

of everybody's examining and witnessing for themselves is abundant all around us. He who ventures to deny their existence may as well deny the existence of the Crystal Palace, because, forsooth! he has not taken the trouble to go and see it. His wisdom is that of the driven sheep, which leaps over an unreal obstacle because another sheep has just done it before him; and of him, at least, it can not be truly said, "Never does nature open her breast before a worthy mind only that it may behold, and then fall asleep."

Other instances, however, of a kindred character may as well be mentioned. I will take as an instance the fact of my friends in New York being informed in regard to me, while absent last winter in my journey to Central America. The first time they heard of me, I had been at sea four days in a steamer. We were 800 miles from home, and in long. 73° 2' W., off the coast of Florida. We had spoken no vessels since we left our port, so that there was no possible way, by earthly means, by which people in New York could know how I then was, and what I was then doing; yet, at half-past nine o'clock that evening, the circle of which I had been a member being assembled, asked, "Can any spirit inform us of the condition of Judge Edmonds?" and it was answered, "Thy friend is well and doing well. His passage thus far is favorable, and his mind has been favorable. He is now thinking of the circle, and now enjoying conversation about you. I see him laughing and enjoying himself with the passengers," etc. I knew nothing of this till I returned home four months afterward, and then, having learned it, I compared that statement with the entries in my journal, and it was literally true, even to the hour. Four days afterward, while I was still at sea, no ship having yet been spoken, it was said with truth, through the same medium, "Your friend the Judge is not so well as usual, and he wishes himself in his own home again. He has been writing considerable, and it has brought on his old distress." Three days afterward they again heard of me, that I had "left the vessel, was on *terra firma*,

recruiting from the voyage," etc. Our voyage had terminated the previous day, and I had penetrated the interior about ninety miles. Twenty-two days afterward they heard of me again, among other things: "He is now traveling slowly, not being yet sufficiently inured to hardship to travel very rapidly. His head aches at present." On referring to my journal, I found that on the two previous days I had traveled one day four leagues, and the other day eight, and that at the very hour when that was said in New York, I was confined to my bed with a sick headache, more than 2,000 miles distant.

Now what is to be said about this? What solution is to be given of it? It was utterly impossible that that could be done by any mortal means that I know of. And whence came the intelligence that thus conveyed the verity of things then actually existing 2,000 miles distant? Will it be said that it was guessing? If it was guessing, it was, indeed, good, for it was done seven times during a period of four months—every time exactly right, and never twice alike.

I will give another instance. My daughter had gone with her little son to visit her husband's relatives at Ogdensburg, on the St. Lawrence River, more than 400 miles from New York. During her absence, and about four o'clock in the morning, I was told through this spiritual intercourse that the little fellow was very sick. I went to Ogdensburg after him, and found that at the very hour when I received that intelligence he was very sick, his mother and aunt were sitting up with him and were alarmed for the result. Was this also guessing, or my own imagining? When I was so told, I was not thinking of the boy, and yet the information I received was true.

I mention these things as happening to me, because I am giving my own testimony; yet I will confess that if they had happened to me only, I should hesitate in relating them, lest, perhaps, there might be some mistake about it; but we have accounts of many other similar instances

within the last three or four years, and from reliable sources, so that if human testimony is to be credited, they must be true.

Often have I witnessed this unseen power keep time to music that we were making; and once by rapping on my forehead with a hair brush, and at another time by rapping on a violin which I held in my hand, and keeping time to my singing, and changing the time as I changed the tune and the measure, which I did several times, and occasionally as abruptly as I could.

Once when we formed a circle, the first thing that was said was, "Now, Judge Edmonds, about your trouble?" I inquired what trouble? and it was answered by referring to a matter which had indeed been worrying me.

During the last illness of my revered old friend Isaac T. Hopper, I was a good deal with him, and on the day when he died I was with him from noon till about seven o'clock in the evening. I then supposed he would live yet for several days, and at that hour I left to attend my circle, proposing to call again on my way home. About ten o'clock in the evening, while attending the circle, I asked if I might put a mental question. I did so, and I knew that no person present could know what it was, or to what subject even it referred. My question related to Mr. Hopper, and I received for answer through the rappings, as from himself, that he was dead! I hastened immediately to his house, and found it was so. That could not have been by any one present, for they did not know of his death, they did not know my question, nor did they understand the answer I received. It could not have been the reflex of my own mind, for I had left him alive, and thought he would live several days. And what it was but what it purported to be, I can not imagine.

So on one occasion I was warned as to the character of a person in whom I was disposed to place a good deal of confidence. I thought there was some mistake, and I disregarded the warning, yet after some time, during which

the deepest cunning was displayed, I became indeed well satisfied the premonition had been correct.

The warning which Governor Tallmadge received, and which is mentioned in the following papers, is another instance. He was in my library in the city of New York, and was told of events which would happen, and which actually did happen after his return to his home in Wisconsin.

