

SINGULAR REVELATIONS.

EXPLANATION

AND

HISTORY

OF THE

MYSTERIOUS COMMUNION WITH SPIRITS,

COMPREHENDING

THE RISE AND PROGRESS

OF

THE MYSTERIOUS NOISES

IN WESTERN NEW-YORK,

GENERALLY RECEIVED AS SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.

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PREFACE.

FROM the time the first page of this work in manuscript was finished, the authors have had stronger and stronger evidence that they are but discharging their duty in publishing to the world, not what is entirely new, but something which has been often muzzled and concealed by those who dare not tell what they have seen, felt and heard, in consequence of their fears of the hisses and laughter of skeptics. A distinguished professor of a popular and imparadising science, remarked not long since to a citizen of the city of Auburn: "These demonstrations are not new to me. I have heard them and believed they were produced by the spirits of my departed friends for several years, *but I dare not tell others of it.* If I do so, I shall be branded as a lunatic, become unpopular and lose my present influence." This individual was invited to go and investigate the demonstrations in Auburn, but declined. A prejudiced and skeptical community stood ready to ask his opinion after the investigation, and if he expressed in its favor, to throw the same epithets upon him which others had received. Other men equally as learned and distinguished, have investigated and become convinced, but dare not express their convictions in public. We have in our minds two editors of newspapers—one the editor of a weekly paper and who is a distinguished anti-slavery lecturer, and the other the editor of a daily city paper—who have said in the presence of a number of persons that they believed these sounds and communications were from Spirits, but when they came before the public in their editorial capacities, dare not say more than call these demonstrations a humbug of the nineteenth century, because such was the popular opinion of a

certain portion of the upper-tendom. The bowing to popular opinion and prejudice in this matter, is one of the strong reasons that have prompted us to issue the present edition of three thousand copies of this work. In preparing it for the press, we have been cheered on by communications and encouragement from the same kind and friendly source which are believed to be the spirits of the departed.

We are aware that our work will meet with opposition, and we know from what source that opposition will come. A very worthy and *christian* clergyman, and no doubt a great admirer of that law and that religion which burned in chains a Huss and a Jerome, who did not think the same thoughts that their *brothers* did, and which bound a Rogers to the stake and prompted *christian* puritans to hang Quakers and whip Baptists, remarked in the presence of several members of the Church of which he is Pastor, that the believers in this spiritualism ought to be hung. That class which has heretofore opposed every new science, will respond to the *mild* remark of this advocate of the principles and practice of Him who returned good for evil, and exclaimed with His dying breath, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," and will raise their holy hands in horror at the truths it contains, notwithstanding such truths are sustained by the gifted and good, whose followers they profess to be. The class who think for themselves, regardless of proscribing creeds and dictation from others will investigate this matter. We have received a good share of genteel and *christian* epithets, for investigating the subject thus far, but ask no favors or sympathy on account of this. We have lived to learn the cause of the opposition which this has received, and to learn that "TRUTH IS MIGHTY AND WILL PREVAIL."

Should this edition meet with a ready and rapid sale, as present indications show it will, another edition will be issued, more carefully prepared and enlarged.

AUBURN, January 1, 1850.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamed of in your Philosophy."

IN presenting this work to the public, we are not unconscious of the unpopularity of the subject with the mass of the community. Nor are we unconscious of the fact, that we may call down the ridicule of some part of the press and thousands of readers, who have heard of these manifestations only as an idle tale of "a haunted house," or as some common "spook story," growing out of the excited imagination of persons possessed of more marvellousness than causality, and therefore easily led to believe in anything that seems wonderful and unaccountable, whether it comes well authenticated or not. But a consciousness of having fairly, impartially, critically, and we may say *skeptically* examined the subject for the last two years in many different places, and under a great variety of circumstances, and that we are not alone in our investigations, but supported by hundreds of calm considerate men, who have investigated as thoroughly and skeptically as ourselves, we have no hesitation in laying the facts before the world as a phenomena, which if not new in all respects, is certainly in the strangeness, growth and ex-

tent of the manifestations, wholly unprecedented in the annals of the world.

We are actuated by no desire to feed the popular credulity, or to excite the wonder-loving faculties of the ignorant and superstitious. They have already been made the prey of artful and designing men too long, and we are more desirous of stripping nature of the *supernaturalism* which has been thrown around her by the crafty plunderers of the ignorant, than to have their superstitions wrought up to a still higher state of excitement. It is for this reason, that we deem it important that a full explanation of the facts embodied in this work should be made, and a reasonable and *natural* explanation given of the phenomena, which shall satisfy all, that those who have investigated the most thoroughly, have really the least fears and superstitious feeling in regard to the matter. While they have thus by investigation divested themselves of all feeling of superstition, they have become fully satisfied of the importance of the manifestations, as teaching the proximity of spirits, and their power to make themselves known to persons who still remain in the visible case-ment which has become so common to us that we do not wonder, even when minutely surveying the "wonderful" machinery by which it is kept in motion. In doing this, we at the outset disclaim all pretensions to advocating *supernaturalism*. We place too high an estimate on the perfect workings of the laws of nature as set in motion by the "Great Spirit," which pervades, encompasses and governs all things, to attribute the beautiful and fast spreading facts, proving a direct influx of spiritual influences into the world, to anything more or less than another link in the great chain of nature's laws which is but just developing itself to man. The why of its appearance just at this time, or the reason why it has not become more extensively known before, we are as unable to tell as we should be to tell *why* all the great discoveries in science were not made known to man at once, instead of waiting the slow de-

velopment of the intellect of man, and thus prepare him for the gradual reception of the mighty changes which have taken place from the early stages of human development to the present time. As the earth was not formed in a few short years in its present state of geological developments, so man has not all at once sprang to his present state of refinement and knowledge. Gradual growth in the refining process, seems to be the universal law of nature.

As this is a subject upon which the world seems at the present time to be bestowing an unusual amount of attention, it may not be unprofitable for the reader and ourselves to spend some little time in the examination, to see if all the strange facts related in the following pages may not be rational and possible, if not highly probable, even to the most skeptical.

The vast and entire separation made by the old *philosophy*(?) and theology between spirit and matter, has led thousands of philosophical minds to reject all idea of any existence of persons beyond the tangible form which men now occupy. They have failed entirely of obtaining from old traditions, proof which looked rational to them of any such existence. We are prepared to sympathize with those who are thus skeptical about any existence beyond the present, for we long stood in precisely the same condition. The great difficulty in the way of such minds as before intimated, is the great break in the chain between tangible and (to us) intangible substance. The fact that men could not, in a normal state, see the more refined substance to which we give the name spirit, has led theologians to declare that there was an existence, not only intangible, but absolutely something beyond, and *entirely separate* from matter.

Men of any degree of philosophy, not having positive proof of spiritual existence, have discovered this glaring inconsistency, and rejected every theory offered in favor of an existence beyond the decay of the visible body. But the developments of the last few years

in Clairvoyance and Psychological science, have convinced many of the skeptics in regard to future existence, that there is a positive identity of spirits of persons who have passed on beyond this state of existence.

In regard to the *facts* presented in the following pages, they will be accompanied with proof too positive and conclusive to need a word in this connection in vindication of their truth. The idea of a fraud so extensively entered into by persons whose integrity has never been impeached—without any apparent motive—with great annoyance to themselves—without compensation in a pecuniary sense, would be far more mysterious and unaccountable, than to admit it to be just what it purports. It will also be borne in mind, that in this case, those who first heard these sounds, were not only subject to all the annoyance of visitors of all kinds and classes, but they were made the subjects of ridicule, and slanders were rife against their honesty in this matter, and the grossest insinuations against their moral character. As it spread from one house to another and from one neighborhood to another, the abuse of the first became somewhat modified, and it was divided on all who would not shut their eyes and ears to the facts transpiring around them. Since the public investigations that have taken place upon the subject, many have become convinced of the fact that the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, have no agency in producing them, at least to their own knowledge, and we trust that the effect of this work may be to clear all those who have been falsely accused of fraud and deception. It is with this view that many of our friends and the friends of those where it first appeared, have urged us to go forward with this work. If we should accomplish this, it would not be among the least of the objects for which we labor.

If there are any, who, after carefully weighing the testimony here set forth, still discredit it, let them come forward, investigate and prove to the world that it is

a deception, and how it is done, and all candid men will acknowledge themselves greatly indebted to them. If they fail in proving it to be a deception, let them give a better and more philosophical solution of the phenomena, and place the world under lasting obligations to them.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST APPEARANCES OF THE "MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS" IN
THE TOWN OF ARCADIA, WAYNE COUNTY, NEW-YORK.

"The times have been
That when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end;—but now, they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our seats. This is more strange
Than such a murder is!"

THE first well authenticated history that we have of the sounds so unaccountable to those who have heard them, was in a house occupied by Mr. MICHAEL WEEKMAN in a little village known by the name of Hydesville in the town of Arcadia, Wayne county. He resided in the house for about eighteen months, and left sometime in the year 1847. Mr. Weekman makes the statement in substance as follows: That one evening, about the time of retiring, he heard a rapping on the outside door, and what was rather unusual for him, instead of familiarly bidding them "come in," stepped to the door and opened it. He had no doubt of its being some one who wished to come in, but, to his surprise, found no one there. He went back and proceeded to undress, when, just before getting into bed, he heard another rap at the door, loud and dis-

ting. He stepped to the door quickly and opened it, but, as before, found no one there. He stepped out and looked around, supposing that some one was imposing upon him. He could discover no one and went back into the house. After a short time he heard the rapping again, and he stepped (it being often repeated) and held on to the latch, so that he might ascertain if any one had taken that means to annoy him. The rapping was repeated, the door opened instantly, but no one was to be seen! He states that he could feel the jar of the door very plainly when the rapping was heard. As he opened the door he sprang out and went around the house, but no one was in sight. His family were fearful to have him go out lest some one intended to harm him. It always remained a mystery to him, and finally as the rapping did not at that time continue, passed from his mind, except when something of the same nature occurred to revive it.

They were at one time disturbed by a manifestation of a different nature, which might be thought more incredible than the former, had not facts proved that such occurrences were common in the families where the first class of manifestations are heard. One night their little girl, then about eight years of age, was heard to scream from fright, so that the family all were alarmed by her cries and went to her assistance. This was about midnight. She told them that something like a hand had passed over her face and head; that she had felt it on the bed and all over her, but did not become so much alarmed until it touched her face. It seemed cold, and so badly had she been frightened, that it was a long time before she could tell the cause of her alarm. It was several days before she could be induced to go into the same room to sleep.

All this *might* have occurred, and been only "the idle fabric of a dream;" and we should be inclined to the belief that such was the case, had we not had the most conclusive evidence that such manifestations were quite common, not only in that house, but various oth-

ers where any of these strange occurrences have happened.

We hear nothing more of Mr. Weekman being disturbed by the rapping or other manifestations, or there being anything of the kind with that exception, until after the house was occupied by the family of Mr. JOHN D. Fox. It was reserved for that family to be the instruments of communicating to the world, or to this part of it, this most singular affair. They were the ones who first, as if by accident, found out that there was an intelligence manifested even in this rapping, which at first appeared nothing more than an annoying and unaccountable noise.

The family of Mr. Fox, were well known in the neighborhood where they resided. Mr. and Mrs. Fox were themselves members of the Methodist Episcopal church, of which they had for many years been exemplary members, and had sustained a character unimpeachable for truth and veracity. No one who knew them, had the least suspicion of their honesty or truthfulness. At the time these occurrences first took place in the family, there were living with their parents three daughters, the youngest about twelve years of age.

