of June, and parted at eight o'clock. The month and the hour differed from my recollection at the moment, but I afterwards ascertained them to be correct. I made a number of experiments with singular results. I wrote the *initials* of several persons deceased on a small piece of paper, and turned it face downward upon the table, not communicating the fact to any one present. The names were accurately spelt to me, and personal peculiarities were mentioned. These, and a number of other experiments, were made to ascertain the source whence the rappers procured their information. My decided opinion is, that much of it is directly filched from the questioner. I detected my friend Colonel Fiske even picking my pocket (metaphorically or spiritually speaking) of information, and rapping it back to me through the table, to make it appear that he was more familiar with me and my surroundings than I knew to be the case. Many of their answers appear to be given upon a perception of what is articulated in the external mind of the questioner — what the questioner 'says to himself,' as the phrase is. I have witnessed this kind of sympathy (in private and interesting experiments in mesmerism) between the mesmeriser and the subject;

and this suggested the scrutiny which convinced me that these spirits are brought by your own act, so nearly into a consociation with you, as to be enabled to copy from that external region of the mind, what you 'say to yourself.'

"For example, I will give you an instance in which my friend, the Colonel, manifestly to my mind, followed the course of my own mental perceptions. I noticed that when he asked what I already knew, the answer came more promptly than when such was not the case. In these questions, I *expected* the answers, in fact, designed the questions to draw certain ones only. The Colonel spelt my names correctly, using an initial only for the middle one. I then asked him for that middle name, 'as that was my military name.' He spelled it promptly. 'You have known some of that name before?' *Yes*. 'Where? In this country?' *No*. 'England?' *No*. 'Scotland?' *Yes*. (Scotland being what I anticipated from the first.) 'Perhaps you know the name of the old estate in Scotland from which we came?' *Yes*. 'Will you name it?' The name I wanted was Auchentorlie, a word which I do not remember to have heard from the lips of any but my own household here—certainly known to none of those present except my brother, my uncle, and myself. Now, I commonly pronounce this name as though the first syllable were spelt with a *k* instead of the

h, not caring to strive after the Gaelic guttural, *ch*. So the Colonel began "A, u, c, *k*, e, n, t. When the *k* appeared, I noticed the coincidence with my own pronunciation, but also noticed it as an error, and was speculating thereon while the spelling of the word was progressing, but the Colonel pulled up at *t*, and announced a mistake. I questioned upon each of the letters backwards, and the *k* was declared wrong and an *h* substituted; and then the remainder of the word—'orlie'—was correctly added. I made many of these experiments in company with three scientific gentlemen—two of them gross misbelievers. *That we were communicating with an intelligence not embodied in flesh, we did not doubt.* As to the worth of the communications received, we were equally agreed. Some three or four hours, in all, were filled with incidents of the same sort as those I have described, and which, I presume, do not differ from what you have already heard, and perhaps witnessed. The most astounding circumstance connected with the whole subject, to my mind, is that so large a number of persons seem to have adopted the matter into their most familiar daily experiences; and use it with as little apparent idea of its extraordinary character, as they do the post-office or the telegraph.

"It is curious, or rather fearful, to see to what extent the fallacies prevail, that every communi-

cation made from the other world by supernatural means, *must be true*; and that a man, because he has stripped off his carcase and gone into that world, has immediately entered upon the possession of *all knowledge*—‘Let him that is unjust be unjust still, and let him that is filthy be filthy still.’ It is a fruitful theme for reflection, too, to observe how barren is the theology of the day of any means to give its believers a *rational* solution and mastery of these phenomena; or, even if the subject is to be treated as humbug, to give them the power to maintain their *freedom* against it. I saw the nerves of men shaken by it, who were very brave in face of anything that stands upon earth. To me, the spirits we conversed with seemed real individuals, but, as I said before, with few exceptions, of a low and insignificant character. I must confess that I felt that I had them at an advantage; that I possessed a more clear, extended, and rational understanding of things ‘on the other side’ than any of them did, thanks to an instructor whom I fell in with some years ago.

“I hope, but scarce expect, that you will find here something material to add to the information you already possess on this subject; and—&c.

“G.”

Dr. Coale, after describing, in a letter dated August 29th, several curious rapping incidents, writes—

“ Another remarkable manifestation I saw was at a private house—the *medium* not exhibiting for money. There the table tipped and rocked, the *medium*, two women, and a girl, just touching it with the tips of their fingers. Sometimes only *one* touched it, sometimes all three. My brother-in-law tried to restrain the motion of the table, but was dragged half round the room, though exerting himself to a degree which caused his arm to ache severely, even on the following day.

“ The most striking circumstance occurred as we were about to separate. We were standing in promiscuous groups about the room, only the *medium* being near the table, and she was engaged in conversation, so that her attention was not drawn to the table at all. A gentleman asked for a message for his wife, who was present. The table tipped so as to spell out ‘Be faithful, and do your duty.’ ”

This seems conclusively to remove all suspicion that the table was moved (either consciously or the reverse) at the will of the *medium*. These are the facts of the case. Now, what is the theory? I have been told by the spirits that *I* was a *medium*, but as yet I have had no demonstrations of that fact! I am frequently asked, Can spirits be engaged in works like these? I reply with the anecdote, related, I believe, of Erskine. Arguing for the hypothesis that cats were in possession of

souls, his opponent thought he had driven him into a corner by describing a soul, and asking him solemnly whether, in his heart, he believed that a cat *could* possess such a thing? "No," said Erskine, "Cat body, cat *soul*."

So with these spirits. Does death of necessity change the complete identity of both body and soul? If not, one can readily conceive of some noisy, gossiping, busybody, some practical jester, amusing himself by such frivolities as tipping chairs and tables, drumming, &c. There is no reason that he should know any more of the spirit-land— *les arcanes celestes*— than a sailor who has been at Marseilles should know of France.

"The theory of wilful imposture must, at all events, be thrown aside. *Media* are now numbered by thousands, and, among these, are numerous persons of both sexes whose station and character alone seem to preclude the possibility of imposition. Such is Judge Edmonds, of whom you have heard."

With a few words respecting the manifestations in England, I will conclude this chapter. Mrs. Hayden, a *medium* of no great celebrity, whom I met in the States, (and who is mentioned in the introductory chapter as having been made the subject of a somewhat scurrilous article in the *Household Words*), arrived in England three months since. I have before me a list of fourteen houses

of the first distinction, at which she has attended by invitation; meeting, at each, a circle of from ten to fifteen persons, chiefly from the ranks of fashion and nobility, the Guards and Turf Club supplying a liberal quota, and the *savans* being in a decided minority. With circles thus constituted, wherein no other harmony than that of a disposition to jest could possibly be found, it is not surprising that (apart from the ever-puzzling sounds) the results obtained were few and unconvincing. The gentlemen deputed from *Household Words* to collect materials for a funny article, appear indeed to have fulfilled their duty with the happiest success. Regarded, however, as an inquisitorial visit, in protection of an innocent public it must be viewed as an equally signal failure. Grinning faces, the buffoonery of assumed names, exchange of gestures, proposal of absurd questions, &c., are the most certain means of retarding that discovery which silence, harmony, and a determination to give full scope to the theory, might possibly enable us to make.

Even, however, under the disadvantages alluded to, some singular results have not unfrequently been obtained. A circumstance, for example, occurred in a circle assembled at the house of a lady, not far from Park Lane, to the correctness of which, as stated below by one of the party present, I can myself bear personal testimony.

“ Until I received an invitation to join the circle in —— Street, a few hours only before it assembled, I had never heard of the ‘ manifestations,’ nor did I *then* clearly understand what I was to witness. However, believing that some jugglery was to be practised, I placed in my pocket a curious autograph letter of considerable date. During the sitting, I took the letter out, still rolled up scroll-wise, the outside blank, and placed it on the table, no one present but myself cognisant of its nature, and none being suffered to examine it. The ‘ spirits’ having undertaken to name the writer, a gentleman present, a stranger to me, took the alphabet, and the rappings spelled out, without hesitation, ‘ KING WILLIAM.’ It was an autograph letter of William the Third.

“ E. DE ST. CROIX.”

The course and result of the experiment were precisely as this gentleman has stated.

CHAPTER XI.

MECHANICAL, OR BY COLLUSION.

Demolition of former hypotheses—The subject resolved into three heads—The mechanical theory—Toe-ology.

LONG, my dear Sceptic, before we have arrived at this present paragraph, it has become evident to your enlightened mind that the shout of "humbug" is altogether inadequate, of its barren self, to stem the current of belief now setting in, and bearing with it the wise, the eminent, the scientific, the sincere. It has grown incumbent upon you to inform these parties on what authority, public or private, you use that very plastic and general term.

It is not in the scope of human evidence to add one atom of real weight to the accumulated proof that these phenomena *do* exist, and that, up to the present moment, no mortal agency has been detectable in their production. No—nor has even a plausible explanation been offered. It were a waste of time and words to recall even the kernels

of these defunct hypotheses. But here are a few shells:—

Mesmerism, or magnetism.—Why, my good friend, these are of similar genus, and although it be good police-policy to *set* a thief to catch one—it is scarcely permissible to explain one “humbug” by another.

Clairvoyance.—You have ever been sceptical on that head also. But let us see. Though clairvoyance may establish *rapport* between two minds, it can scarcely do so between a mind and a table. It can neither rap, nor move a chair, nor exercise any other physical power whatsoever.

Ventriloquism.—A very random shot, indeed. This art, a curious and very difficult one, resulting as it does from a carefully-studied computation of distance and effect in the science of sound, possesses no such capabilities as are here required. Voices, indeed, may be simulated, and, as was done by the celebrated Thiémet at Paris, and by others, an occasional imitative tap, or other faint sound, be produced; but, even supposing that so many thousand persons had acquired the secret of this rare art, still the most finished performance of Thiémet and the rest, would lack the tone and volume, the electric vibrations, and *multitudinous* location, which characterise the rappings, while this explanation leaves the *physical* phenomena unaccounted for as before.

Allusion has been made to the possibility of the phenomena having their origin in the meeting of persons "having positive and negative relations." This theory, I confess, to be beyond my comprehension; but allowing it the scope to which it seems to lay claim, surely, in that case, these manifestations would be, in all societies, of daily and hourly recurrence.

Long familiarity with the wonders of modern witchcraft has taught us to think with respect of the noble science of mechanics, and with admiration of the legerdemain which turns it to such excellent advantage. But the dullest spectator of these dark dealings knows that he is looking upon purchaseable magic, spells producible by any cunning craftsman, and dexterity, combined. The "mysterious lady" was no doubt a wonder, but whether the secret of her supernatural knowledge of "what fish you like best for dinner," was based in clairvoyance, or in a clever system of mnemonics, the *rapport*, or complicity, was an admitted fact.

In the case of the rappings, complicity, and the use of mechanism, have been alike proved to be manifestly impossible, the most rigid search of place and person having removed the latter objection, and the presence of a *medium alone* in a strange circle, the former.

You ask me, however, my dear Sceptic, what I

have to say to the explicit declaration made by certain members of the faculty, that these sounds are producible by cracking or snapping the joints of the human body. In the rapping case at Pathhead, mentioned in the first chapter, the medical gentleman is understood to have described the process as "cracking some of the larger bones;" but as the difficulty of cracking one's own back-bone, *sternum*, or *tibia*, at pleasure would induce a suspicion of some error in the report, we will turn rather to the physicians of Buffalo, who proved by experiment that these sounds can be produced by a *slipping of the knee-joint*.

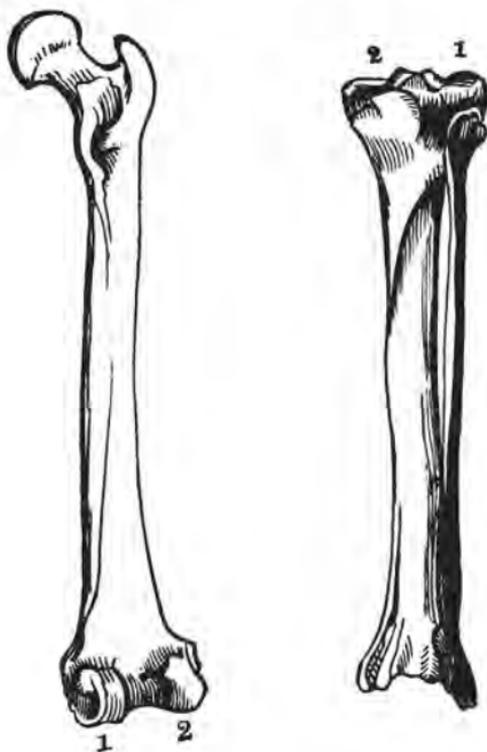
Passing over the circumstance that your own witness, my dear Sceptic, Mrs. Norman Culver, referred them exclusively to the exercise of the *toes*, as in the renowned ghost case of Cock-lane memory,—let us hear the faculty :—

Dr. Charles Lee affirmed that sounds precisely similar in character and degree to those produced by the Fox family can be made by a partial dislocation of the bones. This consists, he observes, in the movement of the *tibia* outward, partly occasioned, it would seem, by pressure in the foot (there being great relaxation of the ligaments about the knee-joint), but chiefly by the action of the muscles of the leg below the knee.

A lady, a Mrs. P., came forward, and on her the doctor proceeded to illustrate his argument.

Placing his hand on the side of the joint, he stated that he felt the bone, at the instant at which the double rap is heard, slipping out laterally, and as suddenly slipping back again, although, he added, by an effort of the will, it can be made to glide back noiselessly, so that only *one* rap is heard.

The accompanying cuts will aid the reader, not well versed in anatomy, in comprehending the doctor's theory, referring the production of sound to the organs and mechanism of this portion of the frame:—



The upper bone is the *femur*, or thigh bone, the largest bone in the body. The rounded head, at the upper extremity, attached by what is called the *neck*, to the shaft of the bone, forming with the latter an obtuse angle, enters into the hip joint. The lower extremity enters into the knee joint. This extremity is expanded so as to form two lateral projections, which are called *condyls*. The outer condyl (Fig. 2) is the broadest and most prominent. The inner condyl (Fig. 1) extends lower than the outer. Between the two condyls there is a depression, or *fossa*.

The two bones of the leg are represented in the other figure. One of these bones only enters into the knee joint. This bone is called the *tibia*. The upper extremity of the tibia is large, and expanded on either side, forming what are termed the two *tuberosities*. The upper surfaces of both tuberosities are smooth, for the purpose of articulating with the *condyls* of the femur. Fig. 1 indicates the upper surface of the outer tuberosity, which is fitted to the external condyl of the femur (No. 2). Fig. 2 indicates the upper surface of the other tuberosity which receives the inner condyl of the femur (No. 1). Between the two tuberosities of the tibia is a projecting ridge of bone, the *spinous process*, which, when the bones are in contact, enters the corresponding depression, or *fossa*, between the two condyls of the femur.

