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Bd. Dec. 1872.



AUTHORIZED EDITION

HISTORY

OF THE

STRANGE SOUNDS OR RAPPINGS,

HEARD IN ROCHESTER AND WESTERN NEW-YORK,

AND USUALLY CALLED

THE MYSTERIOUS NOISES!

WHICH ARE SUPPOSED BY MANY TO BE

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD,

TOGETHER WITH ALL

THE EXPLANATION

THAT CAN AS YET BE GIVEN OF THE MATTER.

ROCHESTER:

D. M. DEWEY, ARCADE HALL

1850.

Phil 7054.93

1853, Oct. 13.

Wm. C. C. C. C. C.
of Cambridge.

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PREFACE.

The publisher of the following pages believes he is discharging an important duty in spreading before the community *facts*, in relation to the mystery which has interested so many people, in western New York and other places, during the past two years. He has had many opportunities of hearing the sounds, purporting to be made by spirits, and of witnessing numerous manifestations, which to him are wholly unaccountable. During one of his visits at the house in this city where the rapping and intelligence of the invisible agent have been most surprising, he enquired of what purported to be "the spirits," if it would be proper for him to publish an account of the subject. The answer was in the affirmative.

The family in whose presence these wonders transpire, also gave their entire consent, and cheerfully related the history of this extraordinary phenomenon, as manifested with them. Their statements are confirmed in every particular, by persons who have been watching the progress of the events related since their first occurrence.

It may here be remarked, that among the thousand stories afloat in regard to the rappings, &c., statements injuriously affecting the character of the Fox family have been made, which are wholly unwarranted, and without a shadow of foundation. Those persons who have known the members of this family for years, emphatically contradict all such assertions.

The undersigned does not undertake to argue, pro or con, in regard to the sounds being made by disembodied spirits, but presents statements

of what has actually occurred, made by gentlemen whose word upon any other subject would not be questioned for a moment, by any person acquainted with them.

The work contains several communications from individuals who thought proper to withhold their names from the public. The writers are men of intelligence, truthfulness of character, and possessed of more than ordinary powers of investigation. The most implicit reliance can be placed in the record of what they have seen and heard. The undersigned, however, is in no way responsible for the peculiar doctrinal conclusions any of the writers have adopted. The publisher is under many obligations to those who have favored him with the result of their personal investigations.

In order that the reader may see what has been heretofore asserted in regard to departed spirits conversing with the living, extracts are given from the statements of Swedenborg, and the Seer of Provost. Extracts are also given from conversations said to have been held by clairvoyants, with departed spirits, showing their proximity to the living; also a brief notice of noises heard in the Wesley family.

It was designed at first to publish a larger work than is now issued, but circumstances have induced the publisher to give only a part of the material counted in the present edition. Early in May another edition will be published, containing many interesting particulars not now given, with a history of other investigations that may be had in the mean time.

D. M. DEWEY.

ROCHESTER, March, 1850

HISTORY
OF THE
MYSTERIOUS NOISES!
HEARD IN
THE FOX FAMILY.

THE compiler of the following pages has taken considerable pains to ascertain the true history of the mysterious sounds, which have attracted so much attention in western New York and other parts of the country. He has heard several members of the family, who lived in the house where the noises first attracted attention, relate minutely the manner in which the sounds first occurred. Certificates have been published, numerously signed, by those living in the immediate neighborhood of the place where these occurrences had their origin all concurring in their general statements in regard to the matter. Those persons who have taken any pains to investigate the subject, are doubtless familiar with the history of the appearance of this mysterious agent. Very erroneous statements have, however, gone abroad—for the information of those not familiar with the facts, a brief history is here given.

The sounds were first heard in a small village named Hyde-

ville, in the town of Arcadia, Wayne county, New York. The house where they were heard was occupied during a part of the years 1846 and 1847, by Mr. MICHAEL WEEKMAN. During this time, Mr. W. states that, one evening, about nine o'clock, as he was preparing to retire for the night, he heard a rapping on the out-side door. He opened it, but saw no one. In a few moments, the rapping on the door was repeated, and was louder than at first. He immediately stepped to the door, and opened it; no person was to be seen. He went into the street and looked about the house, and returned, without seeing any one. Soon the noise was repeated, and, failing to see any person, he placed his hand on the latch of the door, in order to open it immediately, should the annoyance be continued. Again the rapping was heard—he felt the door jar, and sprang into the street. No person was to be seen anywhere, in the vicinity.

Excepting a manifestation to the daughter of Mr. W., then some eight years old, nothing unusual is reported to have been seen or heard by him, while he occupied the premises.

The family of Mr. JOHN D. FOX moved into the house on the 11th of December, 1847. Their former residence was Rochester. They heard the rapping first, the latter part of March, 1848, one evening, after they had retired for the night. It seemed to be in 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; a jar was also experienced 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 31st of March, the neighbors 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 broken 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; she is the one who made her hand go. As fast as she made the noise with her hands or fingers, the sound was followed up in the room. It did not sound any different at that time, only it made the same number of noises that the girl did. When she stopped, the sound itself stopped for a short time.

“ The other girl, who is in her 15th 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 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 it was an injured spirit? to give me the sound, and I heard the rapping distinctly. I then asked if it was injured in this house? and it manifested it by the noise. If the person was living that injured it? and got the same answer. I then ascertained, by

the same method that its remains were buried under the dwelling, and how old it was. When I asked how many years old it was? it rapped 31 times; that it was a male; that it had left a family of five children; that it had two sons and three daughters, all living. I asked if it left a wife? and it rapped. If its wife was then living? no rapping; if she was dead? and the rapping was distinctly heard; how long she had been dead? and it rapped twice."

Mrs. Fox asked if the noises would continue if she called in the neighbors that they might hear it? There was rapping the same as when it was supposed affirmative answers were given. Mrs. REDFIELD, the nearest neighbor, was first called. The children had informed her previously, that strange noises were heard in the house and she went thinking to have some sport with the family. She found the girls very much agitated. Mrs. Fox said, "Mrs. REDFIELD, what shall we do? We have heard the noise for some time, and now it answers all our questions and we cannot account for it."

Mrs. R. heard the sounds and commenced asking questions, which were answered correctly, greatly to her astonishment. She says the girls continued to be much frightened, and she told them not to be afraid; if it was a revelation from the spirit world, it was not to injure them. One of the girls said with much feeling, — "We are innocent — how good it is to have a clear conscience."

Messrs. REDFIELD, DUESLER, HYDE, JEWELL, and their wives were subsequently called, during the same evening. They asked many questions and received answers. Questions relating to the age, number of children, &c., of the persons present, are said to have been answered correctly. Mr. Fox and Mr. REDFIELD remained in the house through the night. Mrs. Fox and her daughters spent the night at the house of one of the neighbors.

A report of the strange noises heard in the house of Mr. Fox, spread throughout that part of the town the next (Sat-

day) morning, and a large number of persons assembled and remained at the house during the day. No noises were heard until evening, when the sounds commenced as before. A committee was appointed to investigate the matter, and a great variety of questions were asked and answered.

On Sunday morning, April 2d, the sounds were heard, and they continued to be made throughout the day. This is the first instance in which they are reported to have been heard in the day time. Sunday evening and throughout that night, no noises were heard.

Several individuals received answers to questions intimating that a murder had been committed in the house, and that the body was buried in the cellar. The following statement relating to this matter is signed by Mr. WM. DUESLER.

"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 bed-room over our heads. It did not seem to bound at all; there was but one sound. I then told Stephen Smith to go right up and examine the room, and see if he could discover the cause of the noise. He came back and said that 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, or thickness, between the bed-room and the cellar—no place where any thing 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. The question had been previously asked, whether it was right that they should dig on that night? and there was no rapping. Then, whether it was wrong? and the rapping was heard. Whether they should dig on Sunday? no rapping; on Monday? and the rapping commenced again. However, some insisted on digging at this time, and dug accordingly, but with no success.

"On Monday night heard this noise again, and asked the same questions I did before, and got the same answers. This is the last time that 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 ground than it is supernatural. I lived in 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 any thing 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, Loren 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."

At one time, when those investigating wished to ascertain a certain name, the spirit was asked if it would rap for the initial letters when they were named. The reply was in the affirmative: and when the alphabet was called over there was rapping at particular letters. Soon the experiment was carried still further, and by request entire names,* and sentences of considerable length were spelled out. A signal for the alpha-

bet is made when the spirit desires to communicate in this way. This signal is five raps in quick succession.

The following brief statement in regard to the manner in which the use of the alphabet, in these communications, was ascertained, is signed by several members of the family:

"During the first inquiries to learn the name of the person who was represented as the injured spirit, it was asked if it would rap at the initials of his name. It rapped in the affirmative, and on calling over the the letters, it rapped at the letters C. R.; and at a subsequent period, David Fox, one of the family, spent several hours in communication with it, and learned the whole name; and afterwards Mrs. A. S. Fish learned that five successive raps was an indication, or signal, to repeat the alphabet, when questions were asked, to which a simple negative or affirmative would not be a correct reply, without qualification.

"It is thus that directions are now given in answer to questions; and often it voluntarily calls by the signal for the alphabet and communicates entire sentences, many of them interesting, and of considerable length.

"MRS. ANN L. FISH,
MRS. MARGARET FOX,
C. R. BROWN,
DAVID S. FOX

"Rochester, March 6th, 1850."

REMOVAL OF A PART OF THE FAMILY TO ROCHESTER.

Soon after the occurrence of the events heretofore related, a part of the family removed from Hydesville to Rochester, and resided with an older sister—Mrs. FISH—who has been a resident of the city some years. The rappings were then heard in both places, and communications were as readily made in one place as in the other. It may here be remarked, that when the sounds first began to attract attention, and during the investigation at Hydesville, they were heard in the presence of any member of the Fox family. They were also distinctly and repeatedly heard by persons who were examin-

ing the house when every member of that family was absent.

It was not long, however, before the noises were made more freely in the presence of the two youngest girls, one named MARGARETTA, the other CATHARINE. When the noises first commenced, Margaretta was about fourteen years of age, and Catharine about twelve. The elder of the two first removed to Rochester. The sounds were made freely when she was with her sister, Mrs. Fish.

Very soon after Margaretta came to Rochester, the sounds attracted the attention of some friends of the family, and they communicated their experience to a few others, who commenced an investigation of the matter. At first, they felt disposed to make known to the public what they saw and heard, and ask the aid of scientific men to solve the mystery. Their statements, made to those who knew them well, and who would not doubt their word upon any other subject, were treated with such incredulity and ridicule, that they generally refrained from conversing upon the subject, excepting with those who had witnessed the manifestations. So few were then acquainted with the subject, that there was no difficulty in finding opportunity for calm and long continued investigation. The character of the persons then endeavoring to solve the mystery—and all of them thought, at first, they could ascertain the trick—places any idea of collusion, on their part, entirely out of the question. If there was deception, they were deceived. The doctrines taught by the unknown, were at variance with the well established belief of those who were asking questions; their early investigations, also, no more agreed with each other, in regard to theological questions, than with what purported to be the "spirit." Therefore, candor compels every one to acquit them of all design in regard to making this unknown agent subservient to the promulgation of any existing creed, or the establishment of any new one.

The rapping was not long confined to one family, in Roches-

test Mr. G——, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a man of unimpeachable character, has heard it, at times, for months, at his own residence, and when no member of the Fox family was present. When it first commenced in his house, answers could be obtained by any two members of his family, standing near each other. No partiality was evinced for any one of the family, until a daughter of Mr. G. was placed under the influence of mesmerism and became clairvoyant. After this, it was necessary for this daughter to be present, or the spirit would not communicate. The sounds have also been made freely in several other families in Rochester; in most of them, however, no communications are obtained. The rapping is also heard and the communications are free in the presence of one member of the family of Deacon Hale, of Greece, in Monroe county.

The next place where the sounds were heard was in Auburn. The youngest daughter of Mr. Fox visited some friends in that city, at whose residence the manifestations were made. It is stated on perfectly reliable authority, that there are some six or eight families in Auburn where the sounds are heard, and in most of them the spirit communicates freely.

It is also stated that the sounds are heard in the family of Mr. Beaver, in the town of Sennet, Cayuga county.

The following is an extract from a communication written from Sennet, and published in the Rochester *Magnet* of Feb. 14th:

“Yesterday in company with a friend I visited the house of Mr. Hermon Beaver, where these sounds have been heard for the past three months. We took seats around a table with the whole family of Mr. Beaver, consisting of himself, wife, daughter and son, a lad of twelve years, whom these sounds always accompany. We then requested the spirits to communicate with us. A knocking was soon heard on the ceiling nearest the table, and from there to the underside of the table. I then proposed that we all place our hands upon the top of the table,

and requested it to communicate by rapping under the table. This was complied with, and the rappings could have been heard by persons outside of the house and several feet from it. After having several communications spelled out for us, we requested that the table might be moved with no visible persons touching it. This was also done, and when it was done, I know no one in the room touched the table, which was moved back and forth several feet. I have heard the mysterious noises in Hydesville, Rochester and Auburn, but never have heard any more loud and distinct, or more willing to answer test questions than these. Hundreds of the inhabitants of this county are daily visiting the house of Mr. Beaver, whose family bear a character where they are known, beyond reproach, and which it will not be safe for an M. D. or ex-editor to assail openly or in private letters and over false signatures."