There are, probably, few families in which such an occurrence could have taken place, where it would have created a greater degree of surprise and fear than in this one. They were entirely unacquainted with the history of any similar occurrence in the world, and brought up in the common routine of religious belief. They were, as in fact all the world really was and still is, entirely unprepared for such a development of the power of spirits to make themselves known to us by sounds or other ways.

From the family we gather the following facts, which are in substance the same as those embodied in a pamphlet published just after the first manifestations at their house.

They moved into the house (formerly occupied by Mr. Weekman) in the early part of the month of De-

ember, 1847, and first heard the sounds in the latter part of March, 1848. The sounds first appeared to be a slight knocking in one of the bed-rooms on the floor. When the rapping was heard, they felt a tremulous motion or jar on the floor, and distinctly felt it while in bed. This feeling has been observed by most persons who have examined the subject and heard the sounds. The best idea we may be able to give of the feeling, is to say that it very nearly resembles the application of a galvanic battery to whatever you stand upon. The jar seems more of that nature than that of a stroke from any tangible substance. The first time they heard it, was in the evening just after they had retired. The whole family occupied at that time the same room, and all distinctly heard the rapping. They arose and searched with a light to find the cause of the noise, which continued all the time they were searching, and near the same spot. It continued that night until they all fell asleep, which was not until nearly or quite midnight. From this time the noise continued to be heard every night.

In the evening of the 31st of March, they concluded to call in the neighbors, the noise still continuing. At this time, none of the family had ever noticed it in the day time. On the evening above alluded to, (31st March,) they retired uncommonly early, as they had been disturbed and broken of their rest for several nights in a vain attempt to discover from whence the sounds proceeded. They thought that this night they would not be disturbed by it, whatever it was.

Mr. Fox had not retired when the usual sounds commenced. The girls who occupied another bed in the same room, heard the sounds and endeavored to imitate them by snapping their fingers. The attempt was first made by the youngest girl, then about twelve years old. When she made the noise with her fingers, the sounds were repeated just as many times as she made them. The sound was not like that which she made, only the number of raps. When she stopped snapping

her fingers, the sounds stopped for a short time. One of the other girls then said in sport, "Now do what I do; count one, two, three, four, five, six," &c., at the same time striking one hand in the other. The same number of blows or sounds, were repeated as in the other case. As this slight manifestation of intelligence was displayed, she began to be alarmed, and desisted from trying any more experiments. Mrs. Fox then said "count ten," and there were ten distinct strokes or sounds. She then said, will you tell the age of —, (one of the children,) and it was answered by the same number of raps that she was years of age. In like manner, the age of her different children was told correctly by this unseen visitor.

Mrs. Fox then asked if it was a human being that was making that noise, and if it was, to manifest it by making the same noise. There was no sound in answer to this question. She then asked if it was a spirit, and requested if it was, that it would manifest it by making two distinct sounds. As soon as she had made the request, she heard the two raps as she desired. She then proceeded to inquire if it was an injured spirit, and to request an answer in the same way, and the rapping was repeated. In this way it answered her until she ascertained that it purported to be the spirit of a man, and that he was murdered in that house by a person who had occupied it some years before; that he was a pedler and murdered for his money. To the question of how old he was, there were *thirty-one* distinct raps. She also ascertained by the same means that he was a married man and had left a wife and five children; that his wife was dead, and had been dead two years.

After ascertaining so much, she asked the question: "Will the noise continue if I call in the neighbors?" The answer was by rapping in the affirmative. They then, for the first time, began to call in their neighbors to help, if possible, solve this great mystery.

They at first called in their nearest neighbors, who came, thinking they would have a hearty laugh at the

family for being frightened; but when the first lady that came in found that the noise, whatever it might be, could tell the age of herself as well as others, and give correct answers to questions on matters of which the family of Mr. Fox was entirely ignorant, she concluded that there was something beside a subject of ridicule and laughter in those unseen but audible communications. These neighbors insisted upon calling in others, who came, and after investigation, were as much confounded as the first.

The family being somewhat alarmed and much fatigued, left the house, with the exception of Mr. Fox, to spend the night, and left the house in the possession of Mr. Fox and a Mr. Redfield. The next day the excitement began to spread, and the house was filled with anxious seekers for the unknown and invisible visitor. Through that day and up to that time, there were no sounds heard in the day-time.

On Sunday morning, April 2d, the noise commenced in the day-time, and was heard all that day by all who could get into the house, as the crowd who came from all quarters was much greater than the house would hold. We have heard it estimated, that at one time there were as many as five hundred people who had gathered to hear the sounds, so great was the excitement at the commencement of these strange occurrences.

On Saturday evening, there was a committee appointed to ask questions and report what the result was, and it was nothing of any importance differing from what is already related.

As a confirmation of what we have now stated as being related to us by the family, we give the following extracts from the testimony of Mr. WILLIAM DUESLER of Arcadia, and an immediate neighbor of Mr. Fox, at the time of the transaction. This statement was published in a pamphlet by E. E. LEWIS, Esq., of Canandaigua, New-York, which contains the testimony of many persons in the neighborhood. Mr. Duesler, says: "I live in this place. I moved from Cayuga

county here, last October. I live within a few rods of the house in which these noises have been heard. The first I heard anything about them, was a week ago last Friday evening, (31st day of March.) Mrs. REDFIELD came over to my house to get my wife to go over to Mr. Fox's. Mrs. Redfield appeared to be very much agitated. My wife wanted I should go with them, and I accordingly went. When she told us what she wanted us to go over there for, I laughed at her and ridiculed the idea that there was anything mysterious in it. I told her it was all nonsense, and that we would find out the cause of the noise, and that it could easily be accounted for. This was about nine o'clock in the evening. There were some twelve or fourteen persons there when I got there. Some were so frightened that they did not want to go into the room. I went into the room and sat down on the bed. Mr. Fox asked questions, and I heard the rapping which they had spoken of, distinctly. I felt the bedstead jar when the sound was produced.

Mrs. Fox then asked if it would answer my questions if I asked any, and if so rap. It then rapped three times. I then asked if it was an injured spirit, and it rapped. I asked if it had come to hurt any one who was present, and it did not rap. I then reversed this question, and it rapped. I asked if I or my father had injured it, (as we had formerly lived in the house,) and there was no noise. Upon asking the negative of these questions, the rapping was heard. I then asked if Mr. —, (naming a person who had formerly lived in the house,) had injured it, and if so manifest it by rapping, and it made three knocks louder than common, and at the same time the bedstead jarred more than it had done before. I then inquired if it was murdered for money, and the knocking was heard. I then requested it to rap, when I mentioned the sum of money for which it was murdered. I then asked if it was one hundred, two, three or four, and when I came to five hundred, the rapping was heard. All in the room said

they heard it distinctly. I then asked the question if it was five hundred dollars, and the rapping was heard.

After this, I went over and got ARTEMAS W. HYDE to come over. He came over. I then asked over nearly the same questions as before, and got the same answers. Mr. Redfield went after DAVID JEWELL and wife, and Mrs. Hyde also came. After they came in, I asked the same questions over again, and got the same answers. * * * * * I then asked it to rap my age—the number of years of my age. It rapped thirty times. This is my age, and I do not think any one about here knew my age but myself and my own family. I then told it to rap my wife's age, and it rapped thirty times, which is her exact age; several of us counted it at the time. I then asked it to rap A. W. Hyde's age, and it rapped thirty-two, which he says is his age; he was there at the time and counted it with the rest of us. Then Mrs. A. W. Hyde's age, and it rapped thirty-one, which she said was her age; she was also there at the time. I then continued to ask it to rap the age of different persons, (naming them,) in the room, and it did so correctly as they all said.

I then asked the number of children in the different families in the neighborhood, and it told them correctly in the usual way, by rapping. Also the number of deaths that had taken place in the families, and it told correctly. I then asked it to rap its own age, and it rapped thirty-one times distinctly. I then asked if it left a family and it rapped. I asked it to rap the number of children it left, and it rapped five times; then the number of girls, and it rapped three; then the number of boys, and it rapped twice. Before this I had asked if it was a man, and it answered by rapping, it was; if it was a pedler, and it rapped.

I then asked in regard to the time it was murdered, and in the usual way, by asking the different days of the week, and the different hours of the day; that it was murdered on a Tuesday night, about twelve o'clock. The rapping was heard only when this particular time

was mentioned. When it was asked if it was murdered on a Wednesday or Thursday or Friday night, &c., there was no rapping. I asked if it carried any trunk, and it rapped that it did. Then how many, and it rapped once. In the same way we ascertained that it had goods in the trunk, and that ——— took them when he murdered him; and that he had a pack of goods besides.

I asked if its wife was living, and it did not rap; if she was dead, and it rapped. I then asked it to rap the number of years the wife had been dead, and it rapped twice. In the same way I ascertained that its children were now living; that they lived in this state, —and after asking if such and such county, (naming over the different counties,) at last when I asked if they lived in Orleans county, the rapping was heard and at no other time. This was tried over several times, and the result was always the same. I then tried to ascertain the first letters of its name, by calling over the different letters of the alphabet. I commenced with A, and asked if that was the initial of its first name; there was no rapping. When I came to C, the rapping was heard, and at no other letter in the alphabet. I then asked in the same way, in regard to the initials of its sir name; and when I asked if it was R, the rapping commenced. We then tried all the other letters, but could get no answer by the usual rapping. I then asked if we could find out the whole name by reading over all the letters of the alphabet, and there was no rapping. I then reversed the question, and the rapping was heard. * * * * There were a good many more questions asked on that night by myself and others, which I do not now remember. They were all answered readily in the same way. I stayed in the house until about twelve o'clock, and then came home. Mr. Redfield and Mr. Fox stayed in the house that night.

Saturday night I went over again, about seven o'clock. The house was full of people when I got there. They said it had been rapping some time. I

went into the room. It was rapping in answer to questions when I went in. I went to asking questions, and asked over some of the same ones that I did the night before, and it answered me the same as it did then. I also asked different questions, and it answered them. Some of those in the room wanted me to go out and let some one else ask the questions. I did so, and came home. There were as many as three hundred people in and around the house at this time, I should think. HIRAM SOVERHILL, Esq., and VOLNEY BROWN, asked it questions while I was there, and it rapped in answer to them.

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 the cellar, to manifest it by rapping, or any other noise or sign. The moment I asked the question, there was a sound like the falling of a stick about a foot long and half an inch through, on the floor in the bedroom over our heads. It did not seem to bound at all; there was but one sound. I then told Stephen Smith to go right up and examine the room, and see if he could discover the cause of the noise. He came back and said he could discover nothing,—that there was no one in the room or in that part of the house. I then asked two more questions, and it rapped in the usual way. We all went up stairs and made a thorough search, but could find nothing.

I then got a knife and 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 bedroom and the cellar; no place where anything could be secreted to make the noise. When this noise was heard in the bedroom, I could feel a slight tremulous motion or jar.

* * * * On Monday night, I heard this noise again, and asked the same questions I did before, and

got the same answers. This is the last time I have heard any 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 have understood from Johnson and others, who have lived there before ——— moved there, that there were no such sounds heard there while they occupied the house. I never believed in haunted houses, or heard or saw anything but what I could account for before; but this I cannot account for. (Signed) WM. DUESLER."

April 12, 1848.

To the same effect is the testimony of the following persons, whose certificates are published in the work alluded to, viz: John D. Fox, Walter Scotten, Elizabeth Jewel, Lorren Tenney, James Bridger, Chauncey P. Losey, Benjamin F. Clark, Elizabeth Fox, Vernelia Culver, William D. Storer, Marvin P. Loser, David S. Fox and Mary Redfield.

These are only a few selected from the immediate neighbors of Mr. Fox. The certificate of persons who have examined this matter up to this time, would swell to hundreds if not thousands.