In the living body, the articulating surfaces of the condyls are covered with a layer of cartilage, a yielding, elastic substance, commonly called *gristle*. The articulating surfaces of the tibia are also covered with the same substance, which is thicker at the sides of the surface, thus forming an excavation for the reception of the condyls. The surfaces of the two bones thus in contact are invested with a firm, smooth membrane, which is kept moist by a little ropy fluid, to facilitate motion, and prevent injury from friction.

From the formation of this joint, in so far as the bones are concerned, it would naturally occur to the observer that dislocations should be of frequent occurrence. The bony conformation of the joint is not such as to afford much security against displacement. This, however, is provided against by the patella or *knee-pan* in front, and by numerous strong ligaments passing from one bone to the other in different directions, and surrounding the joint on every side. By this arrangement the joint is, in fact, rendered the strongest in the body, dislocations being extremely rare.

The protection of this joint being thus chiefly due to the ligaments, it is obvious that, in proportion as the latter may be defective, or elongated in some persons, the extremities of the bones are susceptible of more or less displacement from their proper positions. The ridge of bone be-

tween the two articulating surfaces of the *tibia* must be removed from its situation between the condyls, and rest upon the outer condyl (Fig. 2). This movement is accompanied by a loud noise, and the return of the bone to its place is attended by another equally loud sound.

The conformation of the knee suitable for *rapping* is admitted to be somewhat rare. But this singular power of dislocation and replacement is not, it seems, confined to the knee-joint. It is equally referable to the ankles and the toes. First, as regard the former: rappings at the ankle joint may be produced, and are explained, *thus*,— A muscle, called the *peroneus longus*, arises from the upper part of the leg, just below the knee, and terminates in a long round tendon, or sinew, or chord, which passes through a groove in the back part of the bony protuberance constituting the outer ankle (*malleolus externus*). The tendon then arches forward, passes under the foot, and is attached to the middle of the sole. In most persons this tendon is firmly fixed in the groove by ligaments, but in those who are able to rap by means of this agent, it is not closely confined, but may be moved forward for the space of an inch or more, by contraction of the muscle with which it is connected, and the contraction of this muscle may be produced by an exertion of the will acting exclusively on it. The quick and

forcible movement of the tendon over the outer ankle bone causes a sound, and a second sound occurs when the tendon returns to its place. The proximate cause of the sounds is essentially the same as when they are produced in the joints. As in the latter case, the extent to which the movement may be effected, the facility and force with which it is done, and the corresponding loudness of the sounds, will depend not a little on practice.

It is stated that the medical experience of the day has borne witness to more than one instance of this power; but the interest which seems ever to have attached itself to these individual cases, would rather constitute an argument *against* the theory, that the thirty or forty thousand persons now "rapping" produce the sounds in *this* wise.

In order to produce all the evidence possible, let us call forward Mr. Chauncey Burr. This gentleman, a public lecturer of much ability, assisted by his brother, Mr. Heman Burr, delivered a series of lectures in New York, and after treating a variety of philosophical and scientific subjects, proceeded, in accordance with a previous announcement, to expound (*expose*, you would say, my friend) the whole system of the "Rochester rappings." This he did on the principle to which I have adverted; and concluded by imitating, in his own person, the mysterious sounds, so that they were distinctly

audible to the whole assemblage of a thousand or fifteen hundred persons then present. Besides this, a gentleman who, under the name of Shadrach Barnes, published some curious illustrations of the practical working of the rapping science, proved that he himself possessed the power of rapping with the toes, and could reproduce some of the phenomena of sound exhibited by the Fox family.

Indifference to the realisation of dollars is not a striking feature of transatlantic society, and, of course, the "discoverers," Messrs. Burr and Barnes, applied for and divided the reward that had been so frequently offered in the following advertisement:—

"1,000 DOLLARS REWARD.

"I hereby offer the sum of *One Thousand Dollars* to the person who will satisfactorily explain the phenomena of the so-called 'Spiritual Manifestations,' without reference to their being made, as they purport to be, by departed spirits.

"I am induced to make the above offer, from having seen various articles in the newspapers, in relation to the so-called 'Spirit Rappings,' in which many hard names are used, denouncing those who believe in them.

"Believing, as I do, that it is much more easy to cry 'humbug,' than it is to explain these

things, the above reward is offered in good faith, and will be promptly paid.

" DANIEL DAVIS,
" Magnetic Instrument Maker,
" 428, Washington Street.

" Feb. 18."

They did nothing of the kind. The truth is, that their explanation, though ingenious enough, was far from sufficiently complete in all its details, to satisfy the candid inquirer. That Mr. Burr, and probably Mr. Shadrach Barnes, *did* produce certain cracks or snaps from their knees, ankles, and toes, there is no sort of question. Much, however, depends upon the *character* of these sounds. Fingers may be snapped and cracked with the greatest ease. I myself had a sister, one of whose juvenile amusements it was to put her fingers and thumbs out of joint, and replace them with a *click* (I believe she retains the accomplishment), to the great derangement of my nervous system. No doubt, there are persons who, like Mr. Newman Noggs, enjoy this gift of dislocation and replacement.

The difficulty, in fact, rests here. *Sounds, so produced, are peculiar, generic, and not to be mistaken.* Their apparent location cannot, as in the case of ventriloquism, be altered at pleasure. An ear-witness declared that the sounds produced

by Mr. Burr were so far from being identical with the spirit-rappings, as to *force* the hearers to the conclusion that they could not be produced by the same means. As easily, indeed, might the notes of the flute and the trumpet be referred to the same instrument. There was a peculiar roll and ring in the mysterious sounds, which Mr. Burr admitted that he was unable to produce, though averring that he would do so thereafter.

It is true that Mr. Burr dissented from this doctrine, and argued stoutly for similarity of "snap"—considering that there were at least *five* circumstances which vary the volume and tone of the sounds, although they were, in all the *media*, produced in the same way:—

1. The size and strength of the toe.
2. The tightness of the shoe.
3. The thickness and dryness of the sole.
4. The moisture or dryness of the foot.
5. The substance on which the rapper stands or sits.

But he forgets that in cases where the feet of the *medium* were bound up, or held, the rappings continued as before. And the absence of those electrical vibrations which have been *proved* to accompany the "spirit rappings," also weighs heavily against Mr. Burr's theory.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion, that, if Mr. Burr's sounds are produced by the toe-joints, then

must the original rappings be accounted for some other way.

Eminent surgeons have declared that any such use, or rather *misuse*, of one's joints, would very soon destroy them. But there are further objections to this knee-hypothesis, viz., the knocking out of facts that knee-joints could never reveal; the beating of the notes of music so correctly that the nicest musical ear could detect no variance; the turning over of tables, a species of knocking that knee-joints could hardly accomplish, which has been performed with the *medium* held fast, hands and feet; the uncertainty of obtaining responses to questions, which, if humbug were meditated, would never occur till the joints gave out; these are things that need explaining. We have seen and heard these phenomena so strong, that the knee and toeology fail to convince us of their fallacy. It were better to accept the spiritual theory, as inconsistent and irrational as its opponents declare it, than this disjointed humbug about knee-pans and great toes! The argument is too confined. Serious consideration makes it dumb. The knee, as was observed by a Boston wag, becomes a ne-gation, and the toe-ology fails in *to-to!*

Hold, however, for a moment. Fair play for Mr. Burr, no less than for his intended victims. Did he do nothing more to convince his audience

that the whole was a delusion and a snare? Yes; to be sure. He demonstrated the mode of replying to questions *mentally* asked by parties present. A young man being singled out from the company, Mr. Burr first asked the usual question, "Are any spirits present?" and was answered by three distinct raps, signifying an affirmative. He then requested the young man to think of some deceased friend with whom he desired to communicate, and, calling for the alphabet, rapped out letters composing the name MARY.

This the young man declared was correct!

And thus (rejoins Sceptic, with a slight superior smile) you have, barring a certain admitted difference in the nature of the sounds, the whole phenomenon of the Rochester knockings reproduced.

Exactly, my dear friend, with this slight *addendum*, that this interesting young gentleman, the beloved of "Mary," whose name Mr. Burr affected not to know, confessed, shortly after, to the editor of a Providence paper, or his correspondent, that the Burrs knew his name, and *that he had been engaged expressly for the purpose of practising the deception!*

And if you will permit me to anticipate a little, I will put in a "certificate" in reference to another *medium*, a Mrs. Tambin, which may tend still further to satisfy your scruples on the subject of the toe-ology:—

"Syracuse, N. Y., Monday, Feb. 3rd, 1851.

"I hereby certify that I was present at the house of Mr. G. B. Bennet, in Auburn, N. Y., on the 16th day of February, 1850, for the purpose of investigating the 'rapping,' and the phenomena connected therewith; that Mrs. Sarah A. Tambin was the *medium*; that I was in doubt about the source of the sounds; that I magnetised the *medium*, Mrs. T., *placed her feet on a chair*, paralysed her limbs, so that *she could not move*, or make any effort to do so, without my observing it, even if they had not been paralysed; that I then heard the sounds, *loud and distinct*, on a table at least *twelve feet* from the *medium* or *any other person*, on the wall near the table, on the chair in which I sat, producing an evident jar on the *back* of the chair in which the *medium*, Mrs. T., sat, and in other places about the room, *and I know that she could not have made them by any movement of her body or joints*, FOR SHE COULD NOT MOVE.

(Signed) "HEZEKIAH JOSLYN, M.D.

"Subscribed and sworn before me, this Feb. 3rd, 1851."

Having thus dealt, at perhaps more than sufficient length, with the only portion of this branch of the subject worth notice, we proceed to, at least, a more plausible theory.

CHAPTER XII.

ELECTRICAL.

Arguments and experiments favouring the theory of common electricity—The Magnetoscope—Arguments and illustrations in opposition to the former theory—Vitalized animal electricity—Dr. Du Bois Reymond—Theory of Dr. Richmond—New proposed theory—Mr. Rogers, &c.—The last guess, &c.

THE failure of every attempt to account for the phenomena, by tracing them to mechanical contrivance, having forced investigation into new channels, none offered itself so readily as that all-powerful, and hitherto little comprehended agent—electricity. This bright idea, once started, received abundant confirmation, and as it is clearly difficult to define the properties, or set bounds to the power of what is confessedly not understood, the ground now occupied seemed tenable enough.

Perhaps the consciousness that should this new explanation fail, they might be irresistibly borne into the ranks of the spirit-theorists, might have led some persons to stretch their electric "proofs" unwarrantably far. It must be admitted, never-

theless, that very many circumstances combined to give colour to the present hypothesis.

“When, for instance,” says Mr. Fishbough, “the sounds proceed from a door, they always, to the superficial observer, appear to be made by a rapping upon the opposite side of it. If, however, a person placed himself on *that* side, he on his part would hear the sounds from the side on which the first person stood. This fact of the apparent *opposition* of the sounds was noticed in the phenomena so well-known to have occurred in the house of the father of John Wesley.

“But a more critical examination has disclosed to me the fact that the sounds proceed from neither *side* of the resonant substance, but from *within* it, and that they consist of a concussion among the particles of the substance in which they occur, slightly resembling an explosion. The fact is distinctly perceptible when the ear is placed near where the sounds are made, and when these are compared with those produced by a rap of the knuckles. The sounds are characterised by a kind of vibrating, sepulchral rumble, and not by that hard exterior *crack* which is produced by striking the substance from which they proceed. They are not, therefore, produced by a ‘rapping’ or a ‘knocking,’ and cannot be *exactly* imitated by that process. I speak now of the sounds which occur in ordinary manifestations, and in

answering questions, &c. There are sometimes, however, sounds produced evidently by concussion mainly upon the *surface* of the resounding substance; but these occur but rarely. I have heard them on two different occasions, on both of which they were as loud as if the blow had been struck with a heavy muffled mallet."

In the chapter in which I have mentioned my own personal experiences, the knockings said to have been made by the gallant Colonel Fiske were given as loudly and distinctly as though some one had walked up to the table and struck it repeatedly with his fist, as one might do to enforce silence.

A recent correspondent writes,—“I have heard these inexplicable sounds imitate the tattoo of a drum, in the most perfect manner, though not loud.” (In the case of the noises, &c., at Slawensick, mentioned in the first chapter, the distant beating of a drum was a favorite variety of the disturbances.)

“Others have heard the sounds so loud as to be startling in the extreme. Many other imitations, such as the sound of a cooper’s mallet, &c., I have heard, and these imitations were executed with surprising accuracy.”

It is worth while to collect the evidence of persons, each a stranger to the other, and that other’s views.

Says Mr. Fishbough, "This interior concussion of particles, so to speak, which occurs in the ordinary sounds, can be attributed to no other cause than the permeation and action of some subtle essence analogous to electricity. It is accordingly another important fact, that persons of delicate nerves can generally feel abundant evidence of the action of such an essence, while the phenomena in question are occurring. If, for instance, the points of the fingers are placed near where the sounds are produced, a slight tingle will be felt in the fingers, hands, and arms of the susceptible, precisely resembling a slight shock from a galvanic battery."

Another, a friend of my own, writes,—“I have frequently felt an electrical sensation in the wood;” and, in another communication, he mentions the peculiar sensation experienced by applying the tips of the fingers, however slightly, to the surface of the table.

Another remarks that often, “just before the rappings commence, a crackling, hissing sound is distinguishable, precisely like the escape of electricity from the prime conductor, or from an over-charged Leyden jar.”

I was, myself, as I have mentioned, impressed with the idea of the presence of electricity. But let us rather hear the scientific:—

A physician, of Buffalo, in speaking of the elec-

trical theory, mentions the fact of a gentleman of Main Street, well-known in the community, having the power to generate sufficient electricity in his own person, to produce rappings, when laying his arm upon the table; but if he leans his head back against the wall, the rappings suddenly cease, the wall probably affording a better conductor.

Mr. Fishbough was acquainted with a person subject to remarkable psychological experiences, who was able, by a mere effort of will, to fill his hair so full of electricity, that, on passing a comb through it, it would appear to be almost in a continuous flame, emitting sparks, and slight but perceptible shocks, when the knuckle of another person was presented. . . . He explained in vague terms how he did it, but it was altogether by a psychological process, of which any one in a normal condition would be incapable.