THE INVESTIGATIONS OF THE SUBJECT.

It is not our design in relating what has been done in the investigation of this mystery, to argue that the sounds and communications are produced by the agency of spirits. The opinions of those who have investigated the subject are given, and the reasons of those opinions. We leave every man to decide for himself. The idea that the spirits of the departed can converse with the living, is so foreign to the education and belief of the majority of people, it is no wonder they are incredulous, on the presentation of such a theory; because an idea entirely new to us is broached, we are not therefore, necessarily, to conclude it is false; neither is it proper to denounce those persons who, having witnessed certain wonderful demonstrations, seek a solution of the mystery, and are willing to devote their time for that object. No man should believe without evidence. Candid men will be willing to examine and weigh the facts adduced. To such, the statements made are addressed. If they shall be able to prove that all

the mysterious sounds, purporting to have been made by spirits, have been made by persons practicing a deception—that the names spelled out and the communications received on various subjects, caused by the shrewdness of young girls—they will show what hundreds have failed to do, after many months of careful investigation.

After nearly a year had been spent by a few individuals in Rochester and vicinity, in investigating the mystery, the following communication was spelled out in presence of several persons who had assembled for the purpose of prosecuting their investigations: "You all have a duty to perform. We want you to make this matter more public." Every individual to whom the message was addressed objected to having any agency in bringing the subject before the public. They knew the odium that would attach to any person who should attempt to prove, in the presence of a public assembly, that the sounds they heard were made by spirits. While speaking of the opposition they would incur, and the difficulties in the way, the alphabet was called for, and the following communication spelled out: "That will be so much the better—your triumph will be the greater." This occurrence took place in November, 1849.

Several of the persons designated to assist in bringing the matter before the community, continued strongly to object, until the most positive assurances were given that the rapping should be heard in the hall, by the audience, in response to the lecturer, and that the result would tend essentially to the better understanding of the whole subject. The lectures were finally delivered by Mr. E. W. Capron, of Auburn.

The following account of the investigations had at that time, appeared in the *New York Weekly Tribune*, of Dec. 8th, 1849.

"Some two weeks since, we were in company with some persons who were getting communications from this invisible communicator when a message was spelled out to us to the import that the matter should be made more public—that the time had arrived for the people to investigate the whole affair

—that it was a thing which will ultimately become known to all men, and that we should immediately take measures to have it investigated. The directions were then minutely given by these spirits, as they purport to be, and which we are willing to believe are, until we have as much proof to the contrary as it required to bring us to that conclusion. These directions will appear in the following history as they were fully and strictly followed. The great object was to start investigation and clear those who had been hearing of it for the last two years from the imputation of fraud and deception.

“Accordingly on the evening of November 14, a lecture was delivered in Corinthian hall, in the city of Rochester, and a full history of the rise and progress of these manifestations given. During the relations of these facts the sounds were distinctly heard by the persons in the hall.

“After the lecture, a committee was chosen by the audience, composed of the following persons:—A. J. COMBS, DANIEL MARSH, NATHANIEL CLARK, Esq., A. JUDSON, and EDWIN JONES.

“On the following evening the committee reported in substance, as follows: 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.*

"After this report, and some discussion on the subject, the audience selected another committee, composed of the following persons: Dr. H. H. LANGWORTHY, HON. FREDERICK WHITTLESEY, D. C. MCCALLUM, WILLIAM FISHER, of Rochester, and HON. A. P. HASCALL, of Le Roy. At the next lecture this committee reported that they went into the investigation at the office of Chancellor Whittlesey, and they heard the sound on the floor, on the wall, and door,—that the ladies were placed in different positions, and, like the other committee, they were wholly unable to tell from what the sound proceeded, or how it was made, that Dr. Langworthy made observations with a sesthescope to ascertain whether there was any movement with the lungs, and found not the least difference when the sounds were made; and there was no kind of *probability or possibility of their being made by ventriloquism, as some had supposed—and they could not have been made by machinery.*

"This committee was composed of Dr. E. P. LANGWORTHY, Dr. J. GATES, WM. FITZHUGH, Esq., W. L. BURTIS, and L. KENYON. 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 was no fixtures about them that could produce the sounds. When satisfied on this point, the committee of ladies tried some other experiments, and gave the young ladies the following certificate:

"When they were standing on pillows, with a handkerchief tied around the bottom of their dresses, tight to the ankles, we all heard the rapping on the wall and floor distinctly.

(Signed),

MRS. STONE,

MRS. J. GATES,

MISS M. P. LAWRENCE.

"In the evening the committee, through their chairman, Dr. Langworthy, made a very full report of their examinations during the day. They reported they excluded all friends of the two ladies from the committee room, and had the examination only in presence of the committee of gentlemen, and ladies

chosen by them. Notwithstanding all this precaution, these sounds were heard when the ladies stood on large *feather pillows*, *without shoes*, and in other various positions, both on the floor and on the wall,—that a number of questions were asked, which, when answered, were generally correct. Each member of the committee reported separately agreeing with and corroborating the first statements.

“Thus, by three days of the strictest scrutiny, by means of intelligence, candor, and science, were the persons in whose presence these sounds are heard, acquitted of all fraud.

“On Friday evening, after the lecture, three of the committee, viz: HON. A. P. HASCALL, D. C. McCALLUM, and WILLIAM FISHER, repaired to the house of a citizen, and pursued their investigations still further. There were nearly a score of persons present. The members of the committee wrote many questions on paper, which no person present knew the purport of, and they were answered correctly. At times they would ask *mentally*, and would receive the answers with equal correctness, and they were fully satisfied that there was *something* present manifesting intelligence beyond the persons *visible*.

“One of the committees tried the experiment of standing the ladies on glass, and failed to get any sounds; but the same was subsequently tried in presence of a large number of persons, and the sounds were as loud and distinct as before, on the floor, as usual.

“Such are the facts so far as public proceedings are concerned, (which is but a small part of these strange occurrences) with the committee’s report greatly condensed.

“Thus the matter stands at present, and whether it is a remarkable phenomenon which will pass away with the present generation, or with the persons who seem now to be the medium of this extraordinary communication; or whether it be the commencement of a new era of spiritual influx into the world; it is something worthy of the attention of men of candor and philosophy.

E. W. CAPRON, *Auburn.*

GEORGE WILLETS, *Rochester.*

Rochester, Nov. 22, 1849.”

The committees named in the foregoing account are composed of some of the most intelligent men in the city of Roch-

estes. They publicly reported they could not discover the cause of the rapping. These reports attracted attention. Candid men began to think it was no ordinary humbug, if men like those who were appointed at the public meetings, failed to detect it. ✓

Since the public lectures, and the reports of the committees in Corinthian hall, thousands have visited the family in Rochester in whose presence the rappings are heard most freely. Many theories are advanced to account for the sounds—but no one, up to the present time, can give any solution of the matter on natural principles. ✓

Investigations are still going on, in the places where the rappings have recently commenced, as well as at the residences of those who have been accompanied by the sounds for a longer time. Some individuals in this city daily hear sounds purporting to be made by spirits, but in consequence of the fear of ridicule, they communicate the fact only to a few friends.

LETTERS FROM PERSONS WHO HAVE INVESTIGATED THE MYSTERY.

Letter from the Rev. C. Hammond.

MR. D. M. DEWEY:

Dear Sir:—In compliance with your solicitation, I will proceed to lay before you a brief statement of what has fallen under my observation, in regard to the “mysterious sounds” and “demonstrations,” purporting to be made by intelligent spirits, who once inhabited an earthly tabernacle. It is quite probable that many others may have had more convincing and satisfactory evidences of the real presence of their departed, or, as I should say, deceased friends, than myself; yet I am free to acknowledge my inability to account for these marvelous manifestations by any law, recognized in science or

philosophy,—nor am I aware of having an organization so extra-credulous as to admit theoretical propositions, without facts to sustain them. If, therefore, imposition and deception have “humbled” me into a conviction that the “sounds” and “demonstrations” which I have witnessed originate in any cause other than those assigned in this narrative, the person who shall disclose the mystery and detect the fraud, will receive my grateful acknowledgments.

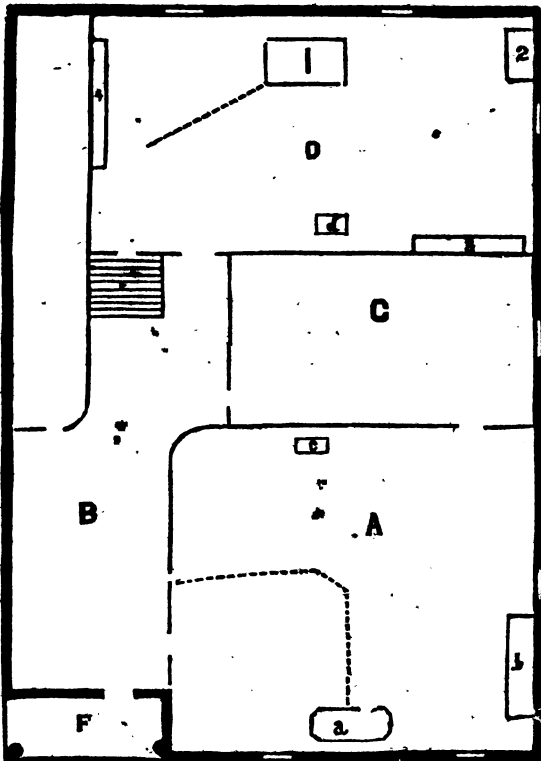
In the early part of January last, in company with other persons, I gained an introduction to the family in this city in whose residence these sounds had been heard. They received us politely, and seemed rather more cheerful than what I had supposed would be natural for those who were hourly exchanging communications with the spirits of the revered dead. A company of twenty or more persons had assembled—the “three sisters” came into the room—the sounds were heard—and through the medium of the alphabet, they, and about half of the company, were directed to retire to another apartment. Our company, in the absence of the “three sisters,” whose presence is generally deemed essential to these spiritual communications, were all seated closely around an ordinary dining table, when one of the ladies, bowing her head, inquired in rather a solemn tone, “Will the spirit answer questions now?” No response being made, I felt the disappointment of the lady, and was half inclined to smile at the ludicrous scene; when the searching glance of her suspicious eye falling upon me, bade me maintain my usual gravity and respect toward the company, and the occasion which had called us there. After several ineffectual attempts to get responses, the sounds were heard, and the company generally were privileged with answers to their respective interrogatories. I availed myself of the opportunity, but gained no other satisfaction than a prompt assurance that all my “test questions” should be answered when I should come there again. I went away skepti-

cal, though unable to account for the "sounds," which caused the floor occasionally to vibrate under my feet.

On my next visit I was much more successful. 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. However, as the spirit promised to satisfy me by other demonstrations when I came again, I patiently awaited the opportunity.

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 eight 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

DIAGRAM OF MRS. FOX'S HOUSE.



- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| A Front Parlor. | 1 Table moved in presence of Hammond. |
| B Front Hall. | 2 Bureau " " " |
| C Bed Room. | 3, 4 Lounges " " |
| D Sitting Room. | a Center table has moved, see line, |
| E Flight of Stairs. | b Piano Forte. |
| | c Stove. |

See Rev. Mr. Hammond's letter, page 27.

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 were situated, when the question was asked, “Will the spirit move the table back where it was before?”—And 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 favor of one side, and then the other. But it regained its first position. In the mean time the “demonstrations” grew louder and louder. The family commenced and sung the “spirit’s song,” and several other pieces of sacred music, during which accurate time was marked on the table, causing it to vibrate—a transparent hand, resembling a shadow, presented itself before my face—I felt fingers taking hold of a lock of hair on the left side of my head, causing an inclination of several inches—then a cold, death-like hand was drawn designedly over my face—three gentle raps on my left knee—my right limb forcibly pulled, against strong resistance, under the table—a violent shaking, as though two hands were applied to my shoulders—myself and chair uplifted and moved back a few inches, and several slaps, as with a hand, on the side of my head, which were repeated on each one of the company, more rapid than I could count. During these manifestations, a piece of pasteboard, nearly a foot square, was swung with such velocity before us as to throw a strong current of air in our faces—a paper curtain attached to one of the windows was rolled up and unrolled twice—a lounge immediately behind me was shaken violently—two small drawers in a bureau, played back and forth with inconceivable rapidity—a sound resembling a man sawing boards, and planing them, was heard under the table—a common spinning-wheel seemed to be in motion,

making a very natural buzz of the spindle—a reed articulated each knot wound upon it, while the sound of a rocking cradle indicated maternal care for the infant's slumbers. These were among many other demonstrations which I witnessed that evening, amid which I felt a perfect self-possession, and in no instance the slightest embarrassment, except a momentary chill when the cold hand was applied to my face, similar to a sensation I have realized when touching a dead body. 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, inst., 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.