CHAPTER III.

HISTORY OF SIMILAR TRANSACTIONS IN THE WESLEY FAMILY, (FATHER OF
REV. JOHN WESLEY,) AT EPWORTH, ENGLAND, IN 1716.

IN order to show that the foregoing narrative is not wholly without a parallel in the world's history, and that if the present manifestations are a deception, those who are carrying it on have no claim to the credit of originality, we devote the present chapter to extracts from the proofs of similar transactions in the "Wesley family" so long ago as 1716. The accounts come too well authenticated to be doubted, and have never, to our knowledge, been disputed by persons of any pretensions to a knowledge of the history of that family, or having the least confidence in the word of those whose character has never been impeached. Nine of that family testify to the same things as well as others. We find this narrative in a book called "Memoirs of the Wesley Family," by ADAM CLARK, LL. D., F. A. S., second edition, 1846.

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, in 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. Robert rose and opened it, but could see nobody. 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 are you! 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 night-gown, 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 old-

er 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 fast 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 ran into the kitchen, where it was drumming on the inside of the screen. When she went round, it was drumming on the outside; and so always on the side opposite to her. Then she heard a knocking at the back kitchen door. She ran to it, unlocked it softly, and when the knocking was repeated, suddenly opened it; but nothing was to be seen. As soon as she had shut it, the knocking began again. She opened it again, but could see nothing. When she went to shut the door, it was violently thrust against her; she let it fly open, but nothing appeared. She went again to shut it, and it was again thrust against her; but she set her knee and her should-

er 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 Haxey, (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 inform me, was heard every night about a quarter before ten. It was toward the top of the house, on the outside, at the north-east corner, resembling the

loud creaking of a saw; or rather that of a windmill, when the body of it is turned about, in order to shift the sails to the wind. We then heard a knocking over our heads; and Mr. Wesley, catching up a candle, said, "Come, Sir, now you shall hear for yourself." We went 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 on-

ly 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 he 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."

The following are copied from the same work, which copies some twelve or fifteen letters that passed between different members of the family on the subject of these disturbances.

Letter III.—From Mr. S. Wesley to his Mother.

"DEAR MOTHER:—Those who are so wise as not to believe any supernatural occurrences, though ever so well attested, could find a hundred questions to ask

about those strange noises you wrote me an account of; but for my part, I know not what question to put, which, if answered, would confirm me more in the belief of what you tell me. Two or three I have heard from others. Was there never a new maid or man in the house that might play tricks? Was there nobody above in the garrets when the walking was there? Did all the family hear it together when they were in one room, or at one time? Did it seem to all to be in the same place, at the same time? Could not cats, or rats, or dogs be the sprites? Was the whole family asleep when my father and you went down stairs? Such doubts as these being replied to, though they could not, as God himself assures us, convince them who believe not Moses and the prophets, yet would strengthen such as do believe. As to my particular opinion concerning the events foreboded by these noises, I cannot, I must confess, form any. I think, since it was not permitted to speak, all guesses must be in vain. The end of spirits' actions is yet more hidden than that of men, and even this latter puzzles the most subtil politicians. That we may be struck so as to prepare for any ill, may, it is possible, be one design of Providence. It is surely our duty and wisdom to do so.

Dear mother, I beg your blessing on your dutiful and affectionate son.

S. WESLEY.

Jan. 19, 1716, '17, Saturday, Dean's Yard, Westminster."

Letter IV.—From Mrs. Wesley to her Son Samuel.

January 25 or 27, 1716, '17.

DEAR SAM:—Though I am not one of those that will believe nothing supernatural, but am rather inclined to think there would be frequent intercourse between good spirits and us, did not our deep lapse into sensuality prevent it; yet I was a great while ere I could credit anything of what the children and servants reported concerning the noises they heard in

several parts of our house. Nay, after I had heard them myself, I was willing to persuade myself and them that it was only rats or weasels that disturbed us; and having been formerly troubled with rats, which were frightened away by sounding a horn, I caused a horn to be procured, and made them blow it all over the house. But from that night they began to blow, the noises were more loud and distinct, both day and night, than before; and that night we rose and went down I was entirely convinced that it was beyond the power of any human creature to make such strange and various noises.

As to your questions, I will answer them particularly: but withal, I desire my answers may satisfy none but yourself; for I would not have the matter imparted to any. We had both man and maid new this last Martimas, yet I do not believe either of them occasioned the disturbance, both for the reason above mentioned, and because they were more affrighted than any body else. Besides, we have often heard the noise when they were in the room by us; and the maid particularly was in such a panic that she was almost incapable of all business, nor durst ever go from one room to another, or stay by herself a minute, after it began to be dark.

The man, Robert Brown, whom you well know, was most visited by it, lying in the garret, and has been often frightened down barefoot, and almost naked, not daring to stay alone to put on his clothes; nor do I think, if he had power, he would be guilty of such villainy. When the walking was heard in the garret, Robert was in bed in the next room, in a sleep so sound that he never heard your father and me walk up and down, though we walked not softly I am sure. All the family has heard it together, in the same room, at the same time, particularly at family prayers. It always seemed to all present in the same place at the same time; though often before any could say, it is here, it would remove to another place.

All the family, as well as Robin, were asleep when your father and I went down stairs, nor did they wake in the nursery when we held the candle close by them; only we observed that Hetty trembled exceedingly in her sleep, as she always did before the noise awaked her. It commonly was nearer her than the rest, which she took notice of, and was much frightened because she thought it had a particular spite at her. I could multiply particular instances, but I forbear. I believe your father will write to you about it shortly. Whatever may be the design of Providence in permitting these things, I cannot say. Secret things belong to God. But I entirely agree with you, that it is our wisdom and duty to prepare seriously for all events.

S. WESLEY."

The following is an extract from an account of one of the sisters (Nancy) to her brother Jack. It is testimony which goes to show that other things herein related were not entirely unknown to the "Wesley Family."

"When five or six were set in the nursery together, a cradle would seem to be strongly rocked in the room over head, though no cradle had ever been there. One night she was sitting on the press bed, playing at cards with some of my sisters, when my sisters Molly, Hetty, Patty, and Kezzy, were in the room, and Robert Brown. The bed on which my sister Nancy sat was lifted up with her on it. She leaped down, and said, "Surely old Jeffry would not run away with her." However, they persuaded her to sit down again, which she had scarce done, when it was again lifted up several times successively a considerable height; upon which she left her seat, and would not be prevailed upon to sit there any more.

"Whenever they began to mention Mr. S., it presently began to knock, and continued to do so till they changed the discourse. All the time my sister Sukey was writing her last letter to him, it made a very

great noise all round the room; and the night after she set out for London, it knocked till morning with scarce any intermission.

“Mr. Hoole read prayers once, but it knocked as usual at the prayers for the king and prince. The knockings at those prayers were only toward the beginning of the disturbances, for a week or thereabouts.”

Although the disturbances generally ceased after a few weeks at the House of the Wesleys, we have good evidence that it was manifested frequently in the presence of one of the daughters for *thirty-four years*, and how much longer the history does not inform us. The following is a further extract on this subject :

“But there is a fact of which all Mr. Wesley’s biographers are ignorant, namely, that Jeffrey, as the spirit was called, continued to molest some branches of the family for many years. We have seen that Miss Emily Wesley was the first who gave it the name Jeffrey, from an old man of that name who had died there; and that she was more disturbed by it than any of the family. I have an original letter of her’s to her brother John, dated February 16, 1750, thirty-four years after the time, as is generally supposed, that Jeffrey had discontinued his operations, in which he is named. Emily was now Mrs. Harper, having married a person of that name, an apothecary, who first lived in Epworth, and afterward in London, or near it; and the letter is addressed to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Foundry.

DEAR BROTHER,——I want most sadly to see you, and talk some hours with you, as in times past. Some things are too hard for me; these I want you to solve. One doctrine of yours, and of many more, namely: no happiness can be found in any or all things in this world; that, as I have sixteen years of my own experience which lie flatly against it, I want to talk with you about. Another thing is, that won-

derful thing, called by us Jeffrey. You won't laugh at me for being superstitious, if I tell you how certainly that *something* calls on me against any extraordinary new affliction ; but so little is known of the invisible world, that I, at least, am not able to judge whether it be a friendly or an evil spirit." * * * *

AMELIA HARPER."

The following remarks of Dr. Clark are so appropriate to this time and this subject, that we give them in this place :

"The story of the disturbances at the parsonage house in Epworth is not unique ; I myself, and others of my particular acquaintances, were eye and ear witnesses of transactions of a similar kind, which could never be traced to any source of trick or imposture, and appeared to be the forerunners of two very tragical events in the disturbed family ; after which no noise or disturbance ever took place. In the history of my own life I have related the matter in sufficient detail.

Dr. Priestley, who first published the preceding papers, says of the whole story, that 'it is perhaps the best authenticated and best told story of the kind that is anywhere extant ; on which account, and to exercise the ingenuity of some speculative persons, he thought it not undeserving of being published' : *Preface*, p. xi. After this concession, he then enters into a train of arguing, to show that there could be nothing supernatural in it ; for Dr. P., as a materialist, could give no credit to any account of angels, spirits, &c., the existence of which he did not credit ; and because he could see no good end to be answered by it, therefore he thinks he may safely conclude no miracle was wrought. Such argumentation can justify no man in disbelieving a story of this kind, told so circumstantially, and witnessed by such a number of persons, whose veracity was beyond doubt, and whose capability to judge between fact and fiction, trick and genuine operation, was

beyond that of most persons, who, in any country or age, have come forward to give testimony on a subject of this nature. He at last gets rid of the whole matter thus: "What appears most probable, at this distance of time, in the present case, is, that it was a trick of the servants, assisted by some of their neighbors; and that nothing was meant by it besides puzzling the family and amusing themselves; and that such a secret should be kept, so that the matter was never discovered, is not at all to be wondered at." We can scarcely suppose that this mode of reasoning satisfied the mind of Dr. Priestley, else he must have been satisfied much more easily on a subject which struck at the vitals of his own system, than he would have been on any doctrine relative to philosophy and chemistry. He had Mrs. Wesley's letter before him, which stated that the servants could not be employed in the work, for reasons which she there adduces; and especially, because those very servants were often in the room with themselves, when the disturbances were most rife. But all suppositions of this kind are completely nullified by the preceding letter of Mrs. Harper, (formerly Emelia Wesley,) which states that even to thirty-four years afterward, Jeffrey continued to molest her. Did her father's servants and the Epworth neighbors pursue her for thirty-four years through her various settlements, from 1716 to 1750, and were even at that time playing their pranks against her in London? How ridiculous and absurd! and this is the very best solution of these facts that Dr. Priestley could arrive at in deference to his system of materialism! The letter of Mrs. Harper I consider of vast importance, as it removes the last subterfuge of determinate incredulity and false philosophy on this subject.

A philosopher should not be satisfied with the reasons advanced by Dr. Priestley. He who will maintain his creed in opposition to his senses, and the most undisguised testimony of the most respectable witnesses, had better at once, for his own credit's sake, throw

the whole story in the region of doubt, where all such relations, no matter how authenticated,

"Upwhirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the back side of the world far off,
Into a limbus large and broad!"

And instead of its being called the paradise of fools, it may be styled the limbus of philosophic materialists, into which they hurry whatever they cannot comprehend, choose not to believe, or please to call superstitious and absurd. And they treat such matters so because they quadrate not with principles unfounded on the divine testimony, feebly supported by true philosophy, and contradictory to the plain, unbiassed, good common sense of nineteen-twentieths of mankind.

But my business is to relate facts, of which the reader must make what use he chooses."