A similar case is stated to have attracted much attention in one of the German cities, last winter, the report of which, in announcing what it describes as a new phenomenon, affirms that a lady, on the evening of the 25th of January, became so highly charged with electricity, as to give out vivid electrical sparks from the end of each finger, to the face of each of the company present. "She was constantly charged, and giving off electrical sparks to every conductor she approached.

This was extremely vexatious, as she could not touch the stove or any other metallic substance, without first giving off an electrical spark, with the consequent twinge.

“The state most favourable to this phenomenon, was an atmosphere of about 8° Fahrenheit, moderate exercise, and social enjoyment. It disappeared in an atmosphere approaching zero, and under the debilitating effect of fear.”

When seated by the stove, reading, with her feet upon the fender, this highly charged lady emitted sparks at the rate of three or four a minute; while, under the most favourable circumstances, a spark that could be seen, heard, and felt, passed every second! She could charge others in the same way, when insulated, who could, in their turn, as it seemed, give off their supplementary sparks to others. No change of dress altered the phenomenon; cotton or woollen producing the same effects as silk. The lady was about thirty years of age, and in rather delicate health, having suffered for two years from severe neuralgic affections.

It would, in short, appear that the singular phenomenon which so alarmed poor Casca, was by no means the “portentous thing” he considered it:—

“A common slave (you know him well by sight),
Held up his left hand, which did flame and burn

Like twenty torches joined; and yet his hand—
Not sensible of fire—remained unscorched !”

The emission of electric sparks from the hair, however, as well as from a silk handkerchief, or a cat's back, are common phenomena enough; the only interesting feature being, as mentioned in the former of these two cases, the production of the fluid at will, and the question it suggests, how far the power of doing so has been partaken by the Misses Fox, and the *media* generally.

In an investigation which took place in April last, with a view to the elucidation of this especial question, it was found that a family of three persons could, by the combined forces of the electricity generated in their several systems, so charge a stand, or light work-table, as to cause it to shake, and, by commanding (*i. e. willing*), even to move slightly along the floor. It was, moreover, ascertained that these parties, and probably not they alone, but almost any family circle, might place their hands on the table, and, in a few minutes, the electricity would operate upon their hands and arms exactly as it would by holding the balls of a galvanic battery, and would similarly affect the system.

The Buffalo physician before-mentioned, noticed at a meeting of investigation, among other things favourable to the electrical hypothesis, that, in placing his foot under the dress of one of the Fox

media, he could feel electrical concussions as distinctly "as though a succession of snow-balls were let fall upon his boot."

That although the Foxes could produce sounds upon the door at the distance of ten or twenty feet, yet the nearer they approached the more distinct and rapid the knocks became. And when they put a hand upon the door, or even touched it slightly with the end of one finger, the door was often made to shake as though struck with a hammer.

That articles of wood, paper, or metal, were thrown about in the wildest confusion, while those composed of cloth were not touched at all. He likewise observed that a large bell, placed under the table, during the sitting, in jumping up against the table, invariably struck exactly opposite a metal candlestick, which was standing on the table. If the candlestick was moved, the bell followed.

Dr. Richmond, of Jefferson, Ohio, remarks:—
"Every *medium* that I have ever questioned, and they have been numerous, say they feel in the wrists and arms, during rapping and writing, electric currents, or numbness and slight shocks resembling electric shocks. In some this fact is marked, the arm being numb and painful to the shoulder. One *medium*, a physician, can produce this numbness by his will at any time. Numb-

ness or shocks are periodical, coming on when sitting in a circle."

In Woodbridge, New Jersey, some years since, a young lady was affected with a disease which gave rise to similar phenomena. Sounds were heard in her presence,* window-panes were broken, door panels were burst in or out, and quick, concussive sounds were heard under her feet as she ascended stairs.

The reasons for ascribing certain of the strange manifestations in the family of the Rev. Dr. Phelps (*supra*) to the effect of animal electricity have been already noticed.

Such are a few out of very many apparently substantial reasons put forth, for referring these phenomena to an electric origin; and if it be considered a counter-argument, that, if this be so, the *media*, one and all, being aware of the fact, must lend themselves to a wilful deceit, in ascribing the sounds to any other source,—it should be remembered that such knowledge is by no means a necessary feature; but in the same manner as the human system is affected by invisible agents, such as atmospherical changes, noxious vapours, &c., and as the mind, though stimulated by the sphere of unseen life and thought, cannot always perceive the spiritual presence, or recognise agencies, in

* See again the case of Angelique Cottin, half "burked," as it undoubtedly was, by the Commission of the Academy of Sciences.

the existing mental state, so the body is alike insensible to the presence of those agents which act upon and change its physiological condition.

I cannot possibly better illustrate this view of the case than by quoting the words of Dr. Samuel Taylor, *e. g.*—

“The human system, under some circumstances, seems capable of eliminating, what I will term for my present purpose, a *detached vital electricity*, such as is not brought into action in the common operations of life, which, by concentrating in the hand, gives it (I will not say volitions independent of the sensorium, but) the ability to perform acts in which the consciousness of the performance of such action is not returned to the common sensorium. Better to illustrate my meaning, I will say, in the common act of writing a letter to a friend, the mind wills and the hand obeys its dictates. But the term ‘mind’ is only a name for that certain something which passes in continuous current from the brain to the hand, and makes it write.

“But in this case, a reflex current (if I may so express it) is continuously running back to the brain, to convey to it the consciousness of the performance of the act by the hand. In the case of the so-called spiritual writings, although the act may really have originated in the individual’s own brain, and a current passed to the hand, dic-

tating the performance of certain acts or motions, yet no current returns to convey an idea of the performance of such acts by the hand. The current may be supposed to pass off from the person. Reasoning from the above facts, it would seem to be the case, that what I have been pleased to term (for explanation) the *detached vital electricity* of one individual, will operate on the physical system of another."

That electricity may be generated in the body, and magnetic currents evolved therefrom, is no new doctrine to the majority of English readers.

In Dr. Leger's admirable defence of the "magnetoscope," embodying an essay "on the magnetoid characteristics of elementary principles, and their relations to the organisation of man," the power of the electric current, influenced by the will, to move substances, is clearly and convincingly proved. The experiment mentioned, I believe, in Dr. Herbert Mayo's *Chamber Magic*, in which a gold ring suspended from the finger by a fine silken thread, and allowed to hang an inch or two above a piece of silver, acquires self-movement, is well known, and dates, as Dr. Leger remarks, as far back as 1652, when it was quoted, as an example of false magic, in a book entitled, *Les bigarrures du Seigneur des Accords*.

In order to test this and analogous experiments, the "magnetoscope" was invented by a scientific

gentleman of Brighton, Mr. J. O. N. Rutter. This beautiful instrument, though it did not fail to provoke that ridicule which, as a sort of fool's tribute, is accorded to most attempts, the character and objects of which are of an unusual kind, soon secured the attention of scientific persons, and very curious results rewarded the ingenuity of the discoverer. Magnetoid currents were produced, and the pendulum (or substitute for the aforesaid ring) moved or stopped by their agency, influenced, as it was afterwards discovered by Dr. Madden, by the will of the operator. After much inquiry, and numerous experiments, it seems, however, to have been agreed that the construction of the instrument was not such as to place the *impossibility* of some muscular influence being imparted to the pendulum, *beyond all doubt*. To effect this desideratum, Dr. Leger modified the instrument, in a certain manner, taking, for the basis of his alterations, Mr. Rutter's discovery that dead animal matter does not transmit the magnetic current which moves the pendulum, and even *stops* the latter when moving. From a brass rod, which emerged from that point in the instrument on which the operator places his finger, he caused to project two levers of equal length, extending in contrary directions, and each holding a thread of equal length, with a pendulum of equal weight. One of these levers was of

brass, the other of dead animal matter—quill, whalebone, or ivory. The result was that, on the finger being placed on the immovable disc from which the brass rod proceeds, the pendulum attached to the brass lever acquired a violent movement, while the other remained perfectly still.

Dr. Leger, in an interesting treatise on this subject, enumerates the conditions to be observed in relation to the use of his beautiful instrument, viz., the operator may be sitting or standing, have the left hand free, the legs not crossed, &c. Early in the morning, or too soon after eating, are unfavourable times; using snuff, smoking or chewing tobacco—conditions of failure; after which he addresses himself to the most important feature,—and that which is most applicable to our present purpose—the exercise of the *will*, which must act—as in the practice of mesmerising—mentally.

“This condition of the will is the most important, and, at the same time, the most difficult point to obtain, or to explain. It consists of a peculiar state of the nervous power, which the instrument acquires the property of obeying.

“After several trials, repeated with perseverance, the pendulum will assume the normal rotation; the extent of the motion will increase subsequently, and reach a certain degree, without further pro-

gress. As soon as that degree is ascertained, consider it as *par*; that is to say, as the measure of your own power over the instrument.

“ When the middle finger of the right hand has produced its full manifestation, try to reverse the rotation, by using the forefinger of the same hand; adopt the same precautions, the same spirit of perseverance, and watch always the indications of the tell-tale or witness pendulum, in order to ascertain that in your anxiety you have not, even unconsciously, resorted to muscular action to quicken the results. You will, after a period more or less protracted, obtain the desired success, and ultimately the phenomena will require much less time for their full development.

“ Nothing can demonstrate more positively than the magnetoscope does, how the will of man is in itself a natural force, possessing actual influence over inert matter. The central pendulum of the instrument, under the influence of will alone, powerfully exerted, and without any mechanical impulse besides mere and slight contact, will move in any direction you please, without the tell-tale pendulum being affected, and consequently without any muscular action being resorted to.*

* In a recent interview with Dr. Leger, I had the gratification of witnessing the perfect manner in which this instrument is found to vindicate the once ridiculed truths of phrenology; a subject, however, so distinct from that of which we are treating, that I can

Let us turn to the other side of the question—the non-electrical. It will be found that, in spite

only refer to it marginally, and in a manner too superficial for its merits.

It will be remembered that phrenologists recognize, in the brain, *thirty-six* distinct organs. The pendulum of the magnetoscope has seven distinct motions, viz. :—

Elliptical (or oval) motion, normal rotation, inverse rotation, and the four different oscillations—N. and S., E. and W., N.E. and S.W., and S.W. and N.W.

To every organ in the head, is found to belong *one* of these seven motions of the pendulum, and that one only. So undeviating is this law, that Dr. Leger has been enabled to furnish, in his book, a printed list of the peculiar motion appurtenant to each organ. In phrenological examinations with the magnetoscope, the operator places his right middle finger, as usual, on the immovable disc; his left upon the organ to be examined. The pendulum instantly begins to move in the direction found to belong to that organ; and the *degre* of motion to which it ultimately attains (measured by a number of concentric circles drawn on a card below it, and numbered), furnishes the amount of development to which the organ in question has reached. Thus, in a quarter of an hour, by means of this most uncourtier-like machine, with whose fidelity it is absolutely beyond the power of man to tamper, *you*, my friend, may glean a few hints which, properly acted upon, may prove not unserviceable hereafter.

It is obviously impossible to limit the important uses to which the magnetoscope may be turned. In cases of lunacy, the true state of the brain, and the mental tendencies, are clearly discoverable. Simulated madness is detected on the instant. Dr. Leger has made repeated visits to prisons, lunatic-asylums, &c., and tested the powers of the instrument with startling success. In one of the former, out of one hundred prisoners submitted to his examination, he is understood to have fixed, in *ninety* cases, upon the peculiar character of crime attaching to each individual.

of the peculiarities already noticed as being indicative of the presence of this agent, various experiments, made by close and careful observers, seem to show the reverse.

Among other tests, Mr. Fishbough, while with the Misses Fox, placed a delicately-poised magnetic needle directly over a point on a table, where the sounds were being made, and moved it about into various relative positions, without the slightest deflection being perceptible. The young ladies were then requested to place the points of their fingers to the needle, while the sounds continued ; but still the needle exhibited neither attraction nor repulsion.

The sounds were then requested to be made on the floor, near the feet of the *media*. The invisible agency complied, and while the sounds proceeded, the needle was held in various positions near the ladies' feet. Still no deflection.

Mr. F. then took a small and very light ball, made of a conducting substance, and suspended by a silken thread, and caused the young ladies to approach the points of their fingers thereto, during the progress of the sounds. Had there been the slightest derangement of the electric equilibrium between the ball and the systems of the *media*, the ball would have been instantly attracted to their fingers and as instantly repelled. But no such phenomena occurred.

And, to test the question whether the *media* did, or did not, generate the electricity in themselves, they were twice, in Mr. F.'s presence, placed upon insulated stools, when the sounds were heard, as usual, and *on the floor*.

Thus, these and numerous other physical tests, have utterly failed to elicit any evidence whatever of the presence of electric action; while other reasons combine to fortify this view of the subject.

The theory of sound, according to Newton, is as follows:—namely, that the particles of air being struck by some substance, are propelled forward until they meet with sufficient force to drive them backward slightly, when the first moving power again propels them onward, which causes a movement in the particles of atmosphere all around, until finally the nerves of the ear are reached, and the idea of sound is conveyed to the mind.

Of the two antagonistic forces, electricity and atmospheric air, every one knows that the latter is the denser, weighing about one grain to three cubic inches, while the former is without perceptible weight. Electricity is, in fact, computed to be seven hundred thousand times finer than air. It is therefore very reasonably questioned how this subtle agent, so much rarer than air, can so condense the latter, as to reach the auditory nerves, and produce in the mind the sensation of sound?

Will extreme *force* produce this effect, a large amount of electricity being launched with extreme velocity against the opposing atmosphere? No; for inert matter opposed to a body in motion, if permeable by that body, remains unmoved; and thus electricity, rushing against the atmosphere with great rapidity, penetrates and expands the latter only more quickly than if proceeding with less force; thus affording less opportunity for those processes mentioned in Newton's theory to be essential to the birth of sound, and instead of aiding in producing these rappings, having a precisely contrary effect.

Thus much, then, for the claims of *common* electricity.

A word respecting that species to which modern philosophy has applied the term of "*vitalized*" electricity.

A work published some years since, by Dr. du Bois Reymond, member of the Academy of Sciences, Berlin, and certain experiments which followed, drew considerable attention to the connexion ascertained to exist between the phenomena of vitality and those of electricity. New discoveries and new experiments have delayed the completion of an extended work on these interesting subjects. As yet, therefore, practical deductions, far less practical applications of the results that may be reached, cannot fairly be anticipated.

I will merely use the words of an able commentator.

“In all the operations of vitality, we have manifestations of physical force; and as we find that, in our examination of the phenomena of change in organic matter, each form of force tends to the development of another, thus chemical action effects those disturbances which are sensible to us, in the form of heat and electricity; and thus, in like manner, may develop chemical action, or mechanical power; so life by its mysterious excitation produces disturbances which result in rendering sensible electricity, and those subtle agents which interpenetrate all matter.”