Yours truly,

G. HAMMOND.

ROCHESTER, Feb. 22nd, 1850.

The following letter, written by one who has had many opportunities of investigating the subject, we are permitted to publish:

JANUARY 29th, 1850.

DEAR DOCTOR B.:

I received your letter yesterday requesting me to furnish you some account of the mysterious rappings, in the city of Rochester.

I will endeavor to comply with your request, so far as an hour or two of leisure will enable me to do so. I had heard of mysterious sounds in Wayne county and subsequently at Rochester, but it had not excited interest enough in me to inquire into the particulars of it, but treated it as I would any of the idle and marvellous stories which are the daily offspring of fanaticism or folly. I was in the city of Rochester sometime last fall, and saw a card, announcing to the public that a lecture would be given that evening at Corinthian hall on the subject of the mysterious rappings. I had just curiosity enough to attend. While the lecturer was speaking, he was responded to by frequent raps apparently on or under the platform on which he stood. There were seated near him several young ladies, and it was said that these sounds would only be heard when they were present. A committee that had been investigating the subject that day to discover the origin of the sounds, then reported. That committee having failed to detect the cause, the audience resolved to raise another committee that should continue the investigation the next day, and report the following evening. This was accordingly done, and that, and afterwards another committee, investigated and reported. I need not detail the many expedients resorted to by these committees to ascertain the cause of the sounds. Suffice it to say, that neither the legal, medical, nor scientific skill of any and all the committees, could discover any art or machinery by which the sounds were produced. I was very

skeptical as to the employment of any supernatural agency, and thought that by a very critical investigation at different places the secret might be discovered. As the young ladies and their particular friends challenged the strictest scrutiny, and alleged that they were suffering under an unjust public censure as imposters, I determined to ascertain and expose the whole mystery.

I had good reason to suppose that the task would be a difficult one, and commenced it as I would have done a difficult problem in mathematics, determined that I would not be deterred by any appearances of the supernatural, nor the jeers and "humbugs" of the material world.

But I must be very brief in the detail of my experiments, and can only give you an item or two under several heads of inquiry. This investigation was prosecuted at different times as I had leisure when in the city, and almost always in the presence and with the assistance of men of intelligence and integrity, among whom were physicians, lawyers and scientific men of Rochester and other places in western New York, and from other states; for this phenomenon has attracted many persons from a great distance and excited much interest in many places, and in other states, and this interest has so much increased of late that the crowd of persons who daily present themselves at the residence of the young ladies, prevent all opportunity of quiet and satisfactory efforts to solve the mystery. Answers to questions are by raps. If a question can be answered by the affirmative "Yes," a rap, and sometimes several are received as such an affirmative. If the question can only be answered by words or sentences, a signal is made for the alphabet by five or more raps in quick succession. The interrogator then calls over the letters of the alphabet and on naming the one which is required a rap is given, and this process is continued until whole words and sentences are spelled out. In the first place, many test questions were put

some by writing them down, some mentally, and some by speaking. The answers were generally correct. In answer to a question as to a certain number the raps were four, with a short interval and then repeated. Eight would have been the right answer. I insisted to the company that the answer was wrong. The signal for the alphabet was then made by raps, and on my repeating it, this sentence was spelled out: "You do not always understand what I mean." "Very well," I replied, "will you now answer my question?" The number was instantly given by eight successive raps. Many questions were put by myself and others respecting deceased friends. These were generally answered correctly, so far as I could ascertain by the expression of the interrogators, and sometimes an effecting event would be narrated by this singular method of communication, that would cause the interrogator to weep. I was somewhat surprised at these results, and endeavored to account for this apparent superhuman knowledge by giving to clairvoyance all it claimed, and supposing that these young girls could throw themselves into a mesmeric state at will, and in that state divine our very thoughts; but I was forced to abandon that for two reasons, and one was, that these girls exhibited no appearance of a mesmeric state, but were sometimes even conversing with persons who sat at the table while the interrogator was conversing with the rappers; and the other was, that clairvoyance could not produce the sounds, which were sometimes on the table, on the floor, in a bureau, in the walls apparently, and sometimes at all these places at the same time and with considerable violence; and the same whether in the house where the girls resided or at any other house at which they were invited to attend.

I then concluded to change the course of inquiry, and make the unknown the exponents of this new wonder. They signified a willingness to meet me in that way; and at different times I asked many questions, the answers to some of them I

will give you in substance, and some word for word. I should prefer giving all these in the colloquial manner in which they were obtained, but it would occupy too much space. They informed me, "We are spirits of deceased persons. We enter the spirit world just as we leave the body. Some good and some evil. The evil, continue evil; and the good, good; and we are in a progressive state either way." I had heard it stated, that certain sects were attempting to use these communications to sustain their peculiar views, and some to disprove the authority of the Holy Scriptures. This induced me to enquire, Do persons ever converse with evil spirits? Answer in the affirmative. Have persons been deceived in that way? Answer, They have. I might add much on this point, but my limits will not permit, and I would only say, that in my opinion, no well grounded facts have been elicited from this singular oracle to cast any suspicion, even, on the divine oracles. How can we distinguish the evil from the good? You must prove them. How prove them? If they counsel that which your moral sense would determine to be wrong, you must not follow it, and only converse with the spirits of persons in whom you had full confidence while in the body. Are spirits equal in knowledge? They are not. We told you that we enter this state just as we leave the body. Do you mean that spirits are learned or ignorant as persons were when in this life? We do. I had at several times received communications in which the words were misspelled, and persons sitting at the table made the remark: "Well, I don't believe in spirits that can't spell right." These remarks would cause some merriment, and at one time the alphabet was called for by the usual signal and the sentence spelled out: "You need not laugh at him. He never learned to spell." How may we know what spirit we are conversing with? You must inquire for the spirit of some deceased person and ask for its signal. Have all spirits their distinct and different signals by which they may be known?

Answer in the affirmative. The signal consists of raps, varying in number, and emphasis, so that in hearing a great number of different signals called for by persons who were leading in the interrogatories, I never heard any two that were precisely alike. In asking questions which may be answered by the syllable yes, a rap or two is taken for an affirmative answer. This is generally so intended I believe, but not always as most persons suppose it to be. I have noticed that a low and apparently hesitating rap should seldom be received as an absolute affirmative, and in such cases I have said, You do not answer me promptly, what am I to understand by the answer? Doubtful. You did not mean an affirmative then, but doubtful? Answer, Yes. Can spirits converse together? Answer in the affirmative. Can one spirit instruct another spirit less intelligent? Answer in the affirmative. Can spirits instantly change from one place to another? Answer in the affirmative. Have spirits power over matter to move or effect it? They have. On being requested to give an evidence of such power I have seen tables, chairs, bureaus, move at different places and sometimes against the apparent efforts of several gentlemen: and in the day time with the usual light and without any thing to obstruct the sight. And sometimes the sounds which are produced by mechanics in using different tools, such as a saw, hammer, plane, chisel, &c., are very closely imitated—apparently on or about the table around which the company is seated; also the creaking of the timbers of a vessel, when laboring against the waves, in a storm, at sea; the working the rigging, pumps, &c. These representations are usually made for persons that are familiar with such sounds and at their request.

At one time, when some of these sounds had been unusually loud, I inquired the object of them. The answer was, "To convince you." I said, "You cannot be spirits, for according to my theory, spirits can pervade matter, and pass through it, but cannot move it, and handle it, as this table has been moved."

Reply. You were mistaken: we can and do affect matter at our will. I have heard it said that you sometimes manifest yourselves to persons as by the touch of the hand, &c. Is it so? It is. But it is said that you make such manifestations in the dark only; this leads to suspicions, with all the precaution that can be taken. Why not do this in the light? Because, that in such manifestations we assume a material form, and it would frighten. We do not wish to alarm, but to convince. These manifestations are often made on the feet of persons sitting around a table, in such a way that none of the company could do it without detection.

I said, You appear to be possessed of great intelligence, what is your mission? To benefit mankind. How so? By imparting important truths. Why do you limit your communications to these persons, and by such a tedious process? We do as we are permitted; we are under the control of a higher power. Will you always be thus limited? We shall soon be permitted to converse through many persons, and in a different way. Why not now? The people are not yet prepared. But I must not enlarge, or I shall write a book instead of answering a letter. I have given you, after all, but a very imperfect sketch of this mysterious something.

These inquiries, as I before stated, have been prosecuted with the aid of gentlemen of science and skill, and moral integrity; questions answered, and other manifestations made as before described in the presence of many persons, almost daily, for months, and yet no clue has been obtained to solve this wonderful enigma. You ask my opinion—I give you facts, and Yankee like, instead of giving it, I ask yours.

I will, however, give you some of the reasons offered against it by persons who have not investigated it at all, or but very superficially. And the first that I would name is, "it is a humbug." This is a very common argument, and it is always used against any new thing. This argument is conclusive in the

estimation of a great number of persons. But for those who will not be satisfied with that, it is argued that none but fanatics and skeptics, and persons greatly gifted with the marvellous go there to investigate it. This is often said in the very face and eyes of facts to the contrary. Another argument is, that it cannot be anything but a hoax, because it attends these young girls, and not some great man. By these, many more persons are led to believe that it is some common place jugglery or slight of hand. But, after all, there are some minds that will not be satisfied without a learned and philosophical reason for it; and, consequently, some of our learned professors have discovered the whole mystery in their studies. And it is all produced by a tremulous motion of the earth, caused by a waterfall in the neighborhood, or the mal-formation of the bones in a little girl's foot. Now, dear doctor, as you are an anatomist, and scientific man, you are at liberty to choose whichever of the above arguments and theories you may think most compatible with the facts in the case. After you shall have had an opportunity to investigate this new wonder, we will compare notes, and perhaps be able to satisfy our own minds as to the cause of these singular appearances.

Yours, respectfully, P—.

LETTER FROM J. E. ROBINSON.

D. M. DEWEY:

Sir:—As you have requested of me some recital of my acquaintance with the phenomena known as the "mysterious knockings," or "rappings," as the popular term is, the following is cheerfully placed at your disposal.

My attention was first called to the subject, I think, by Mr. Isaac Post, in the month of October, 1848, at which time Mrs. Fish was living with a younger sister, on Prospect street. I

had previously seen accounts of something of the kind which was said to have occurred at Hydesville, Wayne county, of this state, the former place of residence of Mr. John D. and Mrs. Margaret Fox, now of Arcadia; but had considered it, as most others did, the mere offspring of excited imagination or a trick made up perhaps for the purpose of harmless deception. You may well suppose then that I sought an introduction to the singular mystery with no very credulous ear. I could not doubt the honesty of my friend Post, and from the reports which he gave of his experience thus far, I thought the contrivance must certainly be an ingenious one and well worth one's while to unravel.

I went in company with my friend, John Kedzie. What transpired on the occasion of my first visit, I do not distinctly recollect. My curiosity, however, was only increased, and as an invitation was extended for further observation, I soon became more conversant with the mystery and those whom it seemed particularly to attend. I soon discovered that I must utterly doubt the truthfulness of my senses—which, by the way, are not deficient beyond those of others—or admit that there were sounds produced in my presence, in some manner utterly unaccountable. They were considered to be produced by spiritual beings: but the bare fact that I heard noises and could not account for them, was no evidence to me that such was their origin. Some action of a (to me) hidden law of nature upon inert matter might do this; or it might, in some way, be the effect of animal magnetism. I wanted to know if there was any intelligence connected with, and controlling these manifestations. That point reached, I desired to ascertain whether or not, the sign of such intelligence could be imparted to me in such a manner, that I should know it was out of the power of these individuals of flesh and blood to give.