Precisely similar occurrences took place in Winesburg, Germany, and other places, from the year 1825 to 1828, the authentic accounts of which are given in a work by JUSTINUS KERNER, called "The Seeress of Provorst."

These accounts come down to us sustained by the most positive testimony, and are beyond dispute, to say nothing of the well authenticated cases which come to us by those whom we know, but who have been ashamed to let the world know what they have themselves experienced, and so keep their secret until others more daring shall lay before the world similar facts, when they step forward and add their mite to the testimony.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCERNING THESE SOUNDS AND THE PROBABLE PHILOSOPHY THEREOF.

"We know in day-time there are stars about us,
Just as at night, and name them what and where
By sight of science; so by faith we know,
Although we MAY not see them till our night,
That spirits are about us."

In this place we may be allowed to stop and make some comment upon the strange occurrences which are recorded in the foregoing pages. There must certainly exist some natural cause, by which these sounds are made, and from what has already been stated, it will be seen that, at least, some degree of intelligence has been manifested in the answers indicated on its first discovery in this part of the country.

By natural causes, we do not mean that the cause is known to man at the present time, or that it is produced by machinery or collusion of any kind. *We know this is not the case.* But, as nothing can exist without a cause, and as the laws of nature are the most perfect of anything we can have any conception of; and as nothing of which man or any other production of these laws can conceive or recognize, can be superior to or above these laws; unless it be the source from whence they originated, we speak of the laws which govern this communication between inferior and superior intelligences as perfectly NATURAL. We ask to be pointed to nothing superior to this in the investigation of this subject.

Neither would we make the separation that some do, between spirit and matter. We are convinced that no such separation exists. It is at the same time to assert that it is at once *something* and *nothing*. If it is not matter, it is nothing. It is the height of absurdity to assert that there is an absolute existence, and yet it is not matter—it is nothing, yet to be talked of, to, and about. That there exists matter too refined subtil, and sublimated for our vision in a moral state to observe, we have no doubt; and we have as little doubt of there being intelligent beings who, beyond our vision, still have an influence upon us, and are entirely capable of communicating with us through sounds, impressions and various other means. It is no more proof that they are not thus about us because unseen, than that electricity, or the numerous animalculæ which we are constantly eating, drinking and breathing, although unseen, do not exist for the same reason. It may not be unprofitable to go into the examination of the connection between spirits and other matter, in this connection, in order that the reader's mind may be prepared for the development of facts which may look still more strange than those already related.

In regard to the rapping sounds and their existence, there is no longer room for a doubt. One of the most philosophical observers of the various phenomena of the human mind, and a well known Psychological writer; WILLIAM FISHBOUGH, editor of the *Univercœlum*, remarked in an editorial, under date of February 3rd, '49. "As to the *actual fact* of these manifestations, we think there cannot be a shadow of a doubt, if the numerous concurrent and direct testimonies which we have had from respectable persons on this subject, are deserving of any weight. That the rappings are produced by an invisible and (to us) intangible agency, we are also prepared to believe. That these manifestations may be produced by spirits of the other world—not indeed by rapping, but by producing concussion upon the more refined ingredients of the atmosphere, causing a

vibration of the tympanum and thus addressing the sense of hearing—we can also readily conceive. We might even cite numerous and apparently well authenticated examples of spiritual manifestations of this kind, to say nothing of the floating stories that never have been expressed in type, but which almost every one has heard from his childhood. We might cite, especially, the irreproachable authority of JUSTINUS KERNER in his *Seeress of Prevorst*."

The connection between spirit and other matter, or between the visible and invisible world of human beings, is at present little understood. We are of the opinion that the connection is far more intimate than is generally believed. Of this fact we are receiving almost daily the most positive and convincing proof. Many might be so averse to receiving new truths, which set aside all their preconceived opinions, as to disregard the positive evidence of their senses. But we are by no means willing to admit that we are so easily imposed upon as many think, or pretend to think, they are themselves. Neither are we willing to suppose all but ourselves to be fools or knaves, when they relate to us, on good authority, facts of which we have no knowledge, or which are beyond our sphere of investigation.

If we acquaint ourselves with the process of the formation of the earth—if we observe how it gradually grew, through countless ages, to its present form and state of perfection—if we once reflect that, instead of its always having been what it now is in size, shape and substance, it was once a liquid mass which gradually, by the action of natural causes, became solid in its essential parts and foundations; that at one time vegetable life could not be found "on the face of the earth;" if we remember that at first the mineral productions were of the grossest kind which have been constantly changing and refining; that in the course of ages vegetable productions of the rankest kind appeared, and finally, as the earth refined, the more refined were the productions, and finally animal life appeared; that

these animals like the vegetable productions were of the most imperfect nature; and at last after ages had rolled away, the earth was prepared for the production of man, the superior of all these as an intelligent thinking being; that he at first was a mere infant to what after ages proved him to be; that he is still progressing onward and upward in knowledge and refinement, and exhibits a perfection of organization which is beyond the power of annihilation, we may begin to form some idea of the vast chain of progression which not only applies to things visible, but which applies with equal force throughout the universe and to all stages of existence.

Would it be reasonable, we ask, to stop short at the decay of man's visible organization and deny the existence of any remaining intelligence that pertained to him, merely because we cannot *see* that existence? No man will assert this to be a valid reason. In fact, from various proofs, or from the authority of others, the idea of a future existence has become almost universal, and whether these ideas have been philosophically formed or not it would be useless in this place for us to inquire. We simply wish to prepare the mind for the proof of the close connection between the two different states and the influence they may have upon each other.

It is said, and we think never disputed by men of science, that all space is filled with solid, fluid and imponderable substances, and that all objects or any two, in space, let them be far off or near to each other, are necessarily connected by the various forms or substances existing in the space which separates them. It is a matter which has long been settled by men of philosophy and education, that all particles of matter, wherever situated, act upon and influence each other; that each has an influence upon the other, and that none exist or act without an absolute dependence upon the whole; in a word there is no such thing as absolute individual independence in the Universe.

"Let every part depending on the chain,
That links it to the whole, point to the hand
That grasps its term ! Let every seed that falls,
In silent eloquence, unfold its store
Of argument."

The highest form of organization of which we have any conception, and which probably *is the highest*, is that which manifests *intelligence*. The forms of intelligence, or their manifestations, are various—defined by some as *instinct* and *reason*. It is useless in this place to undertake the task of tracing them through their different forms and gradations up to the highest developments of reason. There is in this, as in tracing the various forms of vegetable and animal life, a connection so intimate and perfect, that it is impossible to tell where the lower ends and the higher begins, so closely interwoven are the links of the great chain of which all is a part.

The idea, thrown out, that man was the last and highest production of nature is not in any way contradicting the allegorical account generally attributed to Moses.

May we not then safely calculate that man continues to progress beyond his present state of existence, and that the change which takes place at what is called death, is not so vast and so sudden as the world has generally supposed. Again we cannot but quote the words of MR. FISHBOUGH in the *Univercelum*, April 21st, 1849. "From the commencement to the completion of the process of death, the spirit must certainly pass through every successive infinitesimal degree of liberation from the body. Each succeeding degree would in that case be scarcely, if at all, distinguishable from the immediately preceding one; and the spirit preserving its absolute identity throughout the whole process. These minute degrees of liberation, would serve as inseparable lines to connect the future life with the present; and immediately *after* his emergence from the body, the individual will feel that he is not essentially, or in any respect very widely, different from

what he was *interiorly*, immediately *before* he left the body. Does not this reasoning prove a very intimate relation between those in the spiritual who are nearest the natural world; and those in the natural who are nearest the spiritual world? And inasmuch as the liberated spirits must have the most lively remembrance of their former conditions, and sympathy with friends who are still in the body, and inasmuch, moreover, as there are often many such friends who are in the intuitional, and just verging on the *spiritual*, state of mind, is there not every possible reason to suppose that spirits out of the body may communicate with *such* spirits *in* the body, by the infusion of their thoughts according to those laws of spiritual sympathy which have been indubitably exemplified in ten thousand cases, by the phenomena of human magnetism?

Again: It is very evident that the inhabitants of those portions of the spiritual world which are immediately related to this planet, were once the inhabitants of this planet, and that they have passed upwards through all successive degrees from the conditions which they occupied here, to the conditions which they now occupy." On the almost imperceptible change when the spirit first leaves the body, EMANUEL 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 such 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. 653.) "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."

Thus we have the testimony of these men, well known as having laid before the world some of the most sublime and philosophical reasonings and facts in regard to the existence of a world of spirits, unseen but felt by their influence, (and occasionally in a more tangible way,) and heard by those who still remain in the body.

Besides this, we have the testimony of clairvoyants almost without number, in almost every neighborhood, who are in private circles developing the great facts here set forth, while their names are unknown to the world; but the incontestible evidence they afford of their power to point out persons never known to them in their normal state, who have passed into the world of spirits, and their plain and artless descriptions of that state, is having an influence in their respective circles which cannot but put any one acquainted with the facts strongly in mind of Swedenborg's prophecy, that the year 1852 would be one that would decide the fate of his church or his doctrines. The probabilities now

seem to be that his general spiritual theory will, not far from that time, be very generally received.

We have used up this chapter here in the center of our book, for the purpose of showing that very plausible, and to us very philosophical reasons can be given for our spiritual theory, without stating all the facts that have come to our knowledge. But we are in possession of FACTS which we KNOW to have transpired. We get them from no second hand; we assert nothing but what we KNOW or can prove true; and from these statements, like a noble reformer of Boston, we feel that "we will not retract a single inch and WE WILL BE HEARD."

CHAPTER V.

CONTINUED HISTORY OF THE EVENTS IN WESTERN NEW-YORK.

WE have heretofore spoken only of the progress of the sounds at Hydesville, in Arcadia. We left them after they had just learned enough of the matter to converse, by getting a rap for an affirmative, and no sound for a negative, and a name or two spelled out by the use of the alphabet.

Like all new discoveries, this has become more perfect as it has been investigated and studied into. The mode of communication has gradually improved, until those who are most familiar with it can, without difficulty, get long and *correct* communications spelled out by the alphabet.

For some time the rapping was confined to that house, although, as stated in a former chapter, the family of Mr. Fox all left the house at times. While the neighbors were testing the floor and the walls of the house, and the family entirely away from it, the sounds were heard as distinctly as ever. We wish this to be distinctly remembered, as it has often been asserted by persons ignorant of the facts, or willfully malicious, that the sounds were *never heard*, unless in the presence of two of the daughters of Mr. Fox. *The facts already stated and proved, show that they commenced before that family occupied the house or lived in the neighborhood.*

Subsequently, however, as was the case in the Wes-

ley family, it seemed to evince a partiality for, or to manifest itself more freely in presence of the two youngest girls. Why this was so, they could not tell, nor will we at present conjecture. Up to the time of the first manifestations, none of the family had ever been magnetized.

It soon began to be heard, not only in that house, but in that of some of the neighbors also.

Part of the family went to Rochester to reside, and the same sounds were heard by the portion of the family in that city, while the part that remained in Hydesville continued to hear them there. By this time it had been discovered that the different sound or sounds in different places, purported to be the spirits of different persons. Indeed the proofs pretty soon began to be plain, that they were so, or at least that whatever it was, it had the power of telling the names of persons entirely unknown to the family, and often reminding them of something that took place in their own family, of which Mr. Fox's family could know nothing, unless they had the power to see through their thoughts and all space besides, which would be much more strange than to allow it to be what it purports to be.