The power and effect of the magnetoid currents are exhibited by the magnetoscope. The mode and degree in which these are vitalized, or rendered subject to the influence of the will, must be dependent upon innumerable conditions; and, at least in the present stage of discovery, cannot be made amenable to any code of philosophic laws.

The brain and its connexion with the spinal chord, the nerves of sensation and volition, are, as the reader knows, double; in the words of Dr. Richmond, a double magnetic battery, the right lobe supplying the left side of the body with life and motion, and *vice versa*. It is understood that from the brain is generated that fine fluid which constitutes some of the modifications of electricity,

and is that on which mesmerizers and biologists operate.

Dr. Snell claims to have demonstrated that muscular action, and all sensation, seeing, feeling, &c., are voltaic, or produced by the movements of electricity in the system, over the nerves.

According to Dr. Richmond, the rapping phenomena are the result of a diseased magnetic condition of the brain of the *media*. It is both endemic and epidemic, and follows the law of all contagions; and he remarks that the moral, physical, and mental symptoms which accompany its various conditions, are found in somnambulism, magnetic sleep, &c. The Doctor had opportunities of examining many *media*, resident in and about Jefferson, Ohio, most of whom he describes as "*young persons, of a nervous, impressive temperament; honest, and unconscious of any agency in producing the phenomena, collusion being wholly out of the question. These media belonged, generally, to the best families in the vicinity.*"

Dr. Richmond, whose remarks and researches on this difficult subject, are worthy of the closest and most respectful attention, concludes an interesting essay, with a brief *resumé* of the ground over which his arguments had travelled.

"All mesmerizers, and many physiologists, assert that all animal bodies generate a nervo-

electric fluid; all *media* are highly magnetic, and go into all known mesmeric states. This fluid is controlled by mind, and acts most readily on good conductors, and but little on non-conductors. This fluid being lighter than air, when thrown off, it permits the air to act upon matter as in vacuum. In other cases it evidently moves articles by attraction and repulsion. The absence of light aids its effects. Sound is air put in motion. Light is the electric atmosphere put in motion. When the sun or moon or candle-light is withdrawn, it is at rest; the mind can then emanate these currents into space with greater force. But the sunlight puts in motion this ether, and acts counter to the currents from the mind, just as the Northern Lights stopped the telegraph. These strong electric emanations put in motion such strong electric currents as to destroy the *vibration* along the wires. Light or electricity in motion is the greatest of all physical forces. Force is matter in motion, and electric matter only moves on the law of *equilibrium*, or when moved by mind. Intelligence can take hold of it, as found in our bodies. *Mind is self-moving force*. The mesmeric state, or a diseased nervous condition, develops this state of our brain and nerves, and the mind, freed from the gross body, acts with greater power; its seeing is clearer. All intense, long-continued excitement, political, reli-

gious, or mental, will induce this state of mind. I pronounce it a diseased condition, and all 'spirit manifestations' to be the work of spirits in the body.

"B. W. RICHMOND, M.D."

Admitting that this last theory, if fully established, may account satisfactorily for most of the physical phenomena, still the presence of a singular *intelligence* apparently transcending that of any human mind, remains to be explained. This, however, resting as it does, upon evidence quoted by the advocates of the spiritual theory, will come more properly under the head of the latter.

While these notes have been in course of preparation, yet another theory has been added to the many already broached on this subject. It was contained in what seemed to be intended as a serial work, and is published in Boston, by a writer of the name of Rogers. A friend supplies me with a sketch of this last born hypothesis.

In the preface, the writer describes his work as the result of anxious inquiry into these mysterious phenomena, from the earliest ages associated with human-kind, but which have either been insufficiently investigated, or turned to evil purpose; and challenges, for this field of study, the same spirit of patient inquiry, the same calm exercise of intellectual power, that is freely devoted to the interests of chemistry, astronomy, &c.

He then quotes certain cases in which, as he states, phenomena bearing a perfect analogy to rapping demonstrations—in sound and movement—have been exhibited, and announces his theory of explanation, as follows:—

“That, under peculiar conditions, the human organisation gives forth a physical power, which, without visible instruments, lifts heavy bodies, attracts or repels them according to a law of polarity, overturns them, and produces the phenomena of sound.”

He believes in the existence of a *medium*, or agent, distinct from electricity and magnetism, though perhaps bearing some affinity to these, through which the phenomena in question are produced; and adopts the name given by Baron Reichenbach to the *medium* of (supposed analogous) phenomena, that is, *Odyle*. Reichenbach asserts that this *medium* “is formed, or manifested vividly, in a number of cases in which magnetism never gives evidence of its presence; in many chemical processes, in vitality, in crystals, in friction, in the spectra of sun, moon, and candle-light; in polarized light; and in the amorphous material world in general.”

I have not the means of entering more minutely into Mr. Rogers's development of his views. It would appear, however, that he follows pretty closely the opinions of Reichenbach, and recog-

nizes in the experiments made by the latter, an analogy with the present rapping and moving phenomena, which, as my informant has suggested, can hardly be acknowledged to exist. In truth, this new agent assumes a shape nearly as puzzling as that which it proposes to explain. It is not electricity; it is not magnetism. It is equally remote from the nerve-spirit of the German philosophers (elsewhere dwelt upon) and has so much the air of an "occasional" theory, hastily built up to meet the exigences of the time, without much regard to its foundation, that I must decline giving it any serious attention, more especially as the credentials offered by the author, in the shape of experiments, &c., by no means fortify his case.

Lastly, it has been boldly asserted (and the opinion has found not a few partizans), that the *medium* is nothing more than an unconscious clairvoyante, or magnetic subject. That the sounds are produced by her will from the electric atmosphere encircling her. That she possesses an inner consciousness of what is passing in the minds of those who form the circle, and those at a distance with whom their wishes place her in communication; and that her extraordinary answers are given, by means of her clairvoyance, unknown to herself.

This "explanation" seems to be beset with as many difficulties as the foregoing, a contradic-

tion or two superadded. The "unconscious clairvoyante" is nevertheless to have a "consciousness," and, although in total ignorance of all matters connected with her extraordinary answers, is to possess an intimate knowledge of the same! The sounds are referable to the exercise of her will, yet it would appear that she is to exert no volition whatsoever!

In truth, a lady in this very peculiar and superlatively abnormal state, must evidently "know so little of her own mind," that it, perhaps, might be safer to proceed at once to the consideration of the *last* hypothesis.

CHAPTER XIII.

SPIRITUAL.

Belief in intercommunication with the unseen world—Angelic sympathies—Dr. Harbaugh—Ghosts of our time—Circumstances compared—The ghost of Washington—Remarkable recent and authentic instances: in America; Captain B.; at Romford; Bishop Griswold; near London; at Bromley—"Noble Eden," &c.—Old Nanny—Mr. Warren—Intelligence of the manifestations considered—Views of churches—Experiences of Mr. J. Sargent, in remote districts—Indian media—Value of the physical phenomena considered—Mr. Coggeshall—Power of spirit to act upon matter—The "nerve-spirit"—Dr. Passavant—Mr. Fishbough.

THE total failure of every ordinary means of accounting for the manifestations, forces us, at length, *bongré malgré*, to grapple with the third—the last, and most popular theory.

It renders the approach to the consideration of such vast assumptions somewhat easier, when it is remembered that the recent developments, though new in detail, are old in principle, and that the discussion of theories so little in harmony with the views of the existing generation, would be a more delicate as well as more unenviable

duty, were we not armed with testimony such as no man can refute, to prove that manifestations of like origin have been known to all time.

Sacred records declare, in terms whose force remains undiminished by the various rendering to which they have been subjected, that the interference of spirits with the affairs of mortality, was common; and was indeed made the subject of divine enactments. "To deny the probability of witchcraft and sorcery," says Blackstone (Comm. b. iv. c. 4, §. 6), "is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God, in various passages both of the Old and New Testament; and the thing itself is a truth to which every nation of the world hath in its time borne testimony, either seemingly well attested, or by prohibitory laws, which at least supposes the possibility of commerce with evil spirits."

Down to the latest period referred to in the inspired writings, these communications appear to have been of frequent occurrence; and the church signified and sealed its belief in such intercourse, by the ordination of exorcists. That the notice of Scripture seems to have been especially directed to the doings of evil spirits, and such as evoke them, might give colour to the persuasion that such alone are accustomed to exert an influence over the minds of men, did not the caution to *try* the spirits, &c., believe not *every* spirit, &c., coun-

tenance a contrary opinion, by implying that some are worthy of belief.

The Rev. Dr. Harbaugh, in his interesting work, the *Sainted Dead*, remarks that it is evident from the language of our Lord, that angelic communications and sympathies, so abundant in the Jewish dispensation, were not intended to cease at the introduction of the Gospel dispensation, but rather that they should continue more free and frequent than before.

“Why come not spirits from the realms of glory,
To visit earth as in the days of old—
The times of ancient writ and sacred story?
Is heaven more distant? or has earth grown cold?

To Bethlehem's air was their last anthem given,
When other stars before the One grew dim?
Was their last presence known in Peter's prison?
Or where exulting martyrs raised their hymn?”

A beautiful but needless question. “Where are they? We see them not,”—is the faithless cry of such as have no eyes to discern spiritual things—no faith, which is the evidence of things not seen. The outward, after all, is but the shell,—the inward, the reality. The gross manifestations of angelic beings under the old dispensation—like that dispensation itself,—were destined to pass away, to give place to such as shall *never* pass away—the spiritual.

The persuasion that the spirits of the departed

occasionally revisit the scene of their earthly existence, is too general, and too deeply seated in men's minds, to render it necessary to dwell at any length upon that branch of the subject. Those who repudiate the subject, as unworthy of the consideration of rational minds, have either not read, not reflected, or else are incapable of grappling with a theme so complicated and so profound. The favourite dogma of these easy-going philosophers, however, viz., that "ghosts" have but two sources—coincidence and the imagination—stands somewhat in our way, and must be swept aside.* Two or three instances, of the

* Although, perhaps, a little out of place, it may be as well to mention here, by way of concession to the sceptics aforesaid, a proof how easily a good ghost-story may be made a better, as exemplified in the apparition of George Washington to Professor Longfellow, related in Miss Mitford's charming *Recollections*, a story which, owing to the celebrity of the parties concerned, really bade fair to acquire a sort of national importance.

On the occasion of one of the visits I had the pleasure of making to the amiable and accomplished poet, at his curious old mansion, once inhabited by Washington, I ascertained the real version to have been as follows:—On a certain evening, while entertaining a party at dinner, the alarm was given of a fire at a short distance from the house, and all immediately issued forth upon the lawn in front, which was bounded on one side by a shrubbery. The fire proved to be in the rear of the mansion, and it was while those assembled were watching certain singular effects occasioned by the lurid glare thrown upon the trees, by the body of concealed fire, that a figure on horseback, looking something like that renowned petrification—II Commendatore—rode quickly from the covert, paused for a moment, and then as

present day, will suffice for this, and they shall be of the briefest in our collection.

Two gentlemen, intimate friends, had gone out to California, met with considerable success, and were returning home in the same vessel. One day (both being in perfect health), one addressed the other in a puzzled tone, saying—

“I really can scarcely account for it, but I have a persuasion I cannot overcome, that I ought to transfer to your care this gold I have with me. If not, I shall lose it.”

The other agreed. Three days afterwards, the former fell ill and died, and upon his friend devolved the unwelcome office of reporting the catastrophe to his relations, and more especially the widow, whom he thought to find in eager expectation of her husband's return. To his astonishment, the lady appeared melancholy and care-worn, and on his attempting to break the tidings, by telling her that her husband was ill in California, she only shook her head and wept.

“He is *dead*,” she said; “I will tell you the very day and hour on which he died.” And she named them.

hastily retreated, before any daring Giovanni of the party had time to accost him. Some one jocularly suggested that it might be the ghost of the illustrious Washington, revisiting his ancient dwelling, and to this hour it remains an open question, whether it was in effect that hero, or some inebriated citizen anxious to obtain a sight of the conflagration and unaware at first of his trespass.

It seemed that on that day and hour, she had, while sitting at a window, seen her husband come slowly across the street, and approach the door. Supposing he had really arrived, she flew to receive and welcome him; but no trace of him could be found. Impressed with an indefinable dread, she noted down the time of the strange appearance, and it was found to coincide exactly with the moment of his decease.

Now, did it so happen that this coincidence of time prevailed in every similar case, the field of explanation might be narrowed down, and even fairly compressed into the one single theory of a *sixth sense*, that species of spiritual telegraph, by means of which the spirit, at the moment of its release, is enabled to communicate with those with whom the bonds of relationship or affection have placed it *en rapport*. This intermediate agency is fully discussed by Dr. Passavant, and is probably identical with the *nervo-electric fluid*, whose powers and properties will be more directly noticed at the close of this chapter; I will, therefore, only here remark that it is described by Dr. Passavant as a nervous ether, which in cases of somnambulism, trance, or the approach of death, when it may become less closely united with its material conductors, the nerves, is capable of being detached, and of acting upon objects at a distance. The doctor illustrates his theory

by instancing the case of a *gymnotus electricus*, kept alive at Stockholm for four months, which, when hungry, could destroy fish at a distance without contact. The *gymnotus*, assuredly, whether moribund or otherwise, does possess this power, and that the human spirit, in certain abnormal conditions—as when but partially liberated from the body—may exercise a similar control over the electric element, is no unwarrantable assumption.

Now let us see how far our next example confirms this view. The hero of the tale is yet living, and as he has not unfrequently alluded, in general society, to the circumstance in question, I trust I am guilty of no breach of confidence or propriety in using it for the illustration of an argument.

On the night that followed one of the actions in the Peninsula, Captain B—— of the — Highland regiment, retired to his tent in a state of much anxiety as to the fate of a cousin, an officer in the same corps, who, from an early period of the conflict, had been missing. None had seen him fall, or a prisoner, and his well known character forbade the slightest surmise derogatory to his honour. Some strange ingredient in the feeling of uneasiness which haunted him, prevented Captain B.'s enjoying the rest he so much needed, and at length, rising from his couch, he walked forth into the air. A fine broad moonlight greeted

him, and, pacing slowly to and fro, he was still following up the thread of conjecture as to the fate of his missing relative, when an object moving in the distance attracted his attention. Regarding it with the habitual watchfulness of one pretty well habituated to outpost duty, he soon recognised a British officer, and as he drew nearer, the uniform of his own regiment, conspicuous, it may be mentioned, by the broad white cross-belt at that time worn. Hardly doubting that it was his relative, B. sprang joyfully forward to welcome him. The other, without quickening his pace, continued to advance, and at length distinctly showed the features of the lost man. They wore, however, a pale and troubled expression, and the young officer walked with a peculiar gait, as though weak or wounded.