I had been informed that these manifestations, although partaking of the same general features, did not claim to be the

production of any one particular spirit or intelligence; but that numberless spirits, those most naturally drawn by affinity to present themselves in the presence of visitors, had and exercised this power. In accordance with the hint thus given, I asked the noisy but unseen conversationists if I could have the privilege of talking with my sister—then in the spirit world. An affirmative answer being given, pretty soon a gentle rapping was heard: and on my asking if this was the signification of her presence, the reply was, Yes. I then asked a number of questions, referring to the time when we were together in years long since past. The questions thus asked were answered promptly and intelligibly. Afterward the same gentle rapping was heard in the form of a call for the alphabet—(five quick successive raps.) The letters were called, and a sentence spelled out, (unsuggested by any query,) addressed to me and commencing, “Brother, do you remember,” &c. I have lost the memoranda made at the time and cannot recall the precise language of the communication; but the impression then made upon my mind was, that it was exceedingly like my sister. They were *her thoughts*, clothed in the self-same drapery which she was accustomed to throw around them. She mentioned the disease of which her body died, (Consumption,) and alluded to the protracted cough accompanying it. I asked if she was happy, and received an affirmative reply. She told me, in reply to my queries, that human spirits after they leave this stage of existence enter upon a sphere in advance of the one they pass from—that they are the subjects of an universal law; that of Progress, and occupy such sphere as the state of their purity and advancement, at the time of death, (so called,) prepares them for; and as various in its arrangements as are the classes of spirits:—that the “many mansions in the Father’s house,” are but the varied spheres, suited to the wants and conditions of their occupants.

Since the occasions above alluded to, and many times during the past year, I have had opportunities of this kind. Very frequently when I have been at the house of Mrs. Fish the time and attention of these manifestations have been engrossed by other visitors; and often on such occasions I have been exceedingly interested. In a multitude of instances I have seen individuals there, entire strangers to the family, whose questions have been answered by these invisible agencies with the utmost accuracy. I remember at one time, while there, a gentleman and his wife called and begged an opportunity for a few moments. They were non-residents of the city, and desired to leave town on the morrow. The request was granted. We all took seats around a table, and permission was given the gentleman to ask questions. To the question, "How many children have I had?" the reply was, *one*. "Is it living?" The question being reversed, the signal intimated to the father (what was the case) that the child was in the spirit-world. He asked the child's age at the time of his death? the length of time that had elapsed since his death? which queries were, as he said, correctly answered. He then asked if the spirit of that child would be allowed to converse with him: an affirmative was given, and soon a roll of light sounds announced the presence of the little one. A signal for the alphabet was given, and the child-like spirit spelled out a communication to its earthly parent; the effect of which, upon the father, told me too plainly the reality of the semblance. The mother then asked a few questions, such as "are you very happy?" "are you often with me?" "must I cease to grieve that I have lost you, and remember that you are permitted, although unseen, to be with me still?" That mother left the room in tears; but they were not the outburst of sorrow. Gladness was in her heart, (as she said,) for the first time since she laid her darling child—her first born—down to sleep on the bosom of its elder mother, earth.

I might give you a variety of instances, to which I have been a witness, wherein a remarkable perception has been evinced by these agencies; but a statement of such things goes but a little way toward convincing a skeptic or satisfying the mind of any one who has not the opportunity of observing for himself. The human mind admits, with extreme reluctance, the truth of things which it has been trained to believe without the range of possibility.

I have thus given to you, as briefly as possible, what you have asked me for. My convictions are the result of patient and honest investigation extending through a period of sixteen months. They are fixed—so far as the prime fact is concerned, that a communication exists between the inhabitants of this “breathing world,” and a distinct order of intelligencies invisible to the outward eye. If at any time I embrace an error I would thank him who should point it out and demonstrate the truth. But mere argument, however ingenious, can never move my convictions on this subject. I have submitted everything to the scrutiny of such powers as God has given to the highest nature I possess, and know no better guide to lead me: and any evidence which shall change my opinions must reach me through the same channel of the mind by which these convictions entered it.

Perhaps it would not be out of place, in this connection, to state (what many are aware of) that the family to whom I have alluded as the ones in whose presence these manifestations occur—although by no means the only ones—have in consequence of the circumstances, been subjects of much misrepresentation, and in some instances, of serious wrong. This might have been expected at the hands of those who are ever ready to cast opprobrium on individual character if it chance to be allied in any way to what *to them* is unaccountable, or cannot be made to serve their peculiar views and purposes. During my acquaintance with them I have never discovered

the least ground for the justice of such charges. I have known them intimately nearly a year and a half, and some of my friends have been acquainted with them for many years. No one whose word I could rely upon has ever admitted to me the belief that any one of the family had been guilty of any serious departure from moral rectitude. I have uniformly been treated by them with courtesy and kindness; and they have, on all proper occasions, extended to me such facilities as were requisite to enable me to prosecute my inquiries. They make no pretensions to what the world calls piety, neither do they claim exemption from the venial faults which exist more or less in all their fellow beings. Let him who is faultless "cast the first stone" at his neighbor. Neither do they set up the false claim (which some exceedingly soft heads have imputed to them) that they, as individuals, are inspired, or have a mission from the Deity to this world. They are *merely* the *passive media* through whom these communications are made to us, from the world of spirits.

Recognizing then, as I do,—what to me is undeniable—that for some wise purpose, intelligencies in another sphere of existence are permitted to communicate with us in this way: numberless questions have suggested themselves to my mind. As nothing important ever takes place in the wide realm of the universe unconnected with a *purpose*—what is the aim of this? I answer—as I did involuntarily, in the first stage of my experience—to teach mankind that what they have been harboring as a shadow, but never known, is in truth a reality: that the interior man, the sentient being

"That stirs within, and animates his clay,"

is immortal and never dies. This consideration, were there no others, is a sufficient one. But it is not to be supposed that we have yet been made acquainted with all the bearings which it is to have upon us and our welfare. If these spiritual beings are indeed what they purport to be—human spirits—our own

kith and kin, who once walked with us on earth, and still sympathize with us: then, indeed, we may be immensely benefitted by what they may unfold to us. That they *are such*, I have no positive evidence, and none sufficiently strong to warrant the assertion. It is somewhat difficult to identify them with our present aids and limited knowledge. The best we can do, is to judge for ourselves from the correspondences of things. If I converse with a spirit, and its language corresponds closely with the mind of that individual, as I knew it in this life—and particularly, if it alludes to occurrences known only to *myself* and *it*—I have an analogical evidence of its identity. On the other hand, if that spirit gives me a communication, the sentiment and structure of which are totally at variance with my perception of the individual thus personified, I have the same kind of evidence (but no other) that I am deceived. Thus you will perceive my impression that spirits of various grades of intelligence and moral dignity in the scale of being, are allowed the same power; and those persons who seek intercourse with the good, need all the panoply of truth and sincerity to guard them from contact with the opposite.

This admission, however, is by no means condemnatory of the whole matter. A wisdom, exceeding man's, allows good and evil men to live in this world; but it does not follow that because I may occasionally chance to meet with one of the latter, I am to deny myself communication with the former. We must do the best we can in our condition: act well as we may, the part for which we are adapted by the attributes with which Deity hath endowed us. And if, in order to commune occasionally with a bright being of the upper sphere, I am at times subjected to annoyance by one of a lower order, (a devil, if you please,) I can well afford it, and come off best in the *finale*. These unseen devils, after all the disrespect which has been shown them, if I have met them in council, have evinced the possession of nothing *much* worse than ignorance.

And here let me say, I am of the serious opinion that *all* the devils of the universe are not *yet* congregated in the spirit world. Many, alas! too many of them are clothed with human forms, and move in our midst, visible to the common eye. They are spirits of darkness, with a moral depravity which would do no discredit to any locality ever dreamed of in a vision of hell itself. They march in squadrons over fields reddened with human blood. They gather at your scaffolds, to witness spectacles which dishonor the age, and laugh "a fiend's loud laugh," while the human victim is swung off, and struggles in his agony. Their presence is confined to no one particular class. They enter your senate chambers and representative halls, and poison the sentiment and distract the councils of honest men. They bind the slave in a thralldom worse than a thousand deaths! and when you would plead with them to release your brother, they point you, with most demure sanctity of physiognomy, to a volume containing nothing which they venerate save questionable endorsements of their foulest crimes.

So will it be, until man attains to that higher stature, that more perfect being to which he is destined. Meanwhile our mother earth goes wheeling on her pathway, clothed with "that enchantment which distance lends,"—a brightened orb, a happy sphere, seemingly, to those who perhaps gaze on us from the far off shores of some sister planet.

Respectfully yours,

ROCHESTER, March 6, 1850.

J. E. ROBINSON.

The following letter, written by J. C. BAKER, well known as the leader of the "Baker Vocalists," was published in the Dansville Courier of Jan. 23, 1850:

"Having heard and read much of the mysterious noises in Rochester, we had a great curiosity to witness what we sup-

posed to be a genuine humbug. On the occasion of our visit to that city, we met with an opportunity of being formally introduced, and improved the opportunity. After a short walk, we found ourselves seated in a humble but neat little dwelling. On making known our wishes, viz: to hear the 'mysterious sounds,' and to be convinced, *pro* or *con*, one of the young ladies, (there are three of them,) asked 'if the spirit would make sounds?' Whereupon we heard something like raps, distinctly, which seemed to have been made under the floor on which we stood. The raps were unlike any other noise we had ever heard; they seemed to be muffled, yet very distinct. The room being small,—too small to well convene the number present, we were invited into another, larger, where we all seated ourselves in a circle. The lady then asked 'if the spirit would make demonstrations?' There were then three successive raps immediately heard. Three raps, the ladies say, is the same as 'Yes.' The lady then asked 'if we each had guardian spirits?' To which question was returned three raps. She then, singling us out, asked 'how many each had?' The number of raps for each were not uniformly the same—to some, three were given; to others, five. The question was then asked, 'Are any of the members of this family in the spirit world?' Three raps were heard. Again the question was asked,—'Can we know who they are?' Three raps were again plainly heard. I was then advised to write down the names of all the members that *were* and *are* in our family—in any order I chose. I did so. I wrote my father's name first, my own next, the name of my mother following, and others as irregularly as the first. I was then told to let no one see my list—which I did not—and to point with my pencil to any one of them, and ask, 'Is this one dead?—is this one?' &c. As I pointed to my father's name, no sounds were heard—to my own, the result was the same. But as I pointed to my mother's name, and asked the same question, in the same tone of voice, three raps were *very* plainly heard. Nothing was heard as I pointed to each of the others and asked the same question. (The fact is, all but our departed mother are living—or were when last we heard, a short time since.) I then asked how long our mother had been dead? Here some strangers came in, causing a general movement, and we were requested to step into still another room, to be free from the noise, which we did. I repeated the question there, and as many raps were given as years had elapsed since

her decease. I then asked how old she was when she died? Fifty-two raps were heard, which was the number of her years. I further asked my own age. The rapping commenced, and rapped *plainly* twenty-seven times, and after a slight pause, a softer one was heard, only about half as loud as either of the twenty-seven. My age is twenty-seven years and nearly five months. The number of years and months of each of my brothers' ages were likewise accurately given. There were five raps heard, which I understood from the ladies, as calling for the Alphabet. They began—A, B, C, D, &c., and a rap was heard as they spoke the letters necessary to spell 'I am the spirit of your mother.' Mr. CHANDLER's name (our agent) was spelled correctly, and he was a perfect stranger, no one present, but our company, being acquainted with the name.

The ladies were present at our concert in that city; after which, we invited them to call at the hotel where we were stopping, which was on their way home. They complied, and, on entering our room, immediately produced the same rappings.

On leaving the city, our curiosity, already much excited, prompted us to call with our carriage at the door of the young ladies' residence, and invited them to take seats in our vehicle, to see if they could produce the rapping there. They complied with our request; and we heard it quite loud, seemingly under the carriage bottom, and *plainly felt it jar*. We bade them adieu, and drove away, saying, it is mysterious.

The ladies declare that the rapping is superhuman, and appear willing that all should satisfy themselves that it is caused by no human agency;—consequently, all that hear it, have ways to test for themselves. Men of intelligence say that it cannot be accounted for on philosophical principles. In fact, we have been informed, that, during the past two years, various means have been resorted to, for the purpose of detecting the cause of these 'mysterious sounds'; and that, as yet, no one has become satisfied that they are caused by any human agency.

I could say much more in relation to this mystery; but too much, perhaps, has already been said, to be believed by the credulous reader. I speak only of what we have heard with *our own ears*. I give no opinion of my own, and trust none will say that I wilfully attempt to impose upon their credulity, till they have visited the dwelling of these ladies and satisfied themselves.

J. C. BAKER,

(of the Baker Vocalists.)

The following is an extract from a letter, published in the Havana Republican, of Feb. 6th, 1850:

"I called on these ladies a few days since, in company with a friend, for the purpose of testing the matter to my own satisfaction. After testing it in a variety of ways, I requested his ghostship to give me a display of his, her, or its powers, when a table, which was a very heavy one, commenced moving on the floor, and no individual touched or sat near it!

"I have it from persons, in whose veracity I have the utmost confidence, and who have investigated the matter much further than myself, that these spirits have repeatedly manifested themselves to them in a tangible manner; that they have listened to the most exquisite music, played by spirit hands, upon the piano, guitar, &c. The individuals, in whose presence the sounds are heard, in this city, are all good clairvoyants, or easy subjects for mesmerism."