Not long after it began to be heard by this family in Rochester, it began to be heard in other houses in the same city, and among others, in the house of a Methodist clergyman, where the same sounds have continued from that time to this, as they have in other places and houses. The clergyman alluded to, related in a public audience in the city of Rochester the following, which will serve to show the intelligence sometimes manifested by this sound, which so many deny being anything but an imposition. "A Mr. P——, a friend of mine from Lockport, had come from that place on business and put up with me. He told me that he had left at home a child sick. I requested him to go to Mr. G.'s to hear this "mysterious noise." He went, and like many others, could not make up his mind what it was.

In the morning he again went, when the spirit who was in communication with him, spelled out this sentence: '*Your child is dead!*' Mr. P. immediately found Elder J., and although he as yet had not seen or heard enough to convince him of its reliability, he thought it his duty to start for home.

A short time after he started, Elder J. returned to his house, and his wife handed him a telegraphic communication from Lockport, which he opened and read as follows: "*Say to Mr. P., that his child is dead!*" "

Thus did the tangible telegraph operated by human hands, confirm what some speedier telegraph had communicated nearly three hours before. This is an account that can be fully relied on, and we have the names of the parties for such as shall question its truth. All who have investigated the matter to any great extent, have found testimony equally convincing. Several persons who have carefully investigated this affair for the last two years, have kept a private journal in which they have entered many of the most singular occurrences that have come within their personal observation. Extracts from some of these will be given in another chapter.

Soon after the first excitement in the city of Rochester, we hear of its manifesting itself in the adjoining towns, as well as in other places in the city. Among other places, the sounds were heard at the house a Deacon Hale, of the town of Greece in Monroe county. He is a man well known and of unimpeachable character, so far as we have been able to ascertain, and his candor and honesty as a man or his strict adherence to the principles of the church of which he is a deacon, have not been called in question.

Another fact in relation to his experience which we deem important, is, that he had not seen or had any acquaintance with the family of Mr. Fox or any part of them, when they commenced at his house or since that time, and yet he gets the communications as freely as they or any one else. We are not aware that any

of his family have ever been placed under the influence of human magnetism. The manifestations at his house have been varied and singular.

A Mr. G— —, a well known citizen of Rochester, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has long been familiar with these manifestations in his own house and in various places where he has been. There is one singular fact about the manifestations to Mr. G— —, which may be related in this place. For a long time the answers could be obtained by any *two* of the family standing near each other; and there was no difference as we are informed, in the freedom of the answers, or particular preference manifested to have any particular members of the family present. At length one of the daughters of Mr. G. was placed under the influence of magnetism and became clairvoyant. From that time none of the family could get communications unless the daughter who was magnetized was present. This is a singular fact and one which, in the present state of knowledge on this subject, seems almost or wholly inexplicable. Why the communication should leave all the family except the magnetized daughter, after they had once had free conversation without her, remains to be explained.

The daughter does not require to be magnetized in order to hear them but only to be present. There are a number of other families in Rochester who have the same manifestations, some very freely and some only occasionally.

From Rochester and that vicinity, it began to be heard of in this city (Auburn) and like other places it was for a short time confined to one family.

The first of its being heard in this city was when the youngest daughter of Mr. Fox visited us, and from that time it has continued in several families, and hardly a week passes without our receiving authentic information of some new place where these occurrences have commenced. We are informed of at least six families in Auburn who hear more or less of the same sounds.

In almost every place where it has commenced, there has been at first but a few sounds and generally much more faint than after it become more common. It is a very common occurrence in the family and social circles to be talking of some matter connected with this strange development, and for all in the room to hear a distinct rap--perhaps two or three, as if confirming what was said. This is generally the way it commences at new places.

It may be proper, here to remark that persons of any considerable degree of investigating powers, stand in no fear of being deceived, as the sounds have never yet been imitated, nor do we believe they can be. Persons who have heard but little of them and who have very vivid imaginations and large organs of wonder, may, at times, mistake some other sounds for the genuine ones, or those produced by the spirits; but a person who is not over imaginative never.

We state this as it may, probably will be, in many cases, said that it is some visible cause that produces the sounds. We are aware that these charges have been made by persons at a distance, who have no knowledge whatever of the facts in the case.

The same sounds are heard at several places within our knowledge in towns adjoining this city. In the town of Sennett, it is manifested in a family by the name of BEAVER. The particular person in whose presence the sounds are heard in that family is a lad some ten years of age. With him it differs from most others in this, that while it very seldom answers to one alone, he gets the communication just as freely by himself as when two or more persons are present.

This boy has never been magnetized nor have any of the family, and we have been informed by those who have seen it tried that they manifest no signs of being susceptible to magnetic influences.

These are some of the facts that have come to our knowledge and are the common property of the community from their being open and public cases. We know

of numerous cases of private individuals, who declare that they have long heard these same sounds, but do not wish to incur the ridicule and contempt with which they know they must be visited, if they candidly inform their friends of the facts in the case and what they know by their own experience. Or they belong to the church, and the people will not only laugh at them, but that church who is forever prating about the influence of spirits, or *the* spirit, will cast them out of its folds if they do not close their ears and refuse to hear, and their eyes and refuse to see any positive and tangible evidence of what they have so long been talking about with less proof. They do not feel willing to face the frowns of their individual friends or the anathemas of an organized body who assumes it to be sinful to investigate anything new, especially if it be of a nature to disturb some long cherished principle which they have deemed true because they have been told so by their fathers and grandfathers.

We have no such fears. We have the glorious consciousness of feeling above reputation in the matter, especially if that reputation must be sustained at the expense of truth and honest convictions, and received from the vulgar crowd—rich or poor who look only at the apparel and pocket of a man—or his *professions* of a particular faith—in order to be entitled to a reputation from them.

We know of what we speak. We know they are facts—strange, new, and to many wonderful; and to all, as yet in a state that defies the philosophy and theology of the world to explain away, or tell the laws by which they are governed. Knowing this we state the facts candidly to the world, unmindful of the sneers of those who know nothing of the matter, and caring little for the criticisms of those who pretend to much wisdom in psychological knowledge, or those who with no pretensions use vulgar and malicious falsehood as the only weapons which they have at hand. We expect all to use such weapons as they have at command and

those that are in the ditch of ignorance will throw the filth thereof, and others will use weapons of different gradations ascending to their positions.

We have another consciousness which, without boasting, we must think contributes greatly to the freedom of thought of any who occupy it. We are conscious of being bound by no sectarian ties; we have no padlocks on our lips—no ties to bind our intellect to a particular circle of thought.

Another proof of the absence of collusion in the matter, is the fact that it is not confined to particular dwellings, so that there is no more a "haunted house" than a haunted out doors, or a haunted side-walk, for wherever the persons who seem to be in the right condition of body to get the communication are, there you will hear the sounds, whether it be in doors or out. This precludes the idea of machinery for that could not be so suddenly changed from one house to another; or from a house into the open air. But we will consider the objection in another place, and after we have stated a few more facts which have transpired, and which are known to many individuals besides ourselves. There is, undoubtedly a greater desire for facts than reasons on the subject, and yet we cannot refrain from these frequent digressions in order to show, as we go along, how utterly futile the attempts to argue it down have proved to be, and how useless their slanders of persons who try to find the truth have been. We will, in the next chapter, show that in a public investigation of the matter, the seal of truth has been set on the statements of those who have privately investigated so far as the sounds and their intelligence were concerned.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PUBLIC INVESTIGATION AT CORINTHIAN HALL IN THE CITY OF ROCHESTER.

Before speaking of the strange phenomena—thought by some to be much stranger than the “rapping” or the intelligence manifested through that medium; we give an account of the public investigations which were gone into in the city of Rochester in the month of November, 1849.

The first intimation that was received in regard to those investigations came from these sounds, through the use of the alphabet. Several persons were in company, trying, as usual, to gain some information in regard to the law which governs this strange communication. While they were thus investigating, the following was spelled out by the use of the alphabet, it being part of the message or directions for those present to follow. “You all have a duty to perform. We want you to make this matter more public.” As this announcement was altogether unexpected, the persons began to discuss the difficulties, and remarked that the opposition and ridicule, that would be heaped upon any one who should attempt to lecture upon this subject, would be almost overwhelming. The answer to this was. “That will be so much the better—your triumph will be the greater.”

After receiving the most positive assurances from this invisible communicator, that the sounds should be heard

in all parts of the Hall in response to the person who should lecture—that it was best, in order that slanders might be silenced, and the truth established, to go forward in the matter—the persons who were designated concluded to make the attempt. It was also intimated, from the same source, that this would prepare the way for a more general development of spiritual communication, which would take place at no distant day.

Probably the best idea of the proceedings at Rochester can be conveyed to the reader by the following brief statement drawn up and published directly after the investigations took place, 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 is 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 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 strange manifestations given. During the relation 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 the 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 ready 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—Doctor H. H. LANGWORTHY, Hon. FREDERICK WHITTLESEY, D. C. MCGATLUM, WILLIAM FISHER, of Rochester, and Hon. A. P. HASCALL, of LeRoy. 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 stethoscope to ascertain whether there was any movement of the lungs, and found not the least difference when the sounds were made; and that there was no kind of *probability or possibility of their being made by vnatrilouism, as some had supposed—and they could not have been made by machipery.*

Again, after this report, another Committee was formed, from persons who had opposed in the meeting all pretensions to there being anything but a trick.

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 were 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 that they had 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 various other 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 farther. 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 an 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 the public proceedings are concerned, (which is but a small part of these strange occurrences) with the Committee's reports greatly condensed.

Thus the matter stands at present, and whether it is only a remarkable phenomena 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 certainly something worthy the attention of men of candor and philosophy.

E. W. CAPRON, Auburn.

GEORGE WILLETS, Rochester.

Rochester, Nov. 22, 1849.

As one of us was present and acquainted with all the circumstances we will make some farther statements in regard to events that transpired during the week of the investigation.

Each of the committee, after the report of their chairman; were called upon to make a report individually and what is unusual where any doubtful matter is under consideration, every individual agreed to all that is published in the above extract.

Some individuals of the committee made more minute reports of questions and answers and other circumstances that came under their observation during these examinations.

One member of the first committee stated that he asked the question. "Who is it that wishes to communicate with me?" The answer was, "your wife will talk." He evaded the answer, and gave the persons present to understand that he never had a wife. To use his own expression when he gave his public report, he "*brow beat it down.*" He would not admit that there was any truth in it until he reported in the evening—then he stated it correctly—*he had lost his wife sometime before.*

The committees were composed of men who, on any other subject, would be trusted to investigate where life or property were at stake. We doubt if any citizen of Monroe county would refuse to submit the justice of his cause even were he to be tried for life or limb, to such men as those who composed the committees during the three days they were engaged in trying every mode to ferret out the cause of these sounds, and yet many persons persist in pronouncing those who even go to hear for themselves fools or knaves!

We insist upon it, that those who were present at Corinthian Hall, and had a voice in the appointment of those committees selected from the best and most reliable men of the city of Rochester, should of all men be the last to cry humbug or collusion. They must be aware that in doing this they impeach their committees, and indirectly accuse them of being ignoramuses and incapable of impartial investigation, or of being accessory to one of the most successful, widespread and long continued impositions ever palmed off on this, or any other community.

When we take into consideration the facts that this matter has now been spreading for two years—that every means have been tried in private circles, and committees appointed by public meetings—that all have

failed to discover anything like collusion—we may safely assert that in regard to the sounds mere y—the following facts are established beyond dispute, viz: That the sounds are heard in various places and at various times—that those sounds are not made by, or under the control of any person or persons, although manifested in the presence of particular persons; and that they evince a remarkable degree of intelligence. These facts, among those who have carefully investigated are no longer disputed.,

CHAPTER VII.

FURTHER PROOF OF THE INTELLIGENCE MANIFESTED BY THESE SOUNDS.