A greater surprise awaited B., who had now closely confronted his friend. The middle portion of his white belt, just above the region of the heart, had been perforated by a shot, apparently fired at so short a distance as to singe the object stricken. Captain B. distinctly noticed the jagged edges of the belt and garments, burned and blackened by the discharge. Hardly had he observed this, when the figure began to recede before him. He followed, but the outlines grew rapidly indistinct, and he stood alone on the open heath!

On the following morning, a fatigue party, in

search of wounded, brought in the body of the unfortunate officer, which had been found in a hollow of the field, nearly concealed by some copse. He had been shot through the left breast, precisely in the manner exhibited by the apparition, and his death must have been almost instantaneous.

Thus we find that the condition of Dr. Passavant's theory, which requires coincidence of time, was *not*, as in the former instance, complied with. Some other mode of explanation must be sought. Imagination! True, Captain B. was anxious for the life—perhaps more than life—the honour, of his dear friend, and we need not dwell upon the cases in which eager and excited contemplation has made fools of the senses, and even, though perhaps unconsciously, supplied the very details which have afterwards proved to be correct.

In the year 1809, the fourth troop of the ——th dragoons was quartered at Romford. The mess comprised Captain T——s, Lieutenants S. and Mac N., and Mr. C.

On the evening of the 12th of August, these four gentlemen had been dining together in a detached building, used merely as a mess-house. All attendance had been dispensed with after the removal of the cloth, and not a soul, except an elderly female, who officiated as cook, remained in the house.

A warm discussion between the three young officers was suddenly interrupted by a loud shriek from below, which being repeated, the disputants rose and hurried down to ascertain the cause of the alarm. The cook was discovered kneeling on the floor, her apron clutched over her head, as though to shut out some fearful sight; and she was in violent hysterics.

On regaining some composure, she informed them that she had been alarmed by seeing Captain T——s pass slowly through the kitchen, and enter a kind of pantry, used as a receptacle for pans and dishes, and from which there was no other egress. Supposing, from his wan look and perturbed air, that he was ill, and might in his confusion have mistaken his way to the outer door, she had followed him, and to her horror and surprise, found the little apartment *empty*.

Looking round incredulously on each other, the young men for the first time became aware that T——s had not accompanied them, and one of them, hastily returning to the dining-room, found the unfortunate officer still seated in the same position in which he had appeared to be listening to their conversation—*dead!*

This curious tale was widely circulated at the time, and more than one of the party are still living to authenticate the facts as stated. It may be added, that one of the young men was so much

impressed by the extraordinary nature of the circumstance, that he immediately quitted the army, and subsequently entered the church.

Here we have coincidence, indeed, of time, but absence of the required *rapport*; for it would be simply absurd to argue that any such connexion, or "polarity," as it is called, could have subsisted between poor Captain T——s and the ancient cook-maid! With as little reason can it be urged that an anxious and excited imagination had conjured up the phantom,—Captain T——'s state of health, manner, appearance, &c., having been—up to the very moment of his death—such as to afford no ground for apprehension on the part of his friends.

The following anecdote possesses no other distinctive feature than such as may be observed in the unusual circumstance of the seer concealing from all the world, during his life-time, an event of that character which most who consider themselves to have been similarly visited, find satisfaction in discussing. Perhaps, circumstances considered, no tale of the kind has ever carried with it a more profound impression of self-possessed judgment and simple truth.

On the death of a late American prelate, the pious and beloved Bishop Griswold, there was found among his books and papers, a diary, in which for many years it had evidently been his

custom to note down the leading occurrences of his pastoral and private life. Among these entries appeared one, in substance, if I remember right, as follows:—

“May 2nd.—While seated this forenoon in my study, I saw the appearance of my son George—now absent in the West Indies—enter and approach my table, then presently turn and leave the room. I followed a part of the way down stairs, but suddenly lost sight of him. I cannot account for this.”

No further mention was made of the circumstance in the diary, nor was the bishop known to have ever alluded to it, in conversation with his friends, but under a subsequent date appeared—

“May 23rd.—This day’s mail brought me tidings of the death of my dear son George, *on the 2nd instant*, of yellow fever.”

About five years since, an occurrence took place in a rural locality, though within ten or twelve miles of the metropolis, which came more immediately under my own observation.

A large landed proprietor of the neighbourhood of H—, had, for his head gamekeeper, a man named Hunt, a big, powerful fellow, who had served in the army, and was rather noted in the village for his daring, reckless character, evinced, probably, in the petty wars of a preserve peculiarly exposed to the forays of the modern moss-

troopers of London. Village scandal whispered that Mr. Hunt and his lady lived not always on the happiest terms; that the gentleman's habits were—to use a gentle term—indomestic,—his affections flighty, his attentions discursive—a certain rustic belle of the neighbourhood being, moreover, confidently pointed at as the principal cause of those family dissensions which were hurrying Mrs. Hunt to a premature grave. However that may be, it did so happen that the poor woman became very ill, and, after a short interval, expired.

That rigid system of economy which, according to Hamlet, pervaded his royal mother's household, prevailed likewise in that of Mr. Hunt, for in two days after his wife's decease, he and his inamorata were made one.

They had been married about a month, when, one night, after retiring to rest, an eager tapping was heard outside the lattice. Imagining it was some traveller who had missed the road, the lady rose, went to the window, opened it, and dropped, with a loud shriek, upon the floor.

"What now, girl? What's the matter?" growled her husband.

"Your wife! your wife!" shrieked the girl, wringing her hands, and pointing, as if fascinated, to the open window. "There you *see* her—there! there!"

“Nonsense, you fool,” said her affable lord.
“Go, look again, or shut the window.”

But the woman persisted, and although (being, as the neighbours afterwards assured us, a “plucky wench”), she soon recovered some composure, nothing could induce her to close the window, or to return to bed. At last, with a muttered oath, the man got reluctantly up, approached the window, and staggered back in strong convulsions! He had, as he often afterwards solemnly averred, beheld his deceased wife standing within a foot of the lattice, in the dress she always wore, and gazing full in his face! So utterly was the man’s courage prostrated and his faculties bewildered, by what he had seen, that he was for hours like one suddenly struck with frenzy. The scene was described as striking and terrible in the extreme, to those to whom Hunt’s daring hardihood of character was familiar. He sat in a chair, his gigantic frame quivering with a sort of *agony* of horror, wringing his hands, and crying out—

“My wife—my wife! she is come back to punish me for my sins. What shall I do? what shall I do?” &c.

Nor could the presence and reasonings of the neighbours, who had been summoned by the alarmed woman, prevail, for many hours, to reassure him. In the mean time, the former had en-

tirely recovered her courage, and repeated, in a perfectly calm and collected manner, her full persuasion that it was indeed the spirit of her predecessor that they had seen. About six weeks after the occurrence, Hunt was thrown from his horse, which, by trampling on his face and head, injured him so severely as to endanger his life—a mishap of which the apparition was considered the harbinger. The story is likely to be a village legend for many years to come; and at the risk of a smile from my friend Sceptic, I may venture to add that, during a shooting excursion in the neighbourhood, I took the trouble to walk some distance to the cottage in question, in order—on the excellent principle of cooking the fish where you catch it—to listen to the story of the ghost, standing on that precise flower-bed in the little front garden, where that unsubstantial existence had revealed itself.

It is hardly necessary to direct attention to the differing features by which this circumstance, if credited, would render nugatory either of the proposed modes of explanation. It is curious, at all events, to remark, as we proceed, how, in no individual instance, the three essentialities of coincidence of time, intense *rapport*, and probable excitement of the imagination, combine.

One fine morning, a very few years since—a party of three ladies sat working, and—(it is not

impossible)—*chatting*—in the large bow-window of a mansion near Bromley, in Kent. A wide carriage-drive, unsheltered by trees, and looking, in the July sunshine, exceedingly hot and yellow—swept up to the front. Along this, one of the party who chanced to look up, saw advancing, at a wearied pace, a gentleman resident in the neighbourhood, with whom all the three owned a slight acquaintance. He came slowly on, passing close to the window, in full view of the ladies, who made movements of recognition, but received no corresponding acknowledgment. As he was known to be near-sighted, this, of course, seemed of little import, and, supposing he had gone to a side-entrance, through a conservatory, the ladies sat working and talking, in expectation of his entrance. Ten minutes, however, elapsed—and the lady of the mansion, having heard nothing of her visitor, then rang the bell, and inquired for Mr. —. No one had seen him. Fancying he might be walking in the grounds, the lady desired that search might be made for him, and resumed her occupation, not without some little comment with her friends on the oddity of the circumstance.

Presently, the bell of the village church—half a mile distant—was heard booming through the still air—in the melancholy cadence that speaks of another unit stricken from the great sum of humanity; and, a moment or two later, a servant, entering,

informed her mistress that she must have been mistaken in regard to Mr. —, he having expired that morning, after an illness of a few hours.

This anecdote is perfectly authentic ; and, philosophically considered, exhibits two points worth notice—the absurdity of attempting to account for appearances of this nature, by attributing them to freaks of the imagination, inasmuch as it is beyond belief that any three minds could, at one and the same time, be influenced in a manner so unusual, or have attained to the same extreme degree of receptivity ; secondly, it presents the anomaly of a spirit revealing itself to parties with none of whom could anything like an adequate *rapport* have been established.

It is thus that the solution of these questions perpetually evades us, almost, as it sometimes appears, at the moment of attaining it—and thus, as the greatest of English poetesses writes—

“ God keeps his holy mysteries
Just on the outside of man’s dream.”

A curious instance of what, in Scotland, would have been termed second-sight, occurred some years since in one of the midland counties ; and as it was attested upon oath, and seemed moreover to receive corroboration from bystanders—is worth rescuing from oblivion. A market-gardener, named Eden—“ Noble ” Eden, as he was

termed, from his fine presence and lofty stature—was murdered at noonday by blows from a hammer such as is used for breaking stones. The brutal deed was committed in the fields at a considerable distance from Eden's dwelling, where his wife was, at the moment of the murder, engaged in ironing at a dresser in the kitchen—a friend standing by.

Suddenly the poor woman started, turned ghastly pale, and sat down. Presently, recovering, she stated that she had seen Robert (her husband) run rapidly past the window, pursued by another man, with averted face, who brandished a stone-hammer over his head as if threatening to strike. The idea that it was anything but what it proved,—a spectral illusion,—never seems to have entered her mind; and so strong was her impression of some evil having happened to her husband, that immediate search was made for him—and his body discovered in a field, the murderous weapon still lying beside him. The circumstance of the vision—though of course excluded from the evidence at the trial of the murderer,—was deposed to, on oath, at the inquest—and may still be in the recollection of the reader.

A well authenticated narrative, called to mind by the spiritual movement, will probably be new to the reader—and, if not useful as illustrating an argument, is, at least, terse and De Foe-like

enough in its tone, to repay perusal. The tale was communicated to the Rev. John Summerfield, by the Rev. Richard Watson, author of *Theological Institutes*. Of the Mr. Mills mentioned in the narrative, Mr. Watson speaks, as an intimate personal acquaintance of his own—a minister of the Methodist Church in England—and a man of the highest moral worth and integrity.

On the circuit in which Mr. Mills preached when in England, there lived a Mr. and Mrs. James, at whose house he was accustomed frequently to lodge. Visiting America for a few months, on his return to his accustomed resort, Mr. Mills was shocked to learn that a recent epidemic had carried off several victims from the neighbourhood, and among them both his hospitable friends. With the orphan children who were still residing in the altered home, he however took up his abode; and, on the night of his arrival, retired to rest in his usual apartment—but in a restless and excited state of mind, such as he had never before experienced.

He had lain for some time, weary indeed, but utterly unable to close his eyes, when, to his astonishment, he heard a loud whispering in the adjoining chamber, once tenanted by his deceased friends, but now, as he knew, unoccupied. He rose and looked into the room. No one was to be seen. Fancying he might have been mistaken,

he lay down again, and endeavoured anew to compose himself to rest. This, however, was more difficult than ever, for the circumstance had recalled to his memory, with strange and sudden force, a singular rumour which had been glanced at by the person, who, meeting him in the village, had first apprised him of the death of his friends. This was, that both Mr. James and his wife had been *seen* more than once since their death!

While meditating on this rumour, the whispering was suddenly renewed; and, again, though with some slight trepidation, he rose and examined the chamber. Nothing, however, was visible. A *third* time he arose, from the same cause—and with the same result—after which he fell asleep, and heard no more.

Now there resided not far from the village, a poor, good old woman, known far and near by the familiar name of "Nanny." To her, on account of her age and excellent character, the preachers, on their circuits, generally resorted; and to her, at three o'clock—the hour of dinner—on the day after his adventure before related—went Mr. Mills. A frugal repast was set before the reverend gentleman, but Nanny herself declined eating, and declared that she preferred attending upon her guest.

Accordingly, Mr. Mills ate, and Nanny watched

him, until his usual meal was finished and grace said. Then she began :—

“ Mr. Mills, I have a request to make to you.”

“ Well, Nanny,” replied the reverend Mr. Mills, “ what is it ?”

“ Why,” said she, “ that you preach my funeral sermon on the next Sabbath.”

“ Nanny !” exclaimed Mr. Mills, looking at her in astonishment, for the good old woman appeared to be in perfect health ; “ have you lost your senses ?”

“ O no, sir,” replied Nanny, “ I know perfectly well what I am saying. At three o'clock in the afternoon on Friday, I shall die.”

“ Nanny !”

“ And though,” continued the old lady calmly, “ you will be some miles from this place, I yet want you to comply with my request ; and, if you have ever known anything good of me that may be serviceable to others, you can tell it.”

“ But,” said Mr. Mills, “ before I promise to comply with your wishes, I should be gratified if you would inform me how you know that you will die on Friday,—this being Tuesday ?”

“ Then, sir, I will tell you. You probably know that reports have been in circulation, that James and his wife have been seen, in different places, by various people, since their death ?”

"True," replied the reverend Mr. Mills, "but indeed I regarded it as no more than idle gossip."

"But, sir," rejoined old Nanny, "*I* saw them both!"

"You saw them?"

"Indeed I did."

"When, my good old friend?"

"This morning, sir, while engaged in sweeping my entry, I happened to glance along the road, and then saw two persons approaching, who seemed so strongly to resemble James and his wife, that I instantly stopped my work, and gazed steadily at them. They never slackened their pace, but came close up to me; and then, though indeed I knew it before, it proved to be, in good truth, James and his wife."