The following is from the *Binghamton Republican*:

"We have been favored with the following letter for publication, written by E. W. Hazard, Esq., a highly intelligent and respectable gentleman, living in Rochester, and who was recently on a visit to this village. It will be found exceedingly interesting, we may say, astounding. We have now no further opinion to express on the subject. This, we know to be an age of wonders; and the end, it seems, is not yet. We trust these 'spirits' will be thoroughly 'tried'—whether they are 'good' or 'evil.'

"ROCHESTER, January 27, 1850.

"DEAR BROTHER: Inasmuch as you so strongly desire I should communicate to you every thing of a remarkable and interesting character, touching the demonstrations made to mortal man by the 'Rochester spirits,' I will improve my unoccupied time by giving you a relation of a few of these mysterious communications, as told me by respectable persons. In the first place, I will tell you what Mr. — told me; as he is a person well known to many of the citizens of your place, his word will not be questioned. He says he was selected as one of the committee, by the citizens who met at

Corinthian hall, because of his known skepticism in regard to every thing of a supernatural character, and he entered upon the investigation with a full belief that it was all a humbug, and that the committee would succeed in exposing it. When it came night, he said he went to the hall with great reluctance, for the reason that investigations of the committee had only succeeded in going to confirm the claims of those who denied the rapping being produced by human agency. That evening, after the meeting adjourned, he, with others of the committee, accompanied the Misses Fox to the house of Mr. Post, a friend, and a believer in spiritual communications. There the party seated themselves around a table, and commenced asking questions in the usual manner. Suddenly, he said, the table moved a fourth of the way round, and he, supposing it done by the girls, immediately requested every one to leave the table. They all did so; and while no one stood within six feet of it, at his request, the table was moved around as if by unseen hands. He said it rapped for him to ask questions, which at first he declined doing, but it insisted, and he finally consented. The thought struck him that he could perhaps catch them by trick. So he thought of the name of a young lady, who formerly lived with him, but who had been dead for several years. He asked if the spirit would rap, on his touching the point of his pencil upon the name he was then thinking of, providing he would write down ten names, and that among the ten. It replied it would. He wrote down ten names, but omitted to write the name of the young lady he was thinking of. He commenced, and went through the process of pointing to each one of the ten names, and with the confident expectation of its rapping, at least on the tenth, but no rap came. All appeared astonished, but he could get no rap upon either of the ten. He then added two more, and one was the name of the young lady, and as quick as he touched it, there came a rap. He then asked it (mentally, I think,) to spell out the name he thought of, and it spelled out the name of the young lady.

“Other questions were asked, and all satisfactorily answered. It told him his own age, his wife’s, and that of every child in his family correct to a day, a thing he could not do himself, and did not know its correctness until he had returned home, and made inquiry. He says, also, it promised to rap at his house, and it did so. Upon this point, he said he was positive.

"I will now leave Mr. —, and take up the case of Mr. Jarvis, a Methodist clergyman, residing in this place. A few evenings since, Mr. J. and his wife awoke early, and while in bed, had a conversation upon the subject of slavery. Mr. J. remarked, he was sorry that Mr. J. Q. Adams was not living, as he thought his influence in Congress would be very beneficial at this critical moment, and added, he had no doubt his spirit was there, taking a deep interest in the question, and influencing the minds of members. At that moment, there came a rapping upon the bed clothing, directly over his breast. He asked his wife if she heard it, and she replied she did not; but the rapping came again and again, and she heard it distinctly. They then asked if it was the spirit of John Q. Adams, and the reply was, it was not. He then felt it take hold of his arm, underneath the clothing, and repeatedly pressed gently upon it, as between thumb and fingers. That evening he was invited to Esq. Draper's, where the Misses Fox were to spend the evening. He went there, and while there, the lady of the Rev. Dr. Luckey called with her son-in-law. She had expressed her decided disbelief in the matter, yet had a curiosity to hear the 'mysterious rapping.' Matters being arranged, the spirits were called for, and among other things, there came a spirit and told Mr. Jarvis to 'tell mother that the communications you and she had this morning, were from Nancy.' Mr. J. had lost a daughter of this name a few years since. So much for Mr. Jarvis' revelations. While I was at your place, the girls came to the Waverly, and succeeded in making a strong impression on the minds of some, with whom I have conversed, that there was no trick in the matter. A Mr. Summerfield came with Judge Hascall, from Le Roy, and held communications with the spirits in a silent way, by taking the alphabet and pointing to letters, and in that way spelling out whatever the spirit wished to communicate. I am told he asked his questions mentally, and it told him he had been to sea, had come near losing his life, and in the effort to save himself and child, lost his cap overboard. He said it was a minute relation of what had actually taken place. He and Judge Hascall had also some remarkable physical demonstrations of a character to them entirely astounding, and under circumstances, I am told, where it excited no suspicion of collusion or trick.

"I will endeavor to gain more insight into this matter, and if it prove to my mind the reality of its being spiritual communications, none will feel more happy in the truth than I, or more ready and free to acknowledge it.

"Yours, truly, E. W. HAZARD."

WM. H. McDONALD, Esq., one of the editors and proprietors of the *Excelsior*, published in New York, has visited the house in Rochester where the rappings are heard, and in his paper of Feb. 2d, 1850, gives the following:

"One of the proprietors of this paper while on a business tour through the western part of the state, passed through Rochester, and during a stay in that place of four days, improved the opportunity by inquiries into the truth of reports which had reached him in New York. In this article he will give an unvarnished account of what he there saw and heard, leaving inferences to be drawn by his readers without any attempt to account for that which, to him, was truly unaccountable.

"There are said to be many in whose presence the rappings are heard, but those who have attracted the largest share of public attention are the three daughters of a Mr. and Mrs. Fox, people of respectability though not wealthy. The mother and daughters have for a few months resided in the city of Rochester, in Troupe-st., in a perfectly respectable neighborhood, the infamous insinuation of Langworthy, to the contrary notwithstanding. The elder sister, Mrs. Fish, is a widow lady, and she has long contributed largely to the support of her younger sisters by teaching music. The second is about sixteen years of age, named Margaretta, and the youngest, Miss Catherine, aged fourteen. At the desire of either of these sisters the rappings are heard.

"The sounds vary from a light clear metallic sound to a dull muffled one, like a rap with the knuckles upon a partition covered with a cloth. When one rap is heard an affirmative is meant,—silence, instead of giving consent, implies a negative. When a question is asked which does not admit of an answer by a simple yes or no, the alphabet is called for by a peculiar

rap. In spelling out a sentence by letters, one of the ladies commences repeating the alphabet, and when the desired letter is mentioned a rap is heard. In this way, though of course slowly, long sentences are communicated.

"Early in the present week, being in Rochester, we solicited and obtained an interview with Mrs. Fish and her sisters, during which the knockings were heard by ourself. Previous to the manifestations we were introduced to two gentlemen belonging to a committee who had been authorized by the ladies to relieve them from the constant annoyance resulting from throngs who besiege the house from motives of curiosity. We were desired to seat ourselves at the table, and after a short conversation upon indifferent subjects, one of the gentlemen present inquired of Mrs. F. if the spirits would converse with the writer. No reply. The question was then asked if the spirits would converse with the other gentlemen in the room. An affirmative rap was heard. Mrs. Fish then asked if the spirits would show in what manner they usually manifested their presence and intelligence. Immediately a series of raps were heard, differing in sound, light and heavy, now on the table, before us, and again on the floor, and in various and distant parts of the room. A number of questions respecting the gentlemen of the committee were then asked, and were said to have been answered correctly. Previous to leaving, the cause or causes of the rappings were requested to answer queries with regard to ourself, and complied by responding without error to a few questions, stating that they would communicate more freely with us on a future interview.

"The morning and evening of the following day, we called upon them again. In the morning, in a very light room, many questions were asked concerning ourself and were answered correctly, without a moment's hesitation. It is impossible that the correct answers to these questions could have been known to any person present, by ordinary methods of obtaining the information. Among these were the ages of ourself and wife, the number of our children living and dead, their ages, health, letters we expected, our success in business, etc.—all these queries related to the past, with one exception, and were solved with perfect correctness. A table standing in the room was moved without any visible agency, (it will be recollected that it was in the day time, and the apartment was well light-

ed,) and notwithstanding all our efforts to keep it stationary. Others present said they received correct answers to interrogations relating to them.

"In the evening similar questions were asked and answered. At the request of the sisters the table was again moved backward, and forward. At the request of a person present the sisters stood up at a distance from it, and it moved against them with sufficient force to push the three against the wall. Two lighted candles were upon the table during its movement. It was also lifted from the floor, and although not heavy, it was, upon a request being made to that effect, held to the floor with so much power that it required great exertion for us to raise one end of it.

"At interviews held with them on the two following days many questions were answered respecting many other gentlemen in our presence, and in all cases said to have been answered correctly. On one occasion the sounds proper to a carpenter's shop were heard apparently proceeding from the wall and table. Sawing, planing, pounding with a mallet, were imitated to the life. We should not have mentioned this, knowing that ventriloquism has often achieved such feats, had it not been that upon placing the hand upon the table the jarring could be perceptibly felt. At another time we took the table, and allowing one leg to rest upon the floor, raised the opposite corner, and holding it with both our hands, with our utmost strength, though placing the leg between our knees, could not prevent it from vibrating.

"All the incidents in the above meager sketch we both saw and heard, and we refrain from relating many others, both for want of space and because they might be accounted for on known principles. We also refrain from narrating many circumstances, more astonishing, which were related to us to all appearance in perfect good faith, by credible and respectable people, because we were not eye and ear witnesses to the transactions. In some future number we may call attention to them again. We have been in these statements careful to indulge in no exaggerations—to make no representations from hearsay.

"As before remarked, we make no effort to solve these curious developments, leaving our readers to form their own opinions. This we however will say, that our utmost ingenuity was

exercised to penetrate the mystery, but without success. Perhaps others may be more successful. We have seen and heard things to us wonderful and unaccountable, and give to the public a plain account of the matter. More or less at present is not within our province.

"It may not be amiss to state here, that since returning to the city we have met numerous individuals who profess to know the causes of the phenomena, but they are prevented from communicating them because they are under promises of *inviolable secrecy*. Some of these persons are connected with the press of this city, and if, as they say, they have penetrated the mystery, their culpability is great, in withholding from community information so eagerly sought by thousands. But it is much easier to see through the mystery of these wisecracks, than the doings at Rochester. They are not the individuals who withhold any knowledge they possess: on the contrary, they are rather apt, not only to tell all that they do know, but also some things that they do not."

The editor of the *New York Merchant's Day Book*, has also visited Rochester, and heard the rappings. The following extracts are from the *Day Book* of the 22d and 27th of February:

* * * "Now then, as to our belief: we have none. We publish simply what we saw and heard. We tried to solve the mystery and failed. We tried to discover some connection between the girls and the sounds, but could not. All that we *know* of the matter we have published, and if any one can find out more than we could find, let him try. Our belief in spirits is not as full as some people's, nor have we faith enough in the art and cunning of the girls to believe they could so successfully deceive *everybody*. We are, however, of the *impression*, as we have before stated, that the girls possess in their persons an amount of electricity sufficient to cause the moving of the tables and chairs, and the noise and vibrations upon the boards, merely by the force of their own will. The following facts led us to this conclusion:

"The table always moved toward the girls. The articles

that moved from the bureau and mantle always came into the girls' laps; they never went from them. The table could not be raised from the floor by a friend who went with us to the house; whereas, the moment we put one hand against it, he could raise it as easily as he could lift a cork. The hand of one person might not destroy the electricity, while that of another would. Metal was more easily affected than wood, and cloth was not touched at all. The piano would follow the girls from one side of the room to the other, and hundreds of people have heard it play any tune that the girls directed. * * *

"When we left the house in the morning, the younger of the two girls regretted very much that we had not heard more of the 'spirit's' queer sayings; but as it had positively declined any further communication, we were compelled to forego the pleasure of further revelations. It had already kept us too long, and when we returned to the hotel, the cars had gone. In the course of the day we made another visit, in company with an unbelieving friend. On arriving at the house, we found five or six gentlemen sitting around the table, with pencils in hand, writing down questions, and receiving answers, which mystified and astonished them more than they had dreamed of. It told one his age; another how many wives he had had; another the names of his children; &c. After listening some time to the conversation, we asked if the 'spirit' would converse with us? Rap, rap. 'How?' It spelled out, 'Alone.' 'Will you not converse with me here?' Rap. 'Are you the spirit of a departed friend or acquaintance?' Rap, rap. 'Whose spirit are you?' It spelled out, letter by letter, the name of a deceased sister. In spelling it, not only the company who were counting the letters, but the girls themselves, had no little difficulty in hitting upon the right letters.