AFTER stating as much as we have already done, we may suppose the reader ready to receive some of the *specimens* of the intelligence so manifested. Of course there are hundreds of proofs lost, from the fact that there is no record kept by the great mass of persons who have visited the scenes of these developments. Others are of a nature that precludes their publication, and among those are some of the most positively convincing proofs. They are of a nature which more particularly concern the families to which they have been delivered. Some of them, however, may be given without giving the names of individuals. They can be had on application to the authors, if any of the facts are disputed.

One of the most remarkable cases of a display of foresight on the part of these sounds, (which we have good evidence of coming from departed spirits, and shall continue so to believe until better proof than has yet been presented to the contrary comes to hand,) of which we have positive proof, is the case of our friend G—W—, now a resident of the city of Rochester. Previous to his going to that city to reside, he had taken a tour to Michigan with a view of purchasing a farm and settling there. On his return he visited a friend in Rochester, who made him acquainted with the strange occurrences that were taking place there, and invited

him to go and hear for himself. Our friend, like ourselves, was of a turn of mind which led him to look upon everything that savored of the marvellous or wonderful, with suspicion. He was a decided skeptic in regard to such relations, if not in regard to any existence beyond the present tangible one. Like many others of similar organization, this had a tendency to excite a feeling of mirth, and he was *sure* his friends were getting uncommonly credulous. However, at the request of his friends, he went to see or hear as he supposed something that would soon be exposed.

On his first visit he heard the sounds very distinctly but had not proof enough to convince him of there being anything out of or beyond the human beings before him, and he concluded to pay no more attention to it. His friend still urged him to more thorough investigation, and finally the next morning he went again. By direction of the sounds the two sisters were magnetized. They were both good Clairvoyants. Up to this time our friend's name had not been mentioned, and the young ladies were entirely unacquainted with his name or residence, where he had been or what his intentions were. The first information he received from them was that his *father*, (who had been dead several years,) was present and wished to converse with him. He then said, "Who is my father?" They then looked a little and replied by speaking a letter at a time, until they had spelled his name correctly. But this was not all. As they began to spell, a loud sound like rapping commenced, not near the magnetized persons but by his side, although he could see nothing. The sounds were very loud and distinct and a rap accompanied the pronunciation of each letter by the Clairvoyants. They told him these sound were made by his father, and described his person. After tracing W—— through his journey and describing the land he had concluded to purchase, &c., they stated that his father would give him any further information that was necessary, and they were brought into the normal state.

After they were released from the influence of magnetism, the sounds commenced giving him information—told him not to go to Michigan—that he must go and see a man in Rochester, (spelling his name,) a man he never heard of, the next morning; that he would find the man at ten o'clock. In the morning, being in something of a hurry, he went early to the man's house and he had gone. W—— had then to travel some distance on foot to find him. After some searching he did find him, and after conversing a few minutes, thought of what had been said of time, and he found it to be about *five minutes past ten*—about as many minutes as they had been conversing. The direction in regard to what he would find after conversing with the man, was most accurately fulfilled. Instead of going to Michigan, he was directed to move to Rochester. This of course he did not feel bound to do, unless he knew more of the reliability of the mysterious development he had by accident become acquainted with. After some time had elapsed, during which time he did not succeed in negotiating for Michigan land, he concluded to move to Rochester for the reason that it afforded more facilities for getting into business than the place where he resided. After he arrived at Rochester, he was directed to go to such a man—the name spelled out, (a man with whom he was totally unacquainted,) and he would find a house which he could rent, and told him that in a few days he would find business. He went as directed and found such a man and such a house. He was surprised at the accuracy of this "mysterious" guide which he was at first inclined to ridicule, and all along so doubtful about.

After a few days, it directed him to go to a man having the superintendence of a large amount of business, and apply for a situation. He had been told that the man was in a distant city. The reply from the spirit (which purported to be his father,) was "go now, he is in his office." It also told him he would have a situation *that week*, and this was on *Thursday*. He went

to the office, *found the man in it*, he having returned a day sooner than expected. When he made application, the answer was very coldly, "We have no vacancies; we'll think of you if any occur." He felt but little encouraged at that time, and before Saturday night somewhat discouraged about gaining his object, when about eight o'clock on Saturday evening, he received information that he was wanted at the office before mentioned, on Monday morning. On Monday morning he went and received an appointment to a station which he held for a long time, until the duties of those occupying the station he filled were abolished.

Thus was everything which had been told him fulfilled to the very letter. And these are only a few of the more prominent among the directions to the same individual, and by no means the whole. These are facts and can be positively proved, with names and dates of all the parties.

The following statement is taken from the private journal of one of the authors of this History:

"On the 23d of November, 1848, I went to the city of Rochester on business. I had previously made up my mind to investigate this so-called mystery, if I should have an opportunity. In doing so, I had no doubt but what I possessed shrewdness enough to detect the trick, as I strongly suspected it to be, or discover the cause of the noise if it should be unknown to the inmates of the house.

A friend of mine who I had long known as a skeptic in regard to any *such* wonders, invited me to go with him to hear it. I accepted the invitation with a feeling that was far from serious apprehension of communicating with anything beyond my power to discover.

Before I heard the sound, we seated ourselves around a table. As soon as we got quiet, I heard a slight but distinct rapping on the floor, apparently on the under side. Although I concluded that such a sound *might* be made by machinery, I could see no possible motive in the family taking so much pains to deceive people, as they received nothing but annoyance and trouble in return for their pains. I proceeded to ask some questions and they were answered very freely and correctly. I asked if it would rap my age? It was done correctly. I then took my memorandum book from my pocket and *wrote* my questions so that no other person could know the nature of the questions. I would write, 'rap four times; rap one; rap six; rap seven;' and to each and every such question I *got a correct answer*. I then laid aside

my book and proceeded to ask similar test questions *mentally*, and as before, received correct answers.

I could not believe that persons present had the power to discern my *thoughts* and make these sounds in answer, for the sounds have a peculiarity not easily imitated. To suppose this to be the case, would make the matter a still greater mystery. I knew they could not give those answers, for there were questions answered which they could not know anything about.

At another time I tried the experiment of counting in the following manner. I took several shells from a card basket on the table, (small lake shells,) closed my hand and placed it under the table entirely out of sight, and requested as many raps as there were shells. It was done correctly. As I knew how many shells there were in my hand, I resolved to test it in another way to see if there was a possibility of my *mind* having any influence in the matter. I took a handful of shells without knowing how many I took myself. Still the answers were correct. I then requested a friend who sat by the table, to put his hand in the basket, take out some shells without knowing the number and pass them into my hand, which I immediately closed and placed in a position where none could see it. The number was told as correctly as before. We continued this class of experiments for a long time without the least failure in getting correct answers."

There could be no mistaking these tests. They could not be influenced by our minds, for we did not ourselves know what the answers should be. This places a quietus on its being anything governed by the minds of those asking questions or those who hear it most freely. The proofs of getting answers and correct ones to mental questions, and to thoughts where questions are not asked, is as plain as even the rapping itself.

We have known several persons to be sitting around a table in conversation, and when they ceased, the signal for the alphabet would be called for, and a sentence would be spelled like this, —, (naming one of the company,) thinks so and so, mentioning exactly what their thoughts were. At one time several persons were present; one wrote on a piece of paper to another, something about two other members of the company, which, although unimportant, they did not wish the others to know; but as if to convince us all of their power to tell our thoughts, the signal was

given for the alphabet, and the same spelled out that they had written. This has so often been the case of similar occurrences, that it is placed beyond dispute by those who have tried the experiment of getting answers to mental questions.

While the investigations were going on in Rochester, they would give information at night what kind of men they were who were on the committee. They would say, "such a man" telling his name, "is a candid man; such a one is very skeptical and hard to convince," &c. When the investigation came on, we would find that we had been told correctly about the character of the different individuals composing the committee.

At one time during the same investigations, we were talking over the subject, telling how much ridicule would be heaped upon us for attempting to lay this subject before the world and have it fairly investigated, and we had this sentence spelled to us: "Now don't get discouraged though the path may look foggy, there is a bright cloud a little beyond. Soon the firmament will brighten and those people who now insult and scandalize this work of the Almighty, will walk off hanging their heads and saying, 'Well we have investigated and proved nought against those insulted people; here we stand, just as ignorant as when we first heard it.' You know that in all new sciences there is something to contend with, but when things take a turn and you know you have conquered, 'thou wilt feel thou art treading on holy ground.'" We at first thought it strange that there should be so sudden a change from *you* to *thou*, and it was explained thus. "I made it 'holy' instead of 'haunted.'" We then knew it to be a quotation from a song called "*The Haunted Ground*."

We might fill pages in recording facts similar to the above, but we trust that none will require more than is here given, to prove the intelligence of the source from whom these sounds emanated.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARE THEY GOOD OR EVIL SPIRITS?

THIS is the great question with those who are fully convinced that these sounds are produced by superior intelligences, and by the spirits of those who have lived in this visible world, and who have been educated to be always looking for evil if there is anything new or beyond *their* bounds of investigation. -

The limits of this book would be too small to convince this class that they had wrought themselves up to a degree that make them almost *wish* for proof of some source of evil which they could lay before the world to prove a long cherished theory, and are therefore incapable of receiving facts as proof. There are exceptions, (and thanks to growing intelligence, the class is fast increasing,) to the rule of persons thus educated. Many have become candid seekers after truth in spite of their early education, and will continue to investigate in spite of all the sneers and threats of the sects and parties to which they belong. -

We are not about to discuss the probabilities of there being an evil power at work "in these latter days" in order that they may, if possible, "deceive the very elect." We have no such apprehensions. We are not constantly looking for evil in order to establish some darling and long cherished dogma of our own. - This may be the reason why we have not been able to find as much evidence of evil in a years candid investigation

as some have found in a few minutes, and others who have not examined at all.

In looking back through the rise of various arts, sciences and improvements in the moral world, we find almost every important discovery accredited to the—devil. Every revolution in religious opinion has the same origin. It would be a wonder, then, if this escaped the common fate of all other phenomena, inventions or discoveries which have gone before it.

In almost every instance where persons of a strong sectarian character have investigated the matter, they have soon become convinced that they are spirits, but—from the devil.* Why this conclusion? Why, first, because it is at variance with all their preconceived opinions. This is their strongest reason. Then again the spirits do not talk enough about our “eternal welfare;” they give too much advice for this world and too little for the next; they do not tell people to go to church one day in the week and spend the remainder in trying to amass wealth. True, they give some good advice about morals, but they make no threats about the consequences of vice *only* that it will place them in a lower sphere. These are a few of the reasons brought forward as proof of the devilish origin of these spirits. Some make the assertion, that in being where these sounds and other manifestations are made, they “tremble when they think how near the clutches of the devil they have been” without any reason at all other than they do not know what else it *can* be. They look for evil and suppose they have found it.

Another reason urged by this class of devilists, is the fact that the manifestations do not confine themselves to church members, but seem to disregard all such sectarian rules, and treat all alike, making no distinction. This, to many, is the greatest wonder of all—and their strongest proof of deviltry; that many who have stood aloof from the organized religious bodies

* See Ezekel xiv, 3, 4.

have been as much favored with the manifestations as those within them, and on this account they persecute those who are in the church and will not refuse to hear, or brand those who do as infidels.

But as facts are worth more than past creeds and beliefs, or present surmises and speculations, we proceed to present some things that have been spelled out to persons, and some answers that have been given, and see whether they contain more evil than good. Many of the messages spelled out to individuals have been taken by them and we have no record of them. Others are of a nature which the persons who received them would not wish us to publish. Still we shall be able to present enough to enable persons to judge in regard to the evil or good there is contained in the communications. Among the numerous incidents of intelligence, foresight and *right* direction, is the following.