"Why, Nanny, were you not afraid?"

"Afraid, sir! Of *what*? No, indeed, I was not afraid. I knew them both too well in this world. They were kind, good people, here; and I was quite certain they had not become bad since they quitted us."

"Well, Nanny, what passed?"

"Well, sir, as I was saying, they came close up to me—and I said, 'Mr. James, is that you?' And he said, 'Yes, Nanny, it is me. You are not deceived—and this is my wife.' And I said, 'James, are you happy?' And he replied, 'I am, and so is my wife; and our happiness exceeds

anything we ever conceived of in this world.' 'But,' said I, 'Mr. James, if you are so happy, why have you returned?' To which he replied, 'Strange as it may appear to you, there is still a mysterious union subsisting between us and our friends in this world. Nanny, you know that I and my wife died suddenly, in consequence of which it has been supposed that I left no WILL; and in order to prevent some uneasiness which is likely to arise among the children respecting my property, we were permitted to return to this world to inform some person that I did make a will, and where it may be found. We went,' he continued, 'last night, to our former mansion, to inform Mr. Mills respecting the will, but he was frightened, and we could not communicate with him. We now, therefore, request *you* to inform him, as he will dine with you to-day—and we knew *you* would feel no alarm.' 'No, James, I replied, 'I am not alarmed, for I am vastly glad to see you, especially since you are happy.' 'The will,' he then said, 'is in a private drawer' (describing it, and the mode of opening it), 'and the executors reside in the neighbourhood. Request Mr. Mills to return to the house, find the will, arrange with the executors, and settle the family affairs satisfactorily. And,' concluded he, 'we are permitted to inform you, Nanny, that on Friday next, at three o'clock, you will die and be with us.'"

“What did you say in reply?”

“I said, ‘O James, I am vastly glad to hear such tidings. I would it were Friday now!’ ‘Well,’ said he, ‘be ready: for *the messenger will certainly call for you at that hour.*’ And I replied, ‘Don’t fear, James—by the grace of God I will be ready.’ So they left me.”

Mr. Mills listened to this account with no small astonishment, and immediately returned to Mr. James’s house. Without the least difficulty, he discovered the drawer and the will, and fulfilled in every particular the directions he had received. On the succeeding Friday, old Nanny died, and Mr. Mills informed Mr. Watson that he preached her funeral sermon on the Sabbath that followed.

The Rev. R. Watson expressed his full belief in this singular narrative.

To return, however, to argument. We have, perhaps, already dwelt too long on circumstances whose character at least is peculiar; but it was desirable to show how little such occurrences seem amenable to fixed laws; and how, as if to perplex man’s judgment, every successive instance either presents some novel feature—destroys some accepted theory—or leaves some condition unfulfilled. Delay it as we may, the conclusion to which we shall inevitably be driven is similar to that at which the assailants of the spirit-theory have already arrived—that an in-

telligence independent of, and wholly separate from, our own—is revealed. And, since the voice of revelation, and the general consent of mankind at large, have been accepted as evidence in favour of those momentous truths—the existence of a God, and the immortality of the soul—why should not the very same evidence be allowed some weight in regard to the doctrine of the return and earthly manifestation of spirits?

“Why,” asks the martyr-philosopher, in Mr. Warren’s *Diary of a Physician*, “Why should not that Omnipotent Being, who formed both the body and the soul, and willed them to exist unitedly, cause, also, the one to exist separately from the other, either by endowing it with new properties for that especial end, or by enabling it to exercise, in its disembodied state, powers which continued latent during its connexion with the body?”

Influenced, probably, by these, or similar considerations, or unwilling to incur the danger of appearing to define the limits of Almighty power, the opponents of the theory now adopted the wiser course of arraigning the presumed intelligences on the ground of their own demerits; and the attack commenced, much in the same manner as one might file a bill in Chancery—by taxing the responding spirits—(granting them to be what they profess)—with evincing a want of

intelligence wholly incompatible with a more exalted state of being; in fact, that the responses were uniformly frivolous, useless, and uninteresting.

This clearly threw upon the defendant spirits the necessity of either acknowledging the lowness of their order, or adducing contrary proof. Now, as has been fairly shown in former portions of this work, follies have been repeatedly committed by parties professing to be under the guidance of, and in constant communication with, the invisible world. It is, however, equally undeniable by all who have in the slightest degree acquainted themselves with the *facts*—that the great majority of the alleged communications, through *media*, have been of a character very far remote from the suggestions of folly, the dreamings of lunacy, or the dark sophistry and delusions of diabolism.

In refutation of the charge of frivolity, the following extract from a conversation first made public in December 1850, may suffice, premising that it is but as an example of one out of many thousand of a similar description. The respondent, in this case, purported to be the spirit of a Mr. C., a gentleman of high repute for intelligence, energy, and philanthropy:—

“QUESTION.—Mr. C., had the human race a conscious existence before we came upon earth?

“ANSWER.—Soul-matter had an existence, but not a conscious existence.

“Q. Are there any spirits which exert an evil or malignant influence on human actions and conditions?

“A. Yes; but not because they desire to do so, but because of their inferior or gross organization.

“Q. Are there any human spirits which have passed from earth, which are not in a state of progress or improvement?

“A. No; but some progress slowly, having a very gross organization to begin with. * * *

“Q. Are there any spirits in a state of misery or pain, so as to feel their existence a burden?

“A. There are some who have mental suffering, because they did not improve (or misused) their advantages while on earth.

“Q. Are there any who despair of ever attaining the condition of the blest?

“A. They may at times, but not lastingly.

“Q. Does the state in which Mr. C. now is, seem more immediately under the Divine government than *our* condition?

“A. Its inhabitants see more clearly, as they have progressed farther.

“Q. Are there any in that state who disbelieve the existence of the Deity?

“A. They do not disbelieve it, but some do not comprehend it.

“*Q.* Then the Deity is not visible in that sphere?

“*A.* He is nowhere visible. We receive impressions from Him, but do not see Him.

“*Q.* Is this new ability on our part to communicate with the spirit-world a consequence of any change or improvement in the human family?

“*A.* Yes: the human race have become more refined and susceptible (to impression from the spirit-world) than formerly.

“*Q.* Do children, who die in conscious infancy, live in the future state?

“*A.* The moment an infant has been ushered into the world, an individuality has been formed, which continues to exist, providing the physical constitution was perfected—not otherwise.”

Upon another occasion, the following dialogue took place:—

“*Q.* What is the spiritual condition of persons who die insane?

“*A.* Insanity is produced by an unfortunate material organization, or diseases of the body. When the spirit leaves the body, these material causes are removed, and the spirit is free.

“*Q.* Do spirits ever become so perfect as to loose their connexion with this earth?

“*A.* Do people ever grow so old as to forget their youth?

“*Q.* Do spirits retain a tangible form?

“*A.* They do. Their identity is never lost. They appear a kind of sublimated essence; can move themselves by will, and receive impressions from one another by undulations of the atmosphere, in the same manner as *sound* is conveyed here.

“*Q.* Is there such a thing as *marrying* in another sphere?

“*A.* There is such a thing as *mating*, which is a very different thing from marrying. Every spirit has its mate—a congenial spirit—and if not properly mated here, will be *there*.”

Consolation, at all events, for disturbed domestic relations. Sceptic, hold your tongue—“Curious fool, be still.” Whatever may be your private opinion of the doctrine and ideas put forth in these and the like responses, the latter are, at least, not wanting in intelligence, are not frivolous, nor devoid of a certain sort of interest.

Sectarian—eh—though? and, by the way, did not Emanuel Swedenborg affirm that in this very present year, 1852—if *ever*—his religion would prevail? It may have been so stated. I believe it to be all nonsense. But, at all events, persons of all churches and creeds have lent themselves to this “movement.” One of the most remarkable *media*, in answer to a question “which religion was the true one?” answered—“None are perfect; but the Roman Catholic Church is nearest to the truth.”

A testimony received by the latter Church in a most ungracious spirit, inasmuch as her teachers have, with much anxiety, warned their hearers against yielding any sort of credence to the new manifestations.

And a friend, dating July, in the present year, writes that the clergy of the "New Church" have, as a body, discouraged the spiritual philosophy, not so much as questioning its origin, as distrusting the character of the spirits concerned. And further, I do not mind telling you, my dear Sceptic, that there *are* people (like ourselves, no Swedenborgians), who, while carefully eschewing any adherence to his cumbrous and obscure system of theology, taken as a whole, yet firmly believe that many of his hitherto contemned doctrines, in relation to the nature, form, and organization of the human soul, the immediate connexion of heaven with earth, and the realization of spiritual communication, will shortly obtain a more general recognition.

I will now, Sceptic, direct your attention to a very remarkable circumstance, communicated to me on the authority of a gentleman of high intelligence and considerable habits of observation, who has lately returned from a tour of several months in Iowa,—Mr. James Sargent, brother of Mr. Epes Sargent, the well-known *litterateur*, of Boston.

Mr. Sargent's route lay principally through tracts of country most remote from the influences of civilization. He was, for a portion of the time, surrounded, almost exclusively, by an Indian population in a state but little removed from barbarism. It need hardly be added, that no vestige of literature (even to the establishment of a district post for the benefit of travellers), had ever penetrated to these wilds. No means for the dissemination of information and opinion existed. Yet Mr. Sargent found that *the rappings, and all the other spiritual manifestations, were of common occurrence.*

It was not by any means unusual, on entering a log-cabin, to find the good, simple people seated round the rude table, upon which raps were being made, and replying, in the usual mode, to questions put by the auditory. There were to be found, moreover, both writing and talking (clairvoyant) *media*, and these in considerable numbers.

The villagers, themselves, appeared to be in total ignorance of the nature and character of the phenomena; only replying, when questioned, that they "did not understand it"—"didn't know but what it might be the devil," &c.

These sylvan rappings first occurred, it appears, when a number of people were sitting together in conversation, and created no small consternation.

Soon, tables and chairs were moved, tipped over, and lifted, and many other Puck-like gambols performed. The idea that these wonders originated in some superhuman intelligence, seems to have occurred to these unsophisticated beings *naturally*, and without any kind of prompting or suggestion from persons already acquainted with the demonstrations; and, having arrived at this conclusion, and ascertained that the rappings could *reply*, they no longer hesitated to enter into conversation.

One woman informed Mr. Sargent that "the spirits would tell lies—for she had found them out in falsehood—and she did'nt want to have anything to do with them."

Thus we find that, in spots and corners of the earth as much wanting in facilities for trickery and collusion as destitute of objects for the practice of such—the mystery which has puzzled civilization, with which science has shyly coquetted, and for whose destruction church, press, and public have railed, ridiculed, argued, and jested in vain—is calmly flourishing, invested with the like inscrutable properties as on its first manifestation. And where was that? At Hydesville? or among the rude ancestors of these very people, as mentioned at the beginning of this book?

To recapitulate instances in which the working of some independent intelligence has been evinced,

would be simply wearisome to the reader. Proofs that, to use the words of my correspondent, G., these phenomena "*are not produced or controlled by any agency on the hither side of nature,*" have been adduced in sufficient numbers to awaken the interest, or at least secure the attention, of all who do not purposely close their ears, or steel their reason, against the matter in dispute; and to those who *do*, I have not the remotest intention of appealing.

But, my dear Sceptic, I am fully aware that your doubts are by no means dissipated. We "accepted service" on behalf of the spirits, in regard to the species of "writ" you served upon them, and are prepared to show cause at your pleasure.

The charge of puerility and dulness in the responses has been disposed of, but there yet remains another branch of the same objection, upon which very great stress has been laid.

You allude to the more mechanical tricks, the tumbings and tippings of chairs and tables. Surely, some more refined, more poetical, and spiritual mode of manifestation would be in better keeping with these ethereal existences? And, granting all—*cui bono*? Who wants a table tipped?

It *might* be answered, that if the ethereal existences did no more than tip or turn over a chair

or table, but did it in such a manner as to convince us that it is done by spiritual power alone, even then, they will accomplish a great and magnificent work—no less than demonstrating, corroborating rather, the truth of a second existence. “Such, indeed,” writes some one, “would be a greater work than any since Christ; and to me their whole design appears to be this, and nothing more. And can this be regarded as of no moment, when we remember how many there are in the condition of the man who said he most sincerely believed in an existence after death, but would give the world to *know* it?”

One recognizes much significance in the saying of Montesquieu—“*Independamment des idées révélées, les idées métaphysiques me donnent une très-forte espérance de mon bonheur éternel, à laquelle je ne voudrais pas renoncer.*”

But, after all, this lays open before us a field of argument into which I am unwilling, and perhaps in a work of this superficial and didactic character, scarcely entitled, to enter—involving, as it does, a direct inquiry into the nature and mission of these invisible speakers themselves. A few words, however, are necessary. The fact is notorious, and it is therefore almost superfluous to begin by stating that, up to the present time, the spirit-communications have been couched in a tone of the deepest reverence to the Almighty

Cause, and of good-will to mankind. The sentiments they have inculcated appear to be such as, humanly speaking, can scarcely fail to promote both the temporal and eternal welfare of him who frankly adopts and sedulously follows their benign prompting. Nor does my own experience recall one single individual instance in which a contrary course has been pursued—in which any lurking suggestion of evil against God or man can be detected under any mask whatsoever.

Granted, however, that this is not sufficient; we all know that the devil can quote Scripture, and have high authority for believing that he can even be “transformed into an angel of light.” Are we right then (say some of our friends, driven at length to the spirit-theory) in accepting even these seeming faithful sayings at the hands of doubtful beings? Such testimony cannot, at all events, be needful to us, since “if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

This, I am aware, is a favourite text with the objectors above-mentioned; and all that can be said in reply is, that deeper consideration than *they* probably have given it, seems due to a text which, taken *literally*, would infer that the entire New Testament was superfluous and vain.

Again, it is argued that *He* who refused to accept the testimony of devils, though true, may

still be averse to the establishment of the truths of His word in any other manner than that already authorised and commanded to mankind. For that reason, also, we are bound to be cautious in receiving at the hands of these intelligences even affirmation of the holiest truths. To descend to human teaching, how writes, on this vexed question, the able and popular Hawthorne?—

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

There—what do you deduce from *that*? ask the triumphant cavillers.

First, my excellent friends, that it is no small thing to find such a pen as you have quoted acknowledging belief in that spiritual thesis against the which you strove so earnestly. In the next place, he who designs to convince on any matter of conscience or philosophy, must do it by argument rather than by declamation. Here, unhappily, the former ingredient is omitted. In the last place, since you know not by what process of reasoning or of evidence this gentleman arrived at his conclusion respecting the unreliability of the spirits, it may not be out of place to remind you of certain counsel which suggests the examination, for yourselves, of every communication claiming to be of inspired or spiritual origin (1 John iv. 2); in the words of Burkitt, “examine their doctrine by the rule of the word of God, and try from whom they come, whether from the Spirit of God, or from Satan.”