"For instance, one of the company would begin, a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, and when the rap was heard they would place it upon l for m, or e for d. But then the rapping would continue until they got the right letter. We put the letters down as fast as the company decided upon the right one, and when the name was complete, it was entirely different from what any one of them supposed the spirit was trying to spell. One of the girls for instance, after the first two letters were got at correctly, asked if it was Emma, then the other asked when the third letter was fixed upon, if it was not

Emily, and when the fourth letter came, some one asked if it meant Eliza, then Ella, then Elizabeth; to all these questions there was no answer, and it was not until the name was spelled out in full and we pronounced it, that it rapped an affirmative answer. The company was, of course, very much astonished; but when we recollected that we had, while there in the morning, drawn our pencil over that name, as the *spirit* told us, which of those we had written was the name of our deceased sister, and that we might have dropped that paper on the floor, the mystery was partly explained, that is, if the girls do the knocking. The spirit then declined any further conversation with the 'gentleman from New York,' and other proofs of his power and presence were requested by the company. The table was asked to move and it moved: it always moved towards the girls, never from them. It was then asked to hold the table down. Our friend, who, by the way, had up to this moment, been sneering at what he called the greatest humbug of this humbug age, took hold of the table and tried to raise it. He lifted hard, it did'nt come; he looked under it, lifted again, moved it to the right and left, gave another lift, then turned round, took up his hat, and said — 'I've done, let's go!' He had not been able to raise it from the floor. We took hold of the table with our right hand and raised it as easily as we would lift a boot. Our friend returned, seized it again, but could'nt stir it. We took hold of his wrist and raised it as easily as before; held it up a few inches from the floor, and told him to hold it there. As soon as we let go of his wrist, it went down with a jar, like the falling of a heavy piece of iron. A stranger took this friend's place and could not raise it; we put our hands under his, and the table came up without difficulty. The spirit was then asked to raise it. Rap, rap, rap, rap. We counted the alphabet to d, and asked if it meant *done*. Rap. Whereupon the meeting adjourned *sine die*.

"We have now stated all the facts as they appeared to us at the time. As for opinions, we do not assert that we have any upon the subject; our readers are as capable of judging as we are, and must form their own conclusions. The 'knocking' we heard and felt; the moving of the table we saw. Whether the girls are possessed of some mysterious power, by which they cause the rapping and the table and the chairs to move at will, we know not. There may be such a thing as an electro-

magnetic influence at work, of which we know nothing. If the girls possess the power of producing these mysterious sounds, and moving *things* without using physical force, we are satisfied that they do not know it. One of them is only 12 years of age, and evidently has no more conception of the rapping than a canary bird. The other is a young lady, apparently 17 or 18 years old; her manners are rather prepossessing, and although not decidedly a beauty, she has a mild and gentle expression of countenance, a face indicative of no superior cunning or shrewdness, but on the contrary one that any person at all acquainted with human nature, would pronounce artless and innocent. It would be more difficult for us to believe that either of the two girls sitting before us were practicing deception and trying to humbug us, than to believe that the knocking was supernatural. The youngest one in fact appeared innocent of even a suspicion that she had any agency in it, and with that earnest simplicity peculiar to children, expressed a wish that it *would* do something just to let me see how strange it acted sometimes, and went on to relate in a hurried manner — when we were leaving — how it sometimes took the books off the table and piled them up in her lap, how it drew out the piano and played tunes, &c. These performances we subsequently heard related by others who had seen them, and who had no doubt of the perfect ignorance of the girls as to the cause. Scientific men may be able to explain the phenomenon; we cannot. In justice to the family, we must acquit the girls of any attempt to impose upon the public — in truth they are the most imposed upon by the public — and when we see published statements of their trickery and deception, we do not hesitate to pronounce the authors of them liars."

NEW FEATURE IN THE SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.—COMMUNICATION FROM DR. FRANKLIN.

The following appeared in the *Rochester Magnet*, soon after the occurrences narrated, took place. The gentlemen, whose names are signed to the statement, are well known to the

citizens of Rochester, and are entirely above practicing any intentional deception on the public:

“TO MESSRS. JERVIS, WILLETS, JONES, AND OTHERS:

“Gentlemen:—As we are required by authority that we think we have no right to disregard, to make public the extraordinary communications recently witnessed at my dwelling, it becomes necessary to give you, and through you to the public, the facts which gave rise to the first interview, on Friday the 16th inst. The novelty of the subject, and the state of the public mind are such, that I feel prompted to do this, not only correctly, but as minutely as possible. Circumstances had placed me in a way to witness those remarkable communications called the ‘mysterious rappings,’ from the time of their origin in this city in the summer of 1848. After the severest tests, under a variety of circumstances, and at various places, for about one year, incontestable evidence addressed to my senses, baffled my skepticism, and fully convinced me that they were the production of no human agencies. And as they profess to emanate from invisible intelligencies, called spirits, I had not allowed myself the liberty to attribute them to any other source, at least until some other origin could be detected. In hope of eliciting some further light on the mysterious subject, I proposed to a member of my family, who is susceptible to magnetic influence, to be put into a clairvoyant state, and see what might be presented in relation to it. She complied, and for this purpose was magnetized on the evening of the 12th inst., and in presence of no other persons. The questions and answers were as follows: Q.—Do you see any thing? A.—I see a stranger that I never before saw. He is not prepossessing in appearance, but is very elevated in his position, in a reflecting attitude, and is busily employed. Q.—What is he doing? A.—He is preparing work for you. Q.—What is the nature of the work? A.—He is establishing a line of communication. Q.—Ask him, ‘Is it practicable to get communications between two distant points by means of these rappings?’ A.—‘To be sure,’ he says. Q.—Can you ascertain who this stranger is? A.—*Benjamin* [and after a pause] *Franklin*. Q.—Will you ask him to give you some signal by which we may know it is really Benjamin Franklin? After a silence of one or two minutes, a violent shock of her person induced me hastily to say, ‘What is the matter—are you waking up?’

A.—No; you wanted a signal, and I told him if it was Dr. Franklin he might electorize me, and he did it. Q.—Has it injured you? A.—No; I feel better—my head is clearer—I can see plainer. Q.—Will you ask him where communications between distant points at the same time can be tested. A.—He says at your own house. Q.—Is there any thing required of us in the matter? A.—He says, get two of these young ladies about whom there is so much excitement in your city, place them in extreme parts of two rooms, and you [meaning herself,] be put in the same state in which you now are, and I will communicate with you. Q.—Who else may be in attendance? A.—Mr. Jervis, and a few others, who have been acquainted with the subject. Q.—Will he direct as to time? A.—He says, consult the convenience of those concerned, and I shall be advertised of it. Q.—Are there any further directions to be given at this time? A.—That is the end of the chapter.

In compliance with the above, the interview, on Friday, the 15th, was called, you and others notified, and the attendance of the two young ladies, Margaretta and Catharine Fox, secured; from whom, for prudential reasons, the above facts and preliminaries were withheld.

Respectfully, yours,

N. DRAPER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY MAGNET:

Pursuant to the notice, as above stated, we, the undersigned, met at the house of Mr. Draper, on Friday, the 15th inst., about 4 o'clock, P. M. We inquired for directions, and were answered by alphabet, "Let Mrs. Draper be magnetized." Through her, the two young ladies were directed to retire to another room. The directions then were, for Mr. Jervis, Mrs. Fox, and Catharine Fox, to be placed in a room at the opposite end of the house, and for Mr. Jervis to take notes. Margaretta Fox should be with the company in the parlor, and Mr. Draper take notes. This was done. The sounds were then heard in both rooms, by either company, exactly similar to the sounds heard in the telegraph office.

Question to the clairvoyant.—What does that rapping mean, unlike any other sounds before heard, by rapping? Answer: He is trying the batteries. The signal for the alphabet was heard, and on calling the letters, was spelled, "She must be

waked in ten minutes." A watch was placed on the table, after noting the time, and covered up, and the question asked, if we could have a signal, by sounds, at the exact time, and was answered affirmatively. At the *precise* time, the signal was heard. The question was then asked, "Who shall wake her"? and she was instantly awakened with an apparent electric shock.

At this point, there was much interruption, by persons coming into both rooms. The question was asked for further directions, and the answer was, by alphabet, "Things are not as I directed, therefore, you cannot proceed at this time." There should be but four in each room. Mr. Jervis and company came into the parlor, and his notes read as follows: "Things are not as I directed them, therefore, you cannot proceed at this time. Q.—Can we have another opportunity? A.—If I set the time, and name the company, there shall be no fail. Q.—Shall the appointment be now made? Answered affirmatively. The following persons were then named, by the alphabet:—Mr. Jervis, Mr. Jones, Mr. Draper, Mr. Willets, Mrs. Jervis, Mrs. Draper, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Fox, Margaretta Fox, and Catharine Fox. Q.—May we know the time? A.—Wednesday next, at 4 o'clock, P. M. Q.—The place? A.—Here.

On the day appointed, Feb. 20th, the above named persons convened; some of the company were late, and as soon as order was observed, the question was asked: What are the directions of Benjamin Franklin? A.—Hurry; first magnetize Mrs. Draper. This was done, she immediately saying: He says we are behind the time, but he will forgive us this time; we must do better in future. The company were divided as follows: Mr. Jervis, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Brown, and Catharine Fox, in a retired room, with two doors closed between them. Mrs. Draper, Mrs. Jervis, Mr. Draper, Mr. Willets, and Margaretta Fox, remained in the parlor. Sounds, unusually loud, were heard in each room by either company, as before, resembling the telegraphic sounds. They were so unusual, that Miss Fox became alarmed, and said, "What does all this mean"? Mrs. Draper, while her countenance was irradiated with animation, replied, "He is trying the batteries." Soon there was the signal for the alphabet, and the following communication was spelled to the company in the parlor: "Now I am ready, my friends. There will be great changes in the nine-

teenth century. Things that now look dark and mysterious to you, will be laid plain before your sight. Mysteries are going to be revealed. The world will be enlightened. I sign my name Benjamin Franklin. Do not go into the other room."

After waiting a few minutes, Mr. Jervis came into the parlor, saying that he was directed by the sounds to come and compare notes. They read as follows: Q.—Are we all right? Answer affirmatively, signal for alphabet, and the following we spelled: "There will be great changes in the nineteenth century. Things that now look dark and mysterious to you, will be laid plain before your sight. Mysteries are going to be revealed. The world will be enlightened. I sign my name Benjamin Franklin. Go in the parlor and compare notes." Mr. Jervis returned to his company, and, by alphabet, was spelled: "now all go into the parlor." The notes were then compared, in presence of the whole company. Q.—Is there anything more from Dr. Franklin? A.—I think I have given tests enough for this day. Q.—Will it not be better to keep this matter private? A.—No: it should be published. Q.—In what paper? A.—In *Democrat* or *Magnet*. Q.—Who shall prepare it for publication? A.—George Willets. Time and place were then designated for the same company to meet again, with two other persons added to the number.

We sign our names as no parties, but as witnesses. If our testimony is incredible, impeach, and reject it; if admissible, hand it over to the judge and jurors—the public, and charge them, that we claim no interest, aside from their own, in their verdict.

REV. ASAHEL JERVIS,

EDWARD JONES,

RACHAEL DRAPER,

MARY BROWN,

ROCHESTER, Feb. 23, 1850.

NATHANIEL DRAPER,

GEORGE WILLETS,

MARY JERVIS,

MARGARET FOX.

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APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTS
AND EXTRACTS FROM THE
WRITINGS OF VARIOUS AUTHORS,
IN REGARD TO
SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.

The following is an extract of an article, written recently by WILLIAM FISHBOUGH, a well known psychological writer:

“By what agency, then, are these rappings produced? The agents indicate, by the process above described, that they are the spirits of the departed—generally the friends of those who are present to hear them, but sometimes those who have been out of the body for a long period of time. * According to any thing we know respecting the spiritual world, and its laws, is there any improbability in this? Reason teaches that if the human spirit, on entering the other world, preserves its identity as a *whole*, it must preserve the identity of the different *parts*—affections and intellectual principles—which compose the whole; that it must, in other words, preserve its affections for its friends, and for whatever gave it real pleasure in this life. These relations, then, necessarily incline it occasionally to act upon, or manifest itself to those still in the body, so far as the laws of the spiritual world might permit.