One day as we were at the dinner table, the direction to one of the family was, "You had better go to the depot at three o'clock." Although he was not conscious of being needed there, he obeyed the direction and found at the depot a friend with his trunk which he could not have brought alone.

At one of the first opportunities I, (E. W. C.) had of investigating, I had the following proof which appeared to be anything but evil to me, although the direction was about "worldly matters."

Myself and wife and a female friend of ours, had been investigating until a late hour, nearly twelve o'clock at night, and a violent storm had sprung up. It was necessary for us to go to another part of the city, and it was so late that the public conveyances had all left their usual stand and we were at a loss how to get a conveyance for the females. The direction was, "go to the corner of the street and there you will find a conveyance." I went as directed, but saw no carriage and began to think I had been misdirected, but just as I was turning to go back, a conveyance came

up the street, and without my speaking hailed me and inquired if I wanted a conveyance. I of course took it and conveyed the females home.

On one occasion, a gentleman of Rochester was indebted to a woman who was in great need of the money. The spirits directed her little sister to go at such a place in the street at a certain hour in the day, and she would meet the man who would pay her three dollars for her sister. The little girl did not know the man who owed the money but went as directed. At the appointed time she met a man who said to her, "Are you the girl that lives with Mrs. —?" She replied in the affirmative. "Here are *three dollars* I wish you would take to her," said the man, handing her a bill, and passed on.

At one time we had been discussing the subject of how much or how little reliance could be placed upon the directions received through this source, and we were directed to sit by the table to receive a message. We did so, and received the following, which as usual was received by using the alphabet: "Now all listen to what we say. We want you to do better. You have doubted our words; you will see the time when you will be ashamed, when you look back to the time when you said 'I don't know what to think—they are evil spirits—I doubt the truthfulness of it.' Now doubt no more, but all have sisterly and brotherly feelings; this is a message from God."

Another instance of foreknowledge and goodness, is the following: "Two ladies sat together when a spirit began to rap for the alphabet. On using it the information was, 'S., (one of the ladies,) is going to be sick.' As she was then apparently as well as usual, they were somewhat surprised, and S. asked a question: "Am I going to be very sick?" The answer was, "Yes very sick." They then told her friend that she better not stay alone with her in the afternoon. This was in the forenoon. S.'s friend went home at noon and returned about one o'clock, and found S. vomiting severely. She

soon fainted, and continued to have fainting fits all the afternoon and through the night. Every time she was about to faint, the faithful guardian (which purported to be S.'s mother,) would give the warning. The directions for taking care of the sufferer, and the medicine, were all given by this unseen watcher. The time when she would begin to recover was foretold and correctly, and all that was directed by them had the effect as foretold.

This is but a small portion of the record kept by those who keep a private journal of sayings, but they are enough at this point to show that if the cause is evil, the effect is good, and that if it is the devil, his character is somewhat different from what the imagination of men have made it out to be, and they should set about correcting their false reports.

But says one, "you get contradictory answers." This is true; or rather, there are answers obtained in regard to coming events which do not accord with the facts as the time transpires. There are several reasons which may operate to produce this discrepancy. One very prominent one is, that we do not know the law which governs this communication and the whole is so new to us that we are very liable to mistakes ourselves. Another reason, in our opinion, is the interference of ignorant spirits, who do not yet know whether the matter they attempt to speak on be true or not. We have never believed in the absolute perfection of this mode of communication. It is a great error that many rush into, who are carried away by a little excitement or wonder, that because there is a medium of communication with spirits, that it is therefore an infallible source of information. The class of persons who assume, at the outset, the infallibility of spiritual communications are the very first to brand them all as evil and nothing but evil, because they have been somewhat disappointed.

We see no reason for supposing that, because a man has passed from this state of existence that he has be-

come at once the most perfect of prophets, without regard to his condition here. This is only equalled by the absurd idea that because a man has been ignorant and degraded here, he shall be placed still lower in the scale of being when he passes from visible existence.

There are, undoubtedly, spirits who desire to be noticed and to answer questions, who are too ignorant to give any instruction and who would be as likely to tell right as wrong. We do not believe these to be willfully vicious; these errors arise from their ignorance, and we are answered that they will ultimately progress to a state of intelligence, purity and happiness equal to those who pass from here under more favorable circumstances. Swedenborg says there are some spirits so ignorant that they do not know but they are the ones called for, when another is meant. This may be so. We are inclined to think it is, for we have known attempts to be made to imitate the signal which we always get when we call for a friend. Nearly every person who has called frequently for some particular spirit gets a signal whereby that particular spirit is known. This signal is different for different spirits, and although it is frequently attempted we have never known these signals imitated. We do not think there is danger of being deceived by ignorant spirits when a person becomes acquainted with these communications. The sound made by an ignorant spirit is quite different from the others. While the sound made by intelligent spirits is clear and lively, the sound made by the ignorant ones is low and muffled like the striking of the hand on a carpet. We are confident that with due caution and care—intelligent and upright individuals will get correct answers. Much depends upon the mind and disposition of persons at the time of asking the questions for as all the Universe goes by affinities it needs a pure mind, calm thinker and deliberate questioner to get communications from spirits of a high order.

Where there are a large number of persons asking

*See Ezkl. xiv, 3, 4.

questions they are apt to get into confusion and mistake the answers. "We were at one time getting something spelled out by a spirit who purported to be the spirit of W—, a member, when living, of the society of Friends. In spelling a sentence one word was spelled wrong and we wondered why it should happen so." He explained it thus, "you were all thinking of another word." This was true, but still we could not see why that should make a difference. It was further explained by saying, "why, thee knows that when thee is talking with a friend and that friend is thinking and talking about another thing, thee is confused." So it will be seen that when spirits do communicate with us they do not pretend to be beyond the influence of those with whom they come in contact.

There is a great difference too, in individuals about getting answers. Some will get *test* questions answered freely and correctly while others can get none at all. Why this difference, we are unable to tell. Sometimes when there is a stranger introduced, all wish him convinced, and yet, as if to show the stranger, and all concerned, how entirely it is beyond our control, no sound can be elicited. This of itself is enough to convince as many as have witnessed such an occurrence, that if it was made by some designing person it would be made when they themselves wish it.

But says one who has hardly spent an hour in making the test, and who has got wrong answers: "*They are proved to be lying spirits.*" *Perhaps* such an argument is good. If it is in this case it will also prove *all men* to be liars because we meet untruthful persons occasionally, or often. "The logic is as good in one case as the other. To all who have seen fit to accuse these manifestations of evil we would put this question. Did you ever know of an answer given, or a message, or a sentence spelled out that had a tendency to evil? We know of none who have been able to answer in the affirmative. We know of those who *think* the theological teaching wrong, but that cannot be proved; and

there is abundance of proof of right direction and positive good in the matter. Some will answer that "evil spirits act thus in order the more effectually to deceive." Well, we insist that as long as they act in accordance with goodness and truth they are not to be condemned as evil on the surmise of some bigoted devil-believers.

We find nothing alarming in the theological teachings of these spirits. Others may. On these points there will be differences among men until they reach a more perfect state of knowledge than they at present possess. Their general theology is that of Davis, Swedenborg, and others who have claimed to receive their impressions from spirits. They generally use the term higher and lower spheres instead of Heaven and Hell. They say that all persons pass to a condition superior to that which they occupied here, on their leaving the body. Thousands of questions have been asked on these points, have been answered by spirits who purported to be Emanuel Swedenborg, the "Seeress of Prevorst." George Fox, Lorenzo Dow, Galen, William E. Channing, Nathaniel P. Rogers, John Wesley, Samuel Wesley, and many others.

It may be well to remark that many times when these spirits are communicating, the alphabet will be called for and some name,—perhaps one of the above, and perhaps some other spelled, as the one who wishes to communicate. Often it is a name which the company had not thought of. They generally deliver some useful and interesting message when such is the case. The following are questions which are frequently asked, and we give the answers as they were spelled out. We might fill a volume with questions and answers.

Q. What is your mission to the world!

Ans. To do good. The time will come when we will communicate universally.

Q. Of what benefit will it be to mankind!

Ans. We can reveal truths to the world—and men will become more harmonious and better prepared for the higher spheres.

Q. Some persons imagine that the spirits are evil and that Satan is transformed into an Angel of light to deceive us. What shall we say to them!

Ans. Tell them some of their bigotry will have to be dispensed with before they can believe we are good spirits. Ask them why they refuse to investigate. They are not as wise as they suppose themselves to be.

Q. Can ignorant spirits rap!

Ans. Yes. (An ignorant spirit rapped and the difference was very plain between that and the other.)

Q. Are these sounds made by rapping!

Ans. No. They are made by the will of the spirits causing a concussion of the atmosphere and making the sounds appear in whatever place they please.

Q. Can they make the sounds to all persons!

Ans. No. The time will come when they can.

Q. Is there some peculiar state of the body that makes it easier to communicate with some persons than others!

Ans. Yes.

On one occasion a spirit purporting to be Lorenzo Dow gave the following definition of Hell.

"The Universalists say that Hell is the grave. This is not so. The Presbyterians say it is a place of fire and Brimstone that burns the soul forever. This is not so. The Hell is man's own body, and when he escapes from that he escapes from bondage."

Such is a brief, faint account of theological views gleaned from this source. Its truth or fallacy will be decided upon according to the bias of individuals reading it. We have attempted to give what testimony we are in possession of, touching the matter of good and evil—truth and falsehood. We ask no one to look upon this as all infallible, for reasons before stated. Investigate with care and if you learn more of the origin of these sounds than we have, let the world have the benefit of it.

CHAPTER IX.

DISPLAY OF 'PHYSICAL POWER.'—MOVING OF ARTICLES.—PLAYING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS; &c., &c.

WE now come to a part of the subject, which is thought to be still harder to believe, and is scouted at still more than anything in the foregoing narrative. We, ourselves, when first hearing of the "mysterious sounds," were far from receiving it as truth, and thought the story very improbable. We thought the story of the power and will to move articles still more so. But we were destined to be convinced by positive proof. This *must* convince the mass of those who ever become convinced of so strange a matter, unless the true philosophy of such occurrences is discovered and laid before the world. We hope this may soon be the case. But we are to deal with facts,

—" 'Tis true, 'tis strange;
Yet stranger 'tis, 'tis true."

That there is a power as well as a will in whatever produces these sounds, is evident to those who have had fair opportunities to investigate the subject. We, with others, have many times been witness to the moving of tables, chairs and other articles, with no *visible* power to move them. We do not believe they were moved without something to do it. We simply say that the power was to us intangible and beyond our vision: we also know that no person or machinery had any agency in producing the phenomena. Those things, like the sounds, are not confined to any particular room or house; but appear in various places. We have ex-

perienced them when but two or three were present, and that of our own family, and when entirely unexpected and uncalled for. It would be the height of absurdity to suppose that we would sit down for the purpose of deceiving ourselves.

The following are extracts from our private journal. All the phenomena there recorded took place in presence of a number of witnesses who are ready to testify to the facts when called upon. The occurrences took place in Auburn.

“WEDNESDAY EVENING, June 20th. Present six persons—(none of the family of Mr. Fox in town.) The rapping was heard very freely by all. The table moved on the floor with no person touching it; moved to the distance of a foot or more and back, in various directions. At our request, the table (which was a very light one,) was held down to the floor so that it required the whole strength of a man to move it from its position. We also held one side, and requested, if there was power to do it, that it would be drawn away from us; this was done, and our strength was not sufficient to hold it. On the light being taken out of the room, (the persons in the room placing themselves in a position where each would know if any others moved,) the table cloth was taken from the table and very compactly stowed away under it, near one corner. A hat which was on the table was turned over the table cloth in a manner that nearly hid it from view. The table was then raised from the floor on one side, and there stood, although we used considerable strength to push it down. While the table stood in that position, by placing our hands upon it we would feel a quick, tremulous motion, like the action of a galvanic battery.”