We recur to the apparent value of the physical manifestations, in regard to which it is only just to remark that the sarcasm so freely levelled against the mere *mode* of operation, is wholly misplaced. A great end consecrates the most insignificant operation. Let it be, with all reverence, observed that there are signs, tests, com-

munications, &c., recorded in Holy Writ (see, for example, Judges vii. 6, xii. 6), which, weighed by their outward seeming, may appear to the unreflective mind undignified to the last degree. Nay, there are not wanting things even in the doctrines and ceremonies of the Christian religion itself, that to unsanctified imaginations seem ridiculous and uncouth; yet who that has a realising faith in that religion would, for such a reason, repudiate it?

Should it seem improbable that this mode of communication with another sphere of being should have originated in actions so seemingly insignificant, let us before deciding pause a moment, scan the sources of the mightiest discoveries, and see if in them an analogy may not be furnished, close enough to diminish greatly what may be considered the puerile character of the mode by which evidences of intelligence were first discovered in these rappings. "It is not difficult," says an American writer, "to imagine that a mind in contemplating the omnipotence of that power which holds with a stronger than *iron* grasp, planet to sun, and system to system, should feel its sublime reflections somewhat depressed, if told for the first time that the mighty law of gravitation had its discovery in the insignificant circumstance of an apple being seen to fall to the ground."

Assuredly, it would not be for us to prescribe modes of operation, nor pretend to fathom the cause of such a form of development, in the case of a system of which we as yet know nothing. By their *fruits* we shall know them, not by the first green leaf. There is, in all things, an alphabet to learn. Mr. Coggeshall aptly reminds us, that in the first rudiments of a child's education, we do not give him explanations of astronomy, geology, painting, elocution; nor, in communication with the mass of tender mind, in some Sabbath school, do we address the infant audience on questions of national importance.

The materials and manner of printing, the power of steam, the properties and use of the electric telegraph, all these *existed* centuries before Gottenburg, Watt, and Morse, called them into action; and, as a corollary, argue the spirit-advocates, with some ingenuity,—that the possibility of communication with the world of spirits was not recognised long before the Hydesville manifestations, *was not because such sounds had not previously been made*, but because no one was so impressed by them as to follow out their indications.

A further objection is at hand. Granting that these movements are the work of spirits, *how* is it managed? How can spirit come in contact with matter, and act upon it, as body upon body?

The reply is, that such immediate contact does not, of necessity, take place. The universe itself is material; God moves it with no visible hand. Our Lord wrought physical miracles, using no material agent. An angel caused the stone to roll away from the sepulchre. A prison-gate opened to another, untouched—"of his own accord." The Rev. Dr. Harbaugh, in his already quoted work, refers to the mistaken notion that angels cannot communicate with our spirits in any other way than by presenting themselves visibly, tangibly, or audibly, to our several senses, and points to the philosophic consideration that there may be even material *media*, whereof none of our five senses are cognisant, which yet might constitute an element in which spiritual being might commune with spiritual. This element is that *nervo-electric fluid* discussed by Dr. Passavant. A fine electric fluid pervades all nature. It is almost spiritual, and if this imponderable agent may form the medium of communication, it is thus that the spirit of man does not act directly upon his grosser parts—his physical nature; for, first, the electric fluid inspires the nerves—the nerves act upon the muscles, the muscles upon the bones, and thus the arm and hand come in contact with substances, and move them. Who shall say that the concentration of this sixth element may not be brought to bear upon material substances, so as to

produce sound and motion?*" (for it is in such a field of explanation that, according to Dr. Passavant, must be sought the solution of those curious "coincidences" so frequently recorded, of pictures falling, clocks and watches stopping, at the instant of a death);—that the exercise of will-power on the part of the surrounding intelligences—those sentient beings which, as Milton expresses it, in millions—

"Walk the earth

Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep,"

cannot so disturb and influence the electric *me-*

* A remarkable illustration of this presumed power has just occurred.

Mrs. Lauriston (the name is slightly altered), a lady residing in London, has a sister living at Southampton. One afternoon, as the latter sat at work in her room, three slight knocks were heard at the door. "Come in," said the lady. No one entered; but the knock being repeated, she rose and opened the door. No one was visible.

Without being able to trace the precise combination of ideas, the thought of her sister—then, as she knew, suffering from illness—suggested itself to her mind in so vivid a manner as to induce her instantly to communicate with her friends in London. She received for answer, that at a moment precisely corresponding with that of the alarm, Mrs. Lauriston's disorder had attained a crisis. A sort of trance then supervened; on recovering from which, the invalid stated that, impressed with an eager desire to see her sister before she died,—she had dreamed that she went to Southampton, and knocked at her room-door—that, on the second summons, her sister appeared; but that inability to accost her had occasioned an uneasiness which recalled her to herself.

dium, as at least to originate those concussions, vibrations, or pulsations (as they have been variously called), now attracting notice,—and thus produce sound?

These views, at all events, seem to be partaken by one who has carefully examined the subject, and with his more ample explanation I am tempted to conclude.

“It is admitted by physiologists in general,” says Mr. Fishbough, “that the nervous system of man is pervaded by a subtle fluid or essence, which, being the medium of the will, is the direct instrument of muscular contraction, and consequently of all human mechanical action upon things in the outer world. It is generally admitted that the interior living principle of man, considered as an independent and conscious entity, survives the dissolution of its bodily encasement. If we consider this as a substantial organic *something*, and not a mere intangible ideality, much of the difficulty which stands in the way of a true conception of the case before us will vanish. This interior living principle, then, consists of all the nervous and physical essences which now pervade and animate the body, and constitute the *real* man. At the death of the body, this interior principle is liberated in its organic form, and constitutes the personal structure of what we understand as a *spirit*.”

This is described by the seeress of Prevorst and others, as the nerve-spirit.

Mr. F. then goes on to remind us of a doctrine which, though essentially Swedenborgian, has been treated with respect by philosophers, and received some apparent confirmation through experiment, viz., "that the human body, in common with all other bodies, animate and inanimate, is surrounded and pervaded by a refined *aura*, or what may be termed a magnetic essence or sphere, and which is perfectly characteristic of its own distinctive nature. In man this magnetic sphere not only serves to connect him interiorly with his fellow-man, and, as in most cases, with a greater or less number of spirits of the higher world, but also with the *ultimate essences* of all surrounding objects of the outer world, with the *exterior forms* of which he is connected through the senses."

And his theory is, that the magnetic nature of a person may, under some peculiar conditions, be so related to the general sphere of the spiritual world, as that spirits may with facility come in connexion or magnetic *rapport* with him; and act, *through his magnetic sphere*, upon all physical objects within that sphere, producing almost any kind of sound or motion.

"And," concludes Mr. F., "in the supposition that these phenomena are produced through the medium of the *nervous fluid* (or 'nerve-spirit') in-

stead of the *electric* fluid, we have a rational solution of the apparently electric sensations described above as experienced by the susceptible while the sounds are being made. For as the nervous fluid in our own system is the medium of all normal muscular contraction, so this same species of imponderable essence, supplied from a *foreign* source, and made suddenly to permeate any of our muscular tissues, would give rise to similar contractions, which, being involuntary, would necessarily resemble the slight shocks of electricity. In the presence and under the volitions of spiritual beings, it may, of course, be supposed that this essence, in an active state, would be abundantly supplied."

CHAPTER XIV.

WHO CARES ?

IN the previous pages I have endeavoured, my dear Sceptic, to deserve your confidence, by setting before you the subject of our discussion in every possible aspect, favourable or otherwise, and although your objections have sometimes placed me in the position of seeming to advocate doctrines of which you were inclined somewhat too hastily to dispose, I have, in point of fact, as on reflection you will admit, done nothing of the kind.

By a pleasant fiction of English law (believed in implicitly by everybody but the individual most intimately concerned), the judge is always "counsel" for the accused. Fortunately the latter has but little confidence in that forensic *jeu d'esprit*; and, though his feelings may suffer a little more during that process of sentencing by his judicial

“counsel,” which usually winds up the ceremony, he, at least, expects no more than, in these days, he is certain to receive—*fair play*. And this is the sum of all that, in the matter before us, I have endeavoured to secure. That which appeared, in my judgment, deserving of contempt, I have treated in a corresponding tone; that which was simply suspicious, with caution; that which, in its present aspect, seems worthy of respect, *with candour*.

Let us see what has been proved.

First.—That manifestations of an extraordinary character are rife in the United States, and are becoming familiar in England.

Secondly.—That demonstrations of a similar kind have been known almost from time immemorial, in civilised and barbarous countries alike; their true origin, as in the present instance, never having been ascertained.

Thirdly.—That the American manifestations have been closely watched, carefully investigated, and submitted to every conceivable test, by persons eminently qualified to conduct such inquiries, and whose characters entitle them to the fullest credit. These have decided:—

Fourthly.—That the phenomena present features which render the theory of the employment of mechanic art wholly inadmissible.

Fifthly.—That the recognised laws of electricity

are utterly insufficient to account for—and the properties of that agent inapplicable to—the results obtained.

Lastly.—That the theories of animal electricity, magnetoid currents, nerve-spirit, &c., will not suffice to explain the whole phenomena, while unconnected with some independent intelligence; though where that intelligence is to be sought, and how explained, there is no satisfactory evidence to prove.

At these conclusions so many enlightened and liberal minds have already arrived, that we recognise the last and most remarkable feature of the whole strange history, in the fact of the question being permitted to halt and remain stationary, exactly at the point where profound and anxious interest for the first time really attaches to it! This is the more noticeable, inasmuch as it certainly is not characteristic of our brethren of the Western world to stop short in the prosecution of *any* inquiry which seems to promise unusual results. So, however, it is; and, deprived of all right to question any longer the actual occurrence of these wonders—persons who have been hitherto most active in inquiry, and rigid in scrutiny, seem to have either plunged headlong into the most extended visions of the “Spiritualists,” or, pausing in the hope of some new evidence “turning up,” abandoned investigation to curious and shallow

minds, alike incapable of gleaning new light, or appreciating what they already possess.

Of this latter class, a talented countryman of their own, disposed in a humorous sketch:—

“Our sham philosophers investigate the subject on *this* wise. They summon a spirit, the spirit, we will suppose, of a grandmother.

“‘Of what did my grandmother die?’ asks the inquirer.

“‘She was blown up in a steamer,’ replies the spirit.

“‘No, *sir*,’ says the inquirer, ‘the old lady is still alive and hearty.’

“And, therefore, the whole concern is voted an imposture.”

No doubt, with such philosophers, the matter *is* so regarded. The man had prepared a test—his grandmother—*Aut avia, aut nulla!* It mattered not how much else of new and strange was there; rappings, odic lights, electric sensations, were nothing to him. Ho stood there for his grandmother. The Shylock of the rappers, he would not depart without that venerable bond. If they denied him, fie upon their lesser wonders!

“There is no force in the decrees of”

rappers. In fine, it is, as everybody knows, a natural characteristic of superficial minds to give undue prominence to that which appeals most intelligibly

to their perceptive faculties, and regard with stupid indifference marvels as great, but more refined. Thus, in old time, the Jewish populace would have dictated the miracles that should have power to convince them. And thus, in our own time, when miracles have ceased—among the vulgar, the pugilist is a hero—the philosopher, a fool.

But, the proceedings,—perhaps, it should rather be said—the short-comings, of the other class of inquirers, are infinitely more extraordinary.

A wonder, whatever its agency, has no doubt been wrought in the land. Considered, for the last time, in the light of an undiscovered *hoax*, its marvellous ingenuity, and the incomparable fidelity with which a secret, that must be known to many thousands, among the neediest and most *purchaseable* of the community—has been preserved—raise it beyond dispute—to the dignity of what it has been styled—a wonder. In spite of the hostility and denunciation of the greater portion of the press—the warning tone of the clergy—the ridicule and *insouciance* of the non-reflective portion of society, the subject has gradually won its way through all opposition; and, up to the present instant, added thousands, almost daily, to the number of those who deem it worthy of zealous inquiry. The misfortune is, that these parties go no further in the course reason dictates, than a

certain special point, arrived at which, they either, as has been observed, subside into apathy, or rush into the wildest absurdities. So long as the snapping of joints, the use of concealed magnets, the possibility of mechanical art, the laws and properties of common electricity, &c., were in discussion, they were eager and inquisitive enough. They were learned and disputatious; they broached impossible theories, and, in short, to use the expression of honest Fluellen, "uttered as prave 'ords at the bridge as you shall see in a summer's day." They plunged into argument, and, keeping the ground well under them, ducked and dived, and of course came up again all right, as sound as ever. But, alas! no sooner are those comfortable corks, toe-ology, and the like, cut from their hold, than our eager friends, seized with an unaccountable fit of the shivers, creep trembling to the bank, and are heard of no more.

Ought we, however, to blame those who, having fairly exhausted all natural modes of explanation, evince reluctance to prosecute researches into such unwonted precincts as those which seem now alone left to them? Who would not pause for an instant on the border of that pathless and illimitable ocean on which the poverty of human reason threatened to force these inquirers? Happy they, who, like him who was once "driven up

and down in Adria," past mortal aid, learn in time to embark no trust in perishable helps, nor presume to impose barriers of their own building to the approaches of God to man. It is not, therefore, to the caution of these parties that we would hold up a scornful finger, but to the selfish disregard of the consequences of their desertion, to others; because, having, with all their might, cheered on the less gifted multitude in chase of this wonder, and slipped quickly aside as the path grew slippery—they make no effort to avert the evils likely to result from the indiscriminating pursuit they themselves originated—forgetting that all who urge a popular movement, of whatever nature, whether they abandon it or not, must be held responsible for its due direction.

The language in which these seceders justify their course, is so extremely concise, that it makes a convenient heading to this chapter—"Who cares?" It was, we believe, the *New York Times*, a journal of considerable eminence, that in giving publication to a certain tirade compounded, in about equal degrees, of ignorance, impudence, and vulgarity, made use of the above expression—but, after all, did no more than express the sentiments of the party referred to. Against such a tone, incredible as it is, when we consider the circumstances, and the age, in which it is assumed, it is

the duty of every honest, right-thinking person, be he British or American, to enter his most emphatic protest.

“Suppose these rappings *are* the work of spirits—who cares?”