“Hence, in all ages and nations, there has been a widely prevailing belief in the influence of spirits upon the affairs of men, and volumes might be filled with apparently the best authenticated instances of spirits manifesting their presence to men in the body, in various ways. Confucius taught that the spirits of the departed returned frequently to the halls of their ancestors. Zoroaster claimed to have intercourse with beings of the other world. The learned are aware that Pythagoras and Plato taught the doctrine of guardian spirits; and

Socrates professed to be under the constant guidance of such a monitor. The ancient Egyptians and Hebrews entertained essentially the same views respecting interpositions of the inhabitants of the spiritual world, and the prophets of the latter frequently held intercourse with angels, who were evidently only the spirits of men manifesting themselves in the capacity of *messengers*. Moses and Elias appeared to Jesus and conversed with him, and were seen also by the disciples who were in company with the latter at the time; and one of the *prophets* appeared as an *angel* to John, and imparted to him the things revealed in the Apocalypse. (Rev. xxii, 8, 9.)

“There is not a syllable in the New Testament writings to indicate that the occasional interposition of spirits in the affairs of men, was to cease after the days of the apostles, and the christian church continued, without interruption, to believe it down to the days of the reformation.

“The catholics still believe in patron saints, and invoke their aid. Swedenborg professed to have held daily intercourse with spirits and angels for the last twenty-seven years of his life, and of the truth of this profession, he certainly furnished many irrefutable evidences; and many others, in modern times, have given evidence that they enjoyed the same privilege. And it is only in these latter days, characterized by a very sensuous mode of philosophizing, that a portion of the christian church has asserted that intercourse with spirits of the other world ceased with the days of the apostles. Thus do we see that the general voice of tradition, as well as the deductions of reason, favors the idea of intercourse with the spiritual world; and no theory of the ignorance and superstition of the masses will, of itself, entirely account for the fact that this opinion has been sustained so generally and so long, among all nations of the world. That the belief must have been sustained by the occasional occurrence of facts and psychological experiences definite upon the point, is, in the writer's opinion, beyond reasonable doubt.

“But though these considerations seem to render probable the doctrine of spiritual visitations and guardianship, in our own day, as well as in other times, is it at all probable that spirits would ever manifest their presence in such an apparently awkward and uncouth way, as by making the voices heard in Rochester and neighboring places? I answer, yes: provided

they cannot make their presence sufficiently manifest in any other way; or, provided those receiving the communication are not prepared for a more open and direct manifestation, without the danger of injury, or being too much shocked by fear. And here I would remark, that hundreds of well-attested cases are on record, of apparently spiritual manifestations of precisely this nature, though, perhaps, in no other case, have the manifestations taken so systematic a form, or been so widely extended. For examples of such phenomena, let the reader peruse Jung Stilling's 'Theory of Pneumatology,' Kerner's 'Seeress of Prevorst,' Mrs. Crowe's 'Night side of Nature,' or many other works of a similar character. But how many thousand cases of this kind have occurred, which have never met with a recorder, and which, through fear of ridicule, have never been told, except under the seal of secrecy!

"The 'Seeress of Prevorst' was in a sort of magnetic (*i. e.* semi-spiritualized) state during most of the time, for seven years, during which, upon the evidence of unmistakable facts, it is affirmed by Dr. Kerner and many others, she had almost daily visitations from the spiritual world. She affirmed that it was much more easy for spirits to make their presence sensible by rapping, or making other noises, than it was to make themselves visible. Those rappings were familiar to all her attendants; and to some besides herself, the sense of *vision* was also addressed.

....

"But how is it possible for disembodied spirits to make the sounds said to be heard at Rochester? I answer, we do not *absolutely know*; but the following *facts* will enable us clearly to conceive how it may be, and possibly is. Spirits still connected with, but owing to some abnormal condition, capable of acting in measurable independence of the body, have sometimes been able to attract, and act upon the refined ingredients of the atmosphere, and especially upon the electric element. The writer is acquainted with a man who is subject to many remarkable psychological experiences, and who is (or was two years ago) able, by the mere effort of his *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 distinctly perceptible shocks, when the knuckle of another person was presented. On diverting his mind from the object, the electricity would, in half a minute,

all disappear, so that not a single spark could be generated, however violent the friction. Then on assuming the previous mental condition again, the electricity would gradually appear, until his hair was charged as before. The writer saw this experiment repeated several times, and under circumstances which excluded all possibility of mistake. There was, at the time, no electric machine in the room, or in the house, and the man was standing, or walking about, on a woolen carpet. He explained, in vague terms, how he did it, but it was altogether by a psychological process, of which any one in a perfectly normal condition, would be incapable.

“Dr. Emerich, professor of theology, at Strasburgh, had a sister, who, having been injured by a fright, fell into a state of somnambulism, accompanied by a high degree of lucidity, (or clairvoyance,) and her body became so surcharged with electricity, that she sometimes imparted strong shocks to those standing near her, although the latter frequently did not touch her. ‘Professor Emerich mentioned, also, that she sent him a smart shock one day, when she was several rooms off. He started up, and rushed into her chamber, where she was in bed: and as soon as she saw him, she said, laughing, ‘Ah, you felt it, did you?’ Mademoiselle’s Emerich’s illness terminated in death.

“It is well known that the *gymnotus electricus* naturally possesses a power analagous to this, by which, without contact, or even very close proximity, it stuns its prey by an electric stroke, seeming to direct the latter with precision, by its *will*. To say, *a priori*, and even against the indication of positive facts, that the human spirit, in certain abnormal conditions of the body, may not have a similar power, is, certainly, to assume that which is unwarrantable.

“If, then, the human spirit, when but *partially* liberated from the body, as in certain abnormal states, can, in this manner, control the electricity of the atmosphere, in how much greater degree may not the electricity, and, through that, the atmosphere itself, and even the powers of *gravitation*, be controlled by a spirit entirely *out* of the body? And may not a spirit, in this way, by the action of his *will*, produce the *shocks* or *concussions* in the atmosphere, improperly called ‘rappings,’ which are heard at Rochester, and elsewhere, and, by which, intelligible communications are received? In this way, sub-

stantially, the 'Seeress of Prevorst,' and, it is said, also the invisible communicators at Rochester, explain these apparently preternatural sounds.

"After all, the main question is not, whether these phenomena, as produced by *spirits*, or other invisible or ultra-mundane influences, are *possible*, or *probable*, or in accordance with any received theological doctrines, but whether they are **FACTS**. Let no *a priori* hypothesis on this subject, be suffered, for a moment, to prevail against *facts*—at least, until more is known than is now generally known, respecting the laws governing spiritual existence. Moreover, if there is any conceivable theory, on which the phenomena in question may be entirely explained, as owing to merely *earthly* causes, the world should immediately have the benefit of it.

"But, *cui bono?*—*What good* can arise from those manifestations, even if they are of a spiritual origin? I have been astonished to hear this question asked, as it has been asked, by many. I answer: They settle at once, and forever, the *fact* of a future state of existence, which thousands of *good* minds now really *desire* to believe, but *cannot*. And who knows but that this may be the dawn of a new era, when the dissolution of the outer body will no longer necessarily separate kindred and friends—when there will be a free communion between them, and when hence, in effect, there will be 'no more death, neither sorrow, neither crying'? And who knows, but that, through a medium, thus *sensibly* established between the two worlds, the 'kingdom of heaven' may, in various ways, descend to the inhabitants of the earth, and bring mankind to the long prayed for and long prophesied unity with each other, with nature, with Heaven, and with God"?

NARRATIVE DRAWN UP BY MR. JOHN WESLEY, AND PUBLISHED
BY HIM IN THE ARMINIAN MAGAZINE.

When I was very young, I heard several letters read, wrote to my elder brother by my father, giving an account of strange disturbances, which were in his house at Epworth, Lincolnshire.

When I went down thither, in the year 1720, I carefully

inquired into the particulars. I spoke to each of the persons who were then in the house, and took down what each could testify, of his or her own knowledge, the sum of which was this:—

On December 2nd, 1716, while Robert Brown, my father's servant, was sitting with one of the maids, a little before ten at night, in the dining room, which opened into the garden, they both heard one knocking at the door. Quickly it knocked again, and groaned. "It is Mr. Turpine," said Robert; "he has the stone, and used to groan so." He opened the door again twice or thrice, the knocking being twice or thrice repeated; but still seeing nothing, and being a little startled, they rose and went up to bed. When Robert came to the top of the garret stairs, he saw a hand-mill, which was at a little distance, whirled about very swiftly. The next day, he and the maid related these things to the other maid, who laughed heartily, and said: "What a couple of fools you are! I defy anything to fright me." After-churning in the evening, she put the butter in the tray, and had no sooner carried it into the dairy, than she heard a knocking on the shelf where several puncheons of milk stood, first above the shelf, then below. She took the candle, and searched both above and below; but being able to find nothing, threw down butter, tray and all, and ran away for life. The next evening, between five and six o'clock, my sister Molly, then about twenty years of age, sitting in the dining-room reading, heard, as if it were, the door that led into the hall, open, and a person walking in, that seemed to have on a silk nightgown, rustling and trailing along. It seemed to walk round her, then to the door, then round again; but she could see nothing. She thought, "It signifies nothing to run away; for, whatever it is, it can run faster than me." So she rose, put her book under her arm, and walked slowly away. After supper, she was sitting with my sister Sukey, (about a year older than her,) in one of the chambers, and telling her what had happened. She made quite light of it, telling her, "I wonder you are so easily frightened; I would fain see what would fright me." Presently a knocking began under the table. She took the candle and looked, but could find nothing. Then the iron casement began to clatter, and the lid of a warming-pan. Next the latch of the door moved up and down without ceasing. She started up, leaped into the

bed without undressing, pulled the bed-clothes over her head, and never ventured to look up till next morning. A night or two after, my sister Hetty, a year younger than my sister Molly, was waiting, as usual, between nine and ten, to take away my father's candle, when she heard one coming down the garret stairs, walking slowly by her, then going down the best stairs, then up the back stairs, and up the garret stairs; at every step it seemed the house shook from top to bottom. Just then my father knocked. She went in, took his candle, and got to bed as soon as possible. In the morning she told this to my eldest sister, who told her, "You know I believe none of these things; pray let me take away the candle to-night, and I will find out the trick." She accordingly took my sister Hetty'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 run 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 set 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.

The next morning, my sister telling my mother what had happened, she said, "If I hear anything myself, I shall know how to judge." Soon after, she begged her to come into the nursery. She did, and heard in the corner of the room, as it were, the violent rocking of a cradle; but no cradle had been there for some years. She was convinced it was preternatural, and earnestly prayed it might not disturb her in her own chamber at the hours of retirement; and it never did. She now thought it was proper to tell my father. But he was extremely angry, and said: "Sukey, I am ashamed of you;

these boys and girls frighten one another; but you are a woman of sense, and should know better. Let me hear of it no more."

At six in the evening he 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 the prayer for the king was repeated.

Being informed that Mr. Hoole, the vicar of Haxley, (an eminently pious and sensible man,) could give me some further information, I walked over to him. He said, "Robert Brown came over to me, and told me your father desired my company. When I came, he gave me an account of all that had happened; particularly the knocking during family prayer. But that evening (to my great satisfaction) we had no knocking at all. 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 wind-mill, 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 up stairs; 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 there 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. Mr. Wesley, observing that they were much affected, though asleep, sweating and trembling exceedingly, was very angry; and, pulling out a pistol, was going to fire at the place from whence the sound came. But I caught him by the arm, and said, 'Sir, you are convinced this is something preternatural. If so, you cannot hurt it; but you give it power to hurt you.' 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." Till this time my father had never heard the least disturbances in his study. But the next evening, as he attempted to go into his study, (of which none had any key but himself,) when he opened the door, it was thrust back with such violence as had like to have thrown him down. However, he thrust the door open, and went in. Presently there was knocking, first on one side, then on the other; and, after a time, in the next room, wherein my sister Nancy was. He went into that room, and (the noise continuing) adjured it to speak; but in vain. He then said, "These spirits love darkness; put out the candle, and perhaps it will speak." She did so, and he repeated his adjuration; but still there was only knocking, and no articulate sound. Upon this he said, "Nancy, two christians are an overmatch for the devil. Go all of you down stairs; it may be, when I am alone, he will have courage to speak." When she was gone, a thought came in, and he said, "If thou art the spirit of my son Samuel, I pray knock three knocks, and no more." Immediately all was silence; and there was no more knocking at all that night. I asked my sister Nancy (then about fifteen years old) whether she was not afraid when my father used that adjuration? She answered she was sadly afraid it would speak when she put out the candle; but she was not at all afraid in the daytime, when it walked after her as she swept the chambers, as it constantly did, and seemed to sweep after her; only she thought he might have done it for her, and saved her the trouble. By this time, all my sisters were so accustomed to these noises, that they gave them little disturbance. A gentle tapping at their bed-head 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, Kezzy, Jeffrey is knocking above," she would run up stairs, and pursue it from room to room, saying she desired no better diversion.