This feeling of electricity seems to pervade nearly everything connected with this phenomena. When the rapping is heard, the peculiar jar is felt—differing from the jar produced by a blow, and in various other ways we are reminded of the use of this subtil agent.

We often see, in a dark room, bright electric flashes on the wall and other places.

We, and all who have taken pains to get at the truth of all these demonstrations, have frequently had a hand laid on their arms, shoulders or head, when no person would or could do it, having all their hands held by each other. These demonstrations, like the others, generally leave a feeling of electricity where they touch. The hand feels much like one who is in a magnetic sleep, being colder (generally) than the hand of persons in a normal state, and having a moisture like a cold perspiration upon it. There is not, usually, any feeling like that of a hard hand, or one made up with the usual amount of bones in it. It is generally soft and smooth, although at our request it will change both its temperature and texture. It will in one instant feel as cold as ice and as warm as a common hand of flesh.

So perfectly natural is the touch when an arm is taken hold of by this invisible hand, or it touches in any other way, that, although you hold every hand in the room, you can hardly believe it to be other than some of them. But the proof is positive and the witnesses are numerous. Then, too, just request a change from natural warmth to the coldness of ice, and you feel the change without the hand being removed. It is past the art of man thus to change the temperature of his body.

We have taken a common pocket bible and have laid it on the table with the strap put through the loop, and have awaited in silence the result. Soon we would hear the leaves begin to turn, and finally it would rap "get the light," and we would find the book laying open at some particular chapter, which generally had something to say about spirits. Other books have been opened and appropriate poetry pointed out. The phenomena of pulling the clothing, handling, moving tables, &c., often takes place when none present are thinking of it, so that *their* wills do not influence the matter.

We continue the extract from our Journal: "SUNDAY EVENING, October 7th. This evening we were directed to go into the hall and take the guitar. We went, and while there the guitar was played by unseen hands, and played so exquisitely too, that it seemed more like far distant music to one just aroused from midnight slumbers, than the music of an instrument a few feet from us. Several tunes were thus played, while not a person in the room knew how to play a tune on that or any other instrument."

"TUESDAY EVENING, October 16th: Several persons present at the house of D. C. M. We were directed to take the guitar into a dark room and it would be played. We accordingly did so, and many tunes were played, and in such positions that we knew no one could do it if there had been any one present who knew how, but there was not. There were none there who could play a tune in the light, much less in the dark, the owner not being there. Besides this, they (the spirits) moved books and other articles to different parts of the room. A paper box was taken from the table, the contents were emptied into the cover and placed in the hands of H. D. B. One of the company accidentally touched the hand of another, when he asked, "Did any body touch my hand?" The alphabet was called for and the question answered, "Yes, E——, touched your hand." So it will be seen that although it may be dark, there is something present that can tell if any one attempts a trick. One of the company was told to take off her ring. She did so, laid it in her hand, and it was taken away. We all sat still until directed to get the light. When upon looking a little we found the ring with a girl's hair band put through and pinned to the apron of the person who sat next to her, in such a manner that they were pinned together."

"SATURDAY EVENING, October 20th. This evening we had asked for some different demonstrations, and our request was complied with. We heard the sounds

on the wall, bureau, table, floor, and other places, as loud as the striking with a hammer. The table was moved about the room, and turned over and turned back. Two men in the company undertook to hold a chair down, while, at their request, a spirit moved it, and notwithstanding they exerted all their strength, the chair could not be held still by them. As we sat by the table, the cloth was removed to a different part of the room. The combs of several ladies were taken from their heads and put into the heads of others, and afterwards the combs returned to their owners, and placed in the hair as before. There was a person present this evening who had been suspicious that the guitar was played a few nights before by some of the persons present. The first thing when we came together was, for the alphabet to be called for by the spirits, who spelled, "A. thinks R. and C. played the guitar!" Thus were her thoughts revealed before the company. At another meeting, another person was told the same thing, although she had never expressed to any one her thoughts."

During one of these evenings, a wish was expressed that we might see the hand that touched us. On looking towards the window, (the moon shining through the curtain,) we saw a hand waived to and fro before it. We could discover no other part of a form. This we have witnessed many times ourselves, and several have discovered distinctly the features of persons whom they knew and who had been dead for years.

On one occasion when several persons were present, the guitar was taken from the hands of those who held it, (they taking hold of hands,) and *put in tune* and commenced playing while it passed around the room above their heads. It was also taken from one person and passed to others in the room. In this way for nearly two hours it continued to play and keep time with the singing; and the guitar taken by this unseen power to different parts of the room while playing.

One evening while several ladies were present, some

of them requested that the spirits would take their hair down. Accordingly it was done. One of them had her hair taken down and done up in a twist, and one of them had her's braided in four strands. We cannot pretend to give all the cases of these singular demonstrations which have been witnessed by ourselves and others; it would fill a large volume. But we have here recorded enough to convince any who have the least confidence in the honesty and intelligence of their fellow-beings, that there is something here worth the trouble of any man to investigate. If it looks strange and unaccountable to most people—if it even looks *impossible*—we can sympathize with them, for we have thought all such accounts, from whatever source, ancient or modern, under whatever name, whether sacred or profane, to be flights of imagination, or a tale to frighten the credulous and excite the marvellous. But if the story of opening prison doors for certain persons without the aid of human hands looked impossible, it can look so no longer for we know of the unlocking of doors and drawers without visible means. If the account of the handwriting on the walls of Belshazzar's palace was looked upon as the idle "fabric of a dream," we can now deem it even probable, as we know the walls of our own room bear *positive testimony* of the fact, that it is not impossible at the present day. We see many things now which may be accounted for on philosophical principles, which once looked to us like a "miracle," and was therefore thought to have no foundation in nature, as we had been taught to believe these things that are recorded as miracles as contrary to natural laws. We now believe that what have been called miracles, either never existed at all, or were perfectly in accordance with nature's laws, which will at some day, and that not far distant, be known to man. We know the objection to this theory: We are aware of the aversion that most people have to explaining ancient mysteries. At the same time they condemn things that to them look strange at the pres-

ent time. We have never been believers in things marvellous or wonderful, and consequently have been branded as "Infidels"—a word by the way, which is too commonly used to alarm any body who really understands its meaning. We expect always to remain "infidel" to theories which are not sustained by facts or reason. Many things look reasonable to us, of which we cannot at present know the tangible facts; and many facts are presented which we may be unable to follow to their causes with our present limited knowledge. But we shall continue the search and endeavor to do our share towards finding the causes for all new and novel phenomena that may present itself, without fear of ridicule from the vulgar, or contempt from the wise and learned.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

READER, we have given you a plain history of this new manifestation, or what appears to many to be new and strange. We have occasionally thrown in some comments and ideas of our own, but make no pretensions to philosophy or erudition. Our main object has been to state facts. Such as we have given, were records of our own experience, and occurrences mostly within our personal knowledge. At some future time we may enlarge this work and publish another edition, which will bring together a large amount of facts collected from different individuals in different parts of the country. We are anxious that the world may know the truth and the whole truth in regard to the matter.

If it is only an occasional phenomenon which is destined to pass away with the existence of a few persons now living, or with the present generation, it is still worthy to be investigated.

If it is really something that is destined to spread and increase, as facts seem to indicate—if indeed it is an influx from the world of spirits into our own, the sooner we become acquainted with the laws that govern and regulate the communication, the better.

As to the strangeness of the occurrences we have related, especially the moving of articles, playing musical instruments, &c., we submit that it is no more strange for a table to move, a guitar or piano to play

without visible means, than it would be to one unacquainted with the laws of nature and the action of the atmosphere or the wind, to see a man's hat rise from his head and whirl through the air or street. Such a person would hardly believe the tale, if it was told to him. He would want "positive proof" on the subject. Still more incredulous would such a person be, if we should tell him that an ocean of calm water was lashed into waves that ran mountain high, or that a vast dwelling, inhabited by men, women and children, was wafted around the world by the same invisible power, or that the same thing caused wires, when placed in a certain position, to produce sounds, harmony, music. If we should tell him all this, he would suppose us to be trying to impose upon him, or that we were crazy, fanatics, fools, or monstrously humbugged, or that he was himself ignorant of the facts. We can all see that *he* would be the "humbugged" one in such a case. We know of many who are in the same condition in regard to this. Ridicule is a cheap weapon, and within the reach of all. The man in the ditch will use it to as good advantage as he who stands higher. The cry of deception and imposture has again and again been proved to be false by some of the most investigating minds in the country. We spend no time with such as are still disposed to accuse all but themselves of fraud and deception.

We respect the honest inquiring skeptic. It is a question upon which a man has a right to be skeptical. But men have no right or reason to accuse their fellow inquirers who have been more fortunate than themselves. Many think and say "well if *I* could go there, I could find out what it is." We have been in that position ourselves. We thought ourselves perfectly able to find it out for the very reason that we thought it some cause which was close at hand and easily found out. A year of trial has convinced us that we were not acquainted with nature enough to find the cause so suddenly as we supposed.

The question very naturally arises: "Why do these spirits require a dark room whenever they play musical instruments, take hold of persons." &c. This they answer by saying that they have to assume a tangible form in order to do these things, and we are not yet prepared for such a visitation.

However much this may be objected to, we are inclined to believe that it holds perfectly true with most persons. It is again asked: "How they can make a form that we can *feel* and even *see* a hand of." Their answer to this is: that they use the ingredients of the atmosphere to make up this form. This must be the case where they touch us, for nothing of a substance so compact as that apparently is, could gain access to the room when doors and windows were closed. But the matter composing what we name spirit is so subtil that it, like electricity, can penetrate anywhere.

How can a spirit rap? says one. They answer they do not rap, but produce the sounds by will. We have examined a number of clairvoyants on this subject and all agree in this. We put a boy, who had no knowledge of the matter at all, neither was he noted for a remarkable degree of intelligence, into a magnetic sleep, and turned his attention to the subject. He was clairvoyant and said he could see *who* made the sounds. We asked him how the persons looked. His answer was, "they look light—just like gauze; I can see right through them." Well, how do they make the sounds, do they rap? "No, they don't strike or rap at all." Then after looking earnestly for a time he said: "They want it made, and it is made wherever they want it." This was his simple way of telling what other clairvoyants have told in language somewhat different, but amounting to the same thing. This is the best explanation we have ever been able to obtain. We believe, from all we have been able to discover, that this is the case. Some have supposed that this was some electric phenomena, and that if the persons who have these communications and seem to be the medium of obtain-

ing them were insulated the sounds would not be heard. The experiment has been tried of standing these persons upon glass, but the sounds were as plain and loud as when they stood upon the floor, so that that idea seems to be a mistake.

On the *why* and wherefore of the subject we are all wishing for more light. We cannot say we *know how* it is produced. We can only say what we are told from this source, and what to us looks reasonable.

We have frequently spoken in the foregoing pages, of the alphabet being called for. The question will naturally arise: "How do you know when the alphabet is called for?" All who are acquainted with these communications understand the signal for the alphabet. It is known by five quick successive raps. On hearing these the person commences calling over the alphabet and gets the communication spelled out.

We conclude this history by giving the names of the following persons who have heard more or less of these manifestations. They are merely those we remember at the moment. We have not consulted them to know their opinion, but are perfectly willing to let them say for themselves what their opinions are from what they have seen and heard.

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