There is something so profound in the philosophy, so lofty in the sentiment, so refined in the expression of this brief sentence, that it is worth preserving as a striking instance of what would be termed by phrenologists, editorial “concentrativeness.”

“Suppose these rappings *are* the work of spirits—who cares?”

Who cares if the spirit of some beloved friend does, indeed, “take the vacant chair beside him?” Who cares if the angel-watchers we have reason to believe walk among us, *are* permitted to reveal their presence and their power? Who cares if the powers of evil *are* let loose against us, to mock and to mislead? *Why*, after fighting, inch by inch, against that “supposition” with an obstinacy and *acharnement* that seemed to imply that it was anything rather than an indifferent matter, does our philosopher, forced to its adoption, suddenly find it of no consequence at all? “Who cares?”

Really, now, we might fancy this reckless, rollicking gentleman was referring, easily, to some disputed scruple in the weight of a fat hog! or replying to some discreet tapster who warned him

that *another* gin-sling might possibly be productive of some domestic difference. "What odds does it make?" *What odds?* Probably the slang of the betting-ring, unscrupulous as it is, has never been more remarkably employed. In the computation of the "odds" in question, no better assistance can be offered than is comprised in the words of an American gentleman, in reference to the manifestations:—

"To every mind that has kept itself so free from absorption in worldly pursuits, that it can cultivate a rational interest in the inquiry—*Where are the dead?* this maligned topic cannot be without its claims to candid investigation. Surely the great problem which has pressed so heavily upon so many noble minds through all ages, is not, in *this*, to be regarded with a callous, or what is worse, audacious indifference.

"That these developments accord rather with the instincts of the vulgar through all time, than with the theories of the learned at the present day, is no good reason that we should turn with supercilious scorn from inquiry. Look at the writers of two or three centuries ago—at Baxter, Henry Moore, and many others; and observe how much of their argument in favour of the immortality of the soul, was founded on phenomena precisely similar to those now exciting our astonishment—phenomena which modern science proudly ignores;

but which nevertheless *occur*, as surely as the earth goes round the sun, in spite of the adverse opinion of the men of the church in Galileo's time."

Such is the language of an enlightened expositor of honest convictions, and it would be infinitely more to the credit of those whose calling places them, for the time, in the position of "custodes morum" of the people, did they adopt a similar tone ; or at least refrain from insulting the better feelings of their readers by ribaldry, or affected indifference to a subject which is clearly not susceptible of such a view.

"Who cares?" asks the newspaper scribe.

No class nor character in the vast human family but might contribute something towards the satisfaction of this gentleman's curiosity. The thoughtless, unreflective mind will care ; for here for the first time stretches directly across his heedless path, something which, appealing at once to the lowest and the highest standard of intellect, awakens interest and baffles comprehension. *He*, for one, will not willingly leave behind him, unexamined, so strange a thing.

That the man of science cares, is evidenced abundantly, in the multitude of shapes in which, through lectures or the press, the matter has been brought before the general public.

Philosopher and theologian care, because they may recognise, in this, the opening of another

door towards the inner sanctuary wherein all knowledge resides. The atheist, in spite of himself, must care ; because, even in the faint uncertain light thus furnished, his gloomy dreams must dissolve and perish. That worst enemy of the age, materialism, will possibly care, because the ground on which its professors have built a temple to their own pride and glory, will crumble from beneath them. It will discover that the *ultima Thule* of human knowledge has not yet been reached ; that there may be yet more vouchsafed to the humble investigator, than is dreamed of in the proud philosophy of unbelief ; that the forces which may be weighed, handled, and measured, are not the only ones that circulate through this life-brimming universe.

If the excision from the human garden of this foul weed, materialism,—this, in the words of Sir Humphry Davy, “ cold, heavy, dull, and insupportable doctrine, necessarily tending to atheism,”—be the ultimate result of this new philosophy, motley, chaotic, nay, repulsive as its elements may yet appear, how great a boon to humanity will be from thence evolved !

“ It is time,” says Dr. Leger, in a passage worthy of deep attention, written in total ignorance of the “ spiritual ” phenomena, “ that a philosophy, worthy of such a name, should find, in the conditions of the actual existence of principles, the

natural and undeniable basis of the truths that religious revelation prescribes as duties. It is fully time that our legislators, enlightened on the true constitution, not only of primary elements, but of man himself, would look into nature for the model of a charter, the importance of which should not consist in the fugitive interests of the present moment, and could ground upon the indestructible laws of universal harmony the wisdom of those which are to govern society.

“That period will arrive only when physicists and chemists will cease to consider as ‘*essential properties of matter*’ that which is only the manifestation of ‘*immaterial principles*,’ to which it merely gives palpability. Then, and only then, truth will banish from the realm of science ‘*absolute materialism* ;’ that is not to be admitted there more plausibly than in religion ; and ‘*matter*,’ reduced at last to its real worth, will descend from a throne which it has but too long occupied.

“Materialists avail themselves of the proposition: ‘*nothing can be made out of nothing*,’ as being an incontrovertible truth. But let us understand each other.

“According to you materialists, ‘*matter*’ is everything, ‘*immateriality*’ nothing. According to us, ‘*matter*’ is not everything, and ‘*immateriality*,’ for being imponderable, is, nevertheless, something. According to you, God cannot exist,

on account of being '*immaterial.*' According to us, God does exist, although '*immaterial.*' According to you, there is no '*power*' but in '*matter.*' According to us, there is no '*matter*' without a primary '*power*' necessarily out, and distinct from it.

"In your fallacious, uncertain, and inconsistent doctrine, you misplace the principle of activity—'*power,*'—to enclose it, of your own private authority, in brute matter, and you reduce it to the limited proportions of the latter. Then, again, granting that '*matter*' is passive and blind in its nature, you, nevertheless, endue it with a kind of spirituality, with a powerful something, to which you give the names of '*physical forces,*' '*chemical affinities,*' and '*essential properties.*'

"According to our doctrine, the absolutely incontrovertible truth is:—that, in nature, nothing is really '*powerful*' but that which does not need a foreign impulse to cause, continue, or suspend motion; and that which is consequently entirely free, and possesses *consciousness* of its liberty."

If the politician will "care," depends upon whether the ultimate effect upon the public mind will be to elevate or brutalise that plastic mass, and which of these results is most in accordance with his own or his party's peculiar views. But there is one variety yet of the world's citizenship, fortunately not yet extinct—no, nor even *rare,*—the

true philanthropist—who would not view with the indifference prescribed by the *New York Times*, the abject submission of his fellow-men to decrees and revelations acknowledged to be of supernatural origin, but whose reliability is unascertained.

Fashionable writers would have us believe that in the age in which we have the honour to flourish, attention is not easily enchained, nor belief lightly won. This is the pert self-sufficiency most strongly characteristic of the aforesaid age, than which anything more insanely credulous, more completely devoted to miracle-mongering of the most unlimited description, it is difficult to conceive. The wonders of art and science have evoked a spirit of reliance upon scarce comprehended things, which, if abandoned entirely to its own impulses, may lead to the most dangerous and fatal consequences. And who will be responsible for them? Surely those whose province it pre-eminently is to complete the work of discovery and analysis, the scattered elements of which may be as baneful, as the entire body, studied, explained, and subjected to the control of reason, may be conducive to man's temporal and eternal good.

These manifestations supply us with a somewhat alarming proof of the extreme imperturbability with which science, immersed in its own peculiar speculations, would see mischief running riot in the world, without an effort to arrest, or

even discourage its fatal course, beyond what may be conveyed in a sneer or a supercilious smile.

So long as this attitude of indifference is preserved, so long, and so long only, are the spirit-manifestations really fraught with danger.

Let us, by way of example, trace the history of a convert to the spirit-theory.

Mr. B., a sincere, but not strong-minded man, hears rumours of some renowned *medium*. He attends a circle. Strange things occur. Inexplicable sounds are heard. A bell rings of its own accord. The name of a correspondent, whose letter is in his pocket, known only to himself, is spelled out. A table, a chair, a cradle, move without the application of visible force, &c., Mr. B. walks away, in a state of bewilderment. On the following day, he waits first upon the clergyman, next the physician, of the precinct, and requests them to furnish him with a theory of explanation. The counsellors smile; the doctor, indeed, laughs loudly, and both tell him that all is legerdemain, and assure him that Signor Blitz, or any other practised sorcerer of our day, can execute still more astounding feats. Mr. B., after further and more rigid investigation, is nevertheless convinced that the phenomena he has witnessed are genuine; and that the *media* are as ignorant as himself of the mode of their production.

Now both the clergy and the faculty having clearly decided in ignorance and error, the bewildered B. is driven perforce to accept that solution of the difficulty to which the manifestations themselves have, from the first, adhered, viz., that they are spiritual. Once to accept this version, is to increase hourly in the faith; and short is the space before he reposes *implicit* confidence in the revelations accorded to him. He no longer dreams of testing the spirits—of questioning their reliability. He is, in effect, wrought up to a pitch of mental excitement; the next forward step from which is to the lunatic's cell, that melancholy bourn to which there is too much reason to apprehend these spirit-doubtings have conducted more than one victim already.

Now, had the phenomena received from the outset a calm and patient attention,—a close, philosophical consideration,—such calamities never could have occurred. Had science condescended to investigate, before pronouncing its arrogant decree that these phenomena should be spiritually *impossible*,—no room would be left to the unlearned for cavil. Can we wonder that reasonable beings will not be commanded—without knowing *why*—to regard in the light of a silly humbug, unexplained signs,—communications in accordance with the admitted dogmas of natural

and revealed religion, and proof upon proof of an insight and intelligence, apparently transcending humanity ?

It is the *laches* of science, and almost that alone, which has driven men to the supernatural, for a solution which it is yet possible may be under our very noses.

How then is the evil to be averted ? Not, surely, by pretended ignorance of what is passing—for the silence and neglect of the learned and educated classes will not prevent those less favoured from resorting to what is, of all things, best calculated to awaken their interest. Not by legislative interference—for though our law (like the absurd enactment of the Code Napoleon) may possibly, by a strained interpretation, be so far exercised as to prevent these manifestations being turned to pecuniary profit—it can in no degree restrain their practice and dissemination in private. Not by ridicule,—for to many who remember how frequently derision has been the portion of what is true and holy—this would be rather a commendation to favour and sympathy. Not by open invective,—for that is foreign to the taste and temper of the age.

Inquiry and demonstration are the sole instruments whereby the safety of the uneducated, the credulous, and the superstitious, is to be secured ; a fact so *prononcé*, that the only wonder is how

the subject could have escaped receiving, long since, the justice its grave attendant evils deserved.

In America, where the principle of progress is not only more fully recognised than with us, but actually, as it were, wrought into the very springs of action,—it is hardly to be expected that science, in its eager course, would pause to keep in view those minute details which contribute to the perfection of wisdom's work; and which are, in the case to which we are referring, peculiarly essential to consider. America is in its fatigue-dress, laboring, not with basket-work, nor *or-molu*,—at the huge foundations of a state, destined—so far as human foresight can extend—to be, in no distant generation, the citadel and heart of the world. Grandeur of conception, and extent of operation, become at last, in the eyes of a nation thus, as one man, employed—features vital and essential to every new scheme or discovery, be its nature what it may. Now and then, no one will deny, they fling us a block or two of raw material, hewn as it were from some giant quarry, which, in our calm and ordered workshops, resolves itself into a marble statue, whose every vein breathes life. May not even *this* be one? They cannot, or have neglected to, clothe it with any recognisable form—earthly or celestial. A shapeless mass it is, as handed hither. The greater need,

therefore, for the application of such tests as may henceforth enable men either to despise the idol, or worship the God; either unite in condemnation of an impious artifice, or in recognition of a new example of the power, the love, and the wisdom of Him who created all things, visible and invisible.

In the mean time, however, there are a sort of folk on this side of the green Atlantic, to whom it may be as well to dedicate the few concluding lines of this extended treatise. I allude to the "fashionable," not the scientific, despisers of the American manifestations; those who, were it not a trifle *mauvais ton* to patronise anything American, would adopt the tone, and perhaps the expression, of our friend the *New York Times*—"Who cares?" &c. Such are they, who, lost in admiration of Miss Martineau's masculine grasp of mind, readily forgive her atheism,—who, weeping over the touching immorality of *La Dame aux Camellias*, gloating on *Candide*, or the seductive page of Sue, raise their long white fingers in holy horror at the bare idea of the rapping-spirits of America. Among such elegant hypocrites, the bitterest, if not the most dangerous, enemies of religious truth have ever been found. The same selfish spirit which induces, for example, my noble neighbour, the lady Disdain, to order out her horses and servants each Sunday morning, and

keep three souls from God's temple, rather than move her own elegant person one hundred yards thither; that same spirit which prompts another accomplished person, under the influence of a temporary attack of *Uncle Tom-dom*, to dictate virtues and charities to women of another land, which she refrains from practising among the unhappy crowds that parade the streets, and occasionally perish upon door-steps, in her own; this contemptible and pharisaic spirit finds its readiest vent in disdain of what it cannot comprehend. They "cannot understand" how any person of decent education (yourself, perhaps, Sceptic, or me), can listen, &c. Most true. They cannot. No one has taxed them with evincing the very slightest impatience under those easy panniers, ignorance and mental sloth. Why then indignant? It is rather *we* who should complain—for these maundering and querulous lamentations interrupt—if they cannot arrest, the search for truth. The fool is welcome to the play-ground, only so long as his senseless bawlings do not disturb the student within; nor must our accomplished friends conceive that, albeit their Italian accent is unexceptionable, and that the mysteries of tambour and *crochet* are no mysteries to *them*—they have absolutely exhausted the springs of science and of art; and that no well-bred individual of either sex can

possibly desire to set foot in advance of them. Of dearer interest to the true philanthropist, is one untaught mind, than legions of these finished beings whose capacious intellect expands itself in immortal stanzas in the Book of Beauty; whose charity smiles sweetly in a pink bonnet, at the fancy-fair; whose moral and religious acquirements are founded on the secure basis of French philosophy; and whose entire nature is so exquisitely polished and beautified, that (as in the case of some "restored" Claude or Poussin in the National Gallery), there becomes visible a little more of the inner self than is for their respect or praise.

But—

I know, my dear Sceptic. I have done. I thank you for your society and attention; and rejoice to think that we part—if not absolutely coincident in opinion—yet learning to respect each other's persuasion. Like Glaucus and Tydides, we war no more with each other.

Enough Bostonians to thy tongue shall yield
 In the rich harvest of that ample field—
 Enough of Englishmen, my pen shall bore—
 But Sceptic and myself dispute no more.

Shade of Homer! forgive me—I do but revenge
 on thine interpreter his injuries to thee!

THE END.