"A few nights after, my father and mother were just gone to bed, and the candle was not taken away, when they heard three blows, and a second, and a third three, as it were with a large oaken staff, struck upon a chest which stood by the bedside. My father immediately arose, put on his night gown, and hearing great noises below, took the candle and went down;

my mother walked by his side. As they went down the broad stairs, they heard as if a vessel full of silver was poured upon my mother's breast, and ran jingling down to her feet.—Quickly after there was a sound, as if a large iron ball was thrown among many bottles under the stairs; but nothing was hurt. Soon after, our large mastiff dog came and ran to shelter himself between them. While the disturbances continued, he used to bark and leap, and snap on one side and the other, and that frequently before any person in the room heard any noise at all. But after two or three days he used to tremble, and creep away before the noise began. And by this, the family knew it was at hand; nor did the observation ever fail. A little before my father and mother came into the hall, it seemed as if a very large coal was violently thrown upon the floor, and dashed all in pieces; but nothing was seen. My father then cried out, "Sukey, do you not hear? All the pewter is thrown about the kitchen." But when they looked, all the pewter stood in its place. There then was a loud knocking at the back door. My father opened it, but saw nothing. It was then at the fore door. He opened that, but it was still lost labor. After opening first the one, then the other, several times, he turned and went up to bed. But the noises were so violent all over the house, that they could not sleep till four in the morning.

"Several gentlemen and clergymen now earnestly advised my father to quit the house. But he constantly answered, 'No; let the devil flee from me; I will never flee from the devil.' But he wrote to my eldest brother, at London, to come down. He was preparing so to do, when another letter came, informing him the disturbances were over, after they had continued, the latter part of the time, day and night, from the second of December to the end of January."

SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE LIVING.

The following extracts, from various writers, are given to show that the idea of spirits holding communication with the living, is not new.

Many interesting statements are made in a work, entitled the

“Seeress of Prevorst,” which contains the experience of Madam Hauffe, of Prevorst, in Wirtemberg.

The following is an extract from her statement:

Unfortunately, my life is now so constituted, that my soul, as well as my spirit, sees into the spiritual world—which is, however, indeed upon the earth; and I see them, not only singly, but frequently, in multitudes, and of different kinds; and many departed souls.

I see many with whom I come into no approximation, and others who come to me, with whom I converse, and who remain near me for months; I see them at various times, by day and night, whether I am alone, or in company. I am perfectly awake at the time, and am not sensible of any circumstance or sensation that calls them up. I see them alike, whether I am strong or weak, plethoric, or in a state of inanition, glad, or sorrowful, amused, or otherwise; and I cannot dismiss them. Not that they are always with me, but they come at their own pleasure, like mortal visitors, and equally whether I am in a spiritual or corporeal state at the time. When I am in my calmest and most healthy sleep, they awaken me; I know not how, but I feel that I am awakened by them, and that I should have slept on, had they not come to my bedside. I observe frequently, that, when a ghost visits me by night, those who sleep in the same room with me, are, by their dreams, made aware of its presence; they speak afterwards of the apparition they saw in their dream, though I have not breathed a syllable on the subject to them. Whilst the ghosts are with me, I see and hear everything around me as usual, and can think of other subjects; and though I can avert my eyes from them, it is difficult for me to do it; I feel in a sort of magnetic *rapport* with them. They appear to me like a thin cloud, that one could see through, which, however, I cannot do. I never observed that they threw any shadow. I see them more clearly by sun or moonlight than in the dark; but whether I could see them in absolute darkness, I do not know. If any object comes between me and them, they are hidden from me. I cannot see them with closed eyes, nor when I turn my face from them; but I am so sensible of their presence, that I could designate the exact spot they are standing upon; and I can hear them speak, although I stop my ears. * * * The forms of the good spirits appear bright; those of the evil, dusky.

Their gait is like the gait of the living, only that the better spirits seem to float, and the evil ones tread heavier; so that their footsteps may sometimes be heard, not by me alone, but by those who are with me. They have various ways of attracting attention by other sounds besides speech; and this faculty they exercise frequently on those who can neither see them nor hear their voices. These sounds consist in sighing, knocking, noises as of the throwing of sand, or gravel, rustling of paper, rolling of a ball, shuffling as in slippers, &c., &c. They are also able to move heavy articles, and to open and shut doors, although they can pass through them unopened, or through the walls. I observe that the darker a spectre is, the stronger is his voice, and the more ghostly powers of making noises, and so forth, he seems to have. The sounds they produce are by means of the air, and the nerve-spirit, which is still in them. I never saw a ghost when he was in the act of producing any sound except speech, so that I conclude they cannot do it visibly; neither have I ever seen them in the act of opening or shutting a door, only directly afterwards. They move their mouths in speaking, and their voices are various, as those of the living. They cannot answer me all that I desire; wicked spirits are more willing or able to do this, but I avoid conversing with them. These I can dismiss by a written word, used as an amulet, and free others from them as well as myself.

When I talk to them piously, I have seen the spirits, especially the darker ones, draw in my words, as it were, whereby they become brighter; but I feel much weaker. The spirits of the happy invigorate me, and give me a very different feeling to the others: I observe that the happy spirits have the same difficulty in answering questions regarding earthly matters, as the evil ones have in doing it with respect to heavenly ones; the first belong not to earth, nor the last to heaven."

In the *Arcana Celestia*, p. 448, EMANUEL SWEDENBORG says:

"I have conversed with many after their decease, with whom I was acquainted during their life in the body; and such conversation has been of long continuance, sometimes for months, sometimes for a whole year; and with as clear

and distinct a voice, but internal, as with friends in the world. The subject of our discourse has sometimes turned on the state of man after death; and they have greatly wondered that no one in the life of the body knows, or believes, that he is to live in such a manner after the life of the body; when, nevertheless, it is a continuation of life, and that of such a nature, that the deceased passes from an obscure life into a clear and distinct one; and they who are in faith towards the Lord, into a life more and more clear and distinct. They have desired me to acquaint their friends on earth that they were alive, and to write to them an account of their states, as I have often told them many things respecting their friends: but my reply was, that if I should speak to them, or write to them, they would not believe, but would call my information mere fancy, and would ridicule it, asking for signs of miracles before they should believe: and thus I should be exposed to their derision: and that the things here declared are true, few, perhaps, will believe, for men deny, in their hearts, the existence of spirits; and they who do not deny such existence, are yet very unwilling to hear that any one can converse with spirits. Such a faith respecting spirits did not at all prevail in ancient times, but (does) at this day, when men wish, by reasonings of the brain, to explore what spirits are, whom, by definitions and suppositions, they deprive of every sense; and the more learned they wish to be, the more they do this."

The following is from an English work, entitled "Psychology; or, the Science of the Soul. By JOSEPH HADDOCK, M. D." It has recently been republished by Fowlers & Wells, of New York. We copy a brief extract from an interesting account of a young lady, who frequently went into a spontaneous state of extasis, or spiritual trance.

"The first of these spontaneous states of extasis, or spiritual trance, occurred on the 3rd of July, 1848, without any expectation or forewarning on her part. This did not last more than a quarter of an hour. Afterward she had several which lasted about half an hour; and since those, some which have extended

from four to ten hours. Of most of these states, she had a presentiment *while in the mesmeric state*; and in one instance foretold the occurrence nearly two months before it happened. But she knew nothing of what was forthcoming while in her ordinary wakeful state; and for the sake of experiment, and to test the truthfulness of her predictions, she was never informed when these trances were to occur; yet she was found correct, even to the exact time. They have usually been preceded by a feeling of quietness, and a somewhat confused sensation in the head, but no pain. Several gentlemen whom I had apprized of her statements, have been witnesses of their accuracy, and of the *genuineness* of this abnormal condition.

"In these states she preserved a recollection, at times, of the place she was actually in, and of the persons by whom she was surrounded, and, at the same time, she had a distinct and *sensational* perception of a higher and spiritual state of existence, and of a class of beings living in such a state. She would speak of these things while in the trance, and on her return to the normal state, she could recollect, and would again describe, what she had seen and heard. During the first trance, of four hours duration, which occurred on the 28th of September, 1848, she was so far elevated in her perceptions that she spoke of *this* world, as the *other* world, just as if she had passed from this life by death. * * * All that she has said tends to confirm the distinction between moral good and moral evil, and the impossibility of those who depart this life in a state of moral evil, attaining hereafter, to a state of moral goodness; in *this respect*, being strikingly dissimilar to the statements of Davis, the American clairvoyant; but who, according to his own subsequent statements, had never been in the state of true spiritual extasis, when he delivered his lectures in the mesmeric state.

"Her general statements represent man as a spiritual being, rising from the shell of the dead body immediately after death, a perfectly organized existence, and having a complete *sensational perception* of his fellow spiritual beings, and of the beautiful scenery of the spiritual spheres; that is, provided he possessed during his natural life a moral state, in harmony with those spheres. The male and female sex retaining all the characteristics necessary to a spiritual state of existence, and living together in a state of angelic union. Those who have

been interiorly united here, coming again into a state of union hereafter. She represents male and female spiritual beings, thus united, as appearing at a distance *as one*, and says that they are not called two, nor the married, but *the one*. Infants and young children, who have passed from this world by death, are stated to grow to a state of adolescence, but more speedily than in the natural world. During infancy and early childhood, they are confided to the care of good female spirits, or angels, whose delight it is to instruct them by various methods, especially *by representatives of things*. These spiritual spheres, and their spiritual inhabitants, are in close association with us, and exercise an influence over us, although we are unconscious of it. All that is wanted to have a *sensational* knowledge of their existence, is the closing of the external consciousness, and a full awakening of the internal consciousness. In the highest state of trance, she appeared to herself to be among spiritual beings, as one of themselves; at other times she appeared to them more shadowy. The first receptacle of the departed spirit, she describes as a sort of middle place or state, from which the good gradually ascend to higher and more delightful places; those that are the best having higher abodes than the others. All are welcomed by angelic spirits, on their arrival in the spirit-world; but the evil will not associate with the good, and recede of their own accord, more or less rapidly, to darker places below and to the left; but of these darker places, she had not been permitted to know so much as of the abodes of the good.

“ Being asked, in one of these long trances, if she now could explain *how* she saw distant individuals in the mesmeric state, she said: ‘ Yes; I can see how it is now: but I could not before ’; and then stated that if spirits wished to see each other, distance is no interruption; and words to the effect, that spirits are not subject to our laws of space and time; and that man, *as to his spirit*, is a subject of the laws of the spirit-world, even while united to his natural body. The opening of her spiritual consciousness, gives her a *sensational* perception of the spirits of all to whom her attention is directed; and thus, however distant the individual, he can be mentally present with her. But this, she further represented, as being accomplished by the aid of intermediate associate spirits, by whom the connection is completed; and she further represented every one as having a

connection with the spirit world *generally*; and a more *particular one*, by means of this associate spirit. Whenever Emma speaks of going into a trance, she always represents it as '*going away*,' and '*going a very long way*.' Of any one that is dead, she says: 'They have left their shell and gone away,' and will never admit that they are dead."

On the almost imperceptible change when the spirit leaves the body, SWEDENBORG says: (*a. c.—h. & h.*)

"As to what in general respects the life of souls, or spirits lately deceased, it was made manifest to me by much experience, that a man, when he comes into another life, does not know that he is in another life, imagining that he is still in the world, yea, in his own body; inasmuch, that when he is informed that he is a spirit, he is filled with wonder and astonishment, as well because he is altogether as a man, as to his senses, desires and thoughts, as from this, that he did not believe, when he lived in the world, that he was a spirit, or (as is the case with some,) that a spirit could be such. But when the astonishment ceases, then they wonder that the church should be in total ignorance concerning the state of man after death; that they should deny the existence of the spirit and dispute about substance, and parts with parts, which were never designed to have any place in the mind, because they obstruct the way to intelligence."

To the same effect speaks A. J. DAVIS, while in the clairvoyant state. He says, (see principles of nature, p. 658):

"And what may appear strange, is, that often when a spirit leaves the human form, and is introduced into this sphere, it for a moment cannot realize the change, for it is imperceptible. Spirits retain the same bodily form in the spiritual sphere, and at first they feel as if they were only transformed to a country they knew not. It is, however, not long after the transition, before the interior senses are opened; and then they behold and appreciate the change and the beauties with which they are surrounded. And some spirits appear to wonder that they did not see it before, and that they did not believe it while in the body; for now it appears so tangible and so perfectly agreeable with the universal teachings of natural law."

Again, on page 675, Mr. Davis says:

"It is a truth that spirits commune with one another while

one is in the body and the other in the higher spheres—and this too, when the person in the body is unconscious of the influx and hence, cannot be convinced of the fact; AND THIS TRUTH WILL ERE LONG PRESENT ITSELF IN THE FORM OF A LIVING DEMONSTRATION. And the world will hail with delight the ushering in of that era when the interiors of men will be opened, and the spiritual communion will be established such as is now being enjoyed by the inhabitants of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, because of their superior refinement.”

THE END.



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