So I was told before sailing for Central America last fall, of several events which would occur during my journey, and which did occur.

So the destruction of the steamer Henry Clay, and the accident to the Reindeer on the Hudson River, last year, were both foretold before they happened.

On one occasion I had forgotten the name of a person in Michigan, to whom I wished a letter addressed on the subject of spiritual manifestations, and upon asking, it was given to me correctly through a medium.

Often when the party have been engaged in conversation, this invisible intelligence has taken part, as if it was a person present hearing what was said. Once I remember we were conversing about propagating this new faith, and it was spelled out to us by the rappings, "Sow only where the soil is prepared."

Once it was spelled out to the medium, "Edward, you seem to feel disposed to oppose us," and on inquiry, we learned that he was adverse to a measure which had been proposed, but he had said nothing about it.

Once a person present expressed his fears, that by avowing his belief in this faith he might be reduced to poverty and destitution, and it was spelled out, "Read the last ten verses of the sixth chapter of Matthew."

On one occasion the medium in New York was told that his sister was sick in the State of Michigan. A few days afterward he received a letter through the mail, giving him the same information.

I once asked a spirit what was the last event in life it

remembered, and what the first event happening here that it noticed after death? The answer detailed two events correctly, one of which happened about an hour after the breath had left the body.

I once mentioned that a dying person had whispered a faint "amen" to a prayer that was uttered. It was answered, "It was not to his prayer that I said amen, but expressing my resignation to the will of God."

At one time the answers were spelled out by moving the table, and not by rapping. A vial of water was put on the table; while it remained there the movings were very gentle, but both before and after it was there, they were vehement enough to have thrown it off.

I have frequently known the violence of the manifestations to be softened at the request that they would be more gentle, and so I have known them to be more vehement when requested.

A word was once used that I had never heard before. Some one present said that Mr. Davis had used it in one of his books. It was said, "Davis has not that term." On subsequent inquiry of him, I found that he never had used it, and had never heard it.

Sometimes when the party have got into discussion among themselves, I have known vehement manifestations made to stop it, and sometimes all communion ceased.

I have known them frequently to correct the minutes which had been kept of the proceedings of a circle; sometimes they would themselves make mistakes in doing so, and on having them pointed out to them would correct the mistake.

A communication was being spelled out by the alphabet, and I was writing it down. I wrote, "No one. Not wo." My mistake was not seen by any of the party, but it was corrected by spelling out "Number one. Number two."

Directions have been frequently given as to deportment and conduct at our meetings, as to put out and bring in a light, to open and shut windows or doors, to ask questions

and to be silent, to change our positions, etc., etc., precisely the same in all respects as we who were living and sitting there would talk to each other.

I have seen a person who knew nothing of music, except a little that he had learned at a country singing-school, go to a piano and play in perfect keeping as to time and concord the several parts of an overture to an opera; and Governor Tallmadge in a recent letter writes:

"My youngest daughter, aged thirteen, plays on the piano by the instructions of the spirits, like an experienced performer. She knows nothing of notes or music, and never played the piano before in her life. The first tune she played was Beethoven's Grand Waltz, and then several others with which we were familiar. After that, she played many we had never heard before, and improvised words suited to the airs, beautiful, and of the highest tone of religious and moral sentiment."

I have known Latin, French, and Spanish words spelled out through the rappings, and I have heard mediums who knew no language but their own speak in those languages, and in Italian, German, and Greek, and in other languages unknown to me, but which were represented to be Arabic, Chinese, and Indian, and all done with the ease and rapidity of a native.

Once a medium, who was a carpenter of very common education, was teaching us about self-knowledge. As I was writing down what he said, I spoke to myself in a low tone, *Γνωθι Σεαυτον*. He paused a moment, said "*Γνωθι Σεαυτον?* yes; know thyself."

And finally—for I must bring this long detail to a close, though it is only a small part of what I have recorded in five large volumes of manuscript, besides very many interviews which I have never recorded, because they were but a repetition of what I had already written—finally, I say, after spending two hours privately and alone with an individual, when I returned home I have had our private conversation detailed to me with an accuracy which startled me in its demonstration of the fact, that every word that

had been uttered in that private conversation was known to the intelligence that was dealing with me.

Now, in all that I have detailed, both as to the reality of the intercourse and its intelligence, though I have mentioned many things that are known to me alone, as well as many known to others, I have not mentioned a single thing whose equal or counterpart has not been witnessed by hundreds and thousands of intelligent and credible people. I am not therefore stating any thing peculiar to myself, though some things can, from the nature of the case, have my testimony alone to support them. But I am referring to matters which are known to thousands, which for the last five years have been occurring in the presence of great numbers in all parts of the country, and which are yet happening in our midst, and can be seen by all who will but take the trouble to see and to hear.

But I have not done with this branch of my subject, though happily I have got to an end of my wearisome detail. There are other considerations connected with it that ought not to be overlooked.

It is now about five years since the subject first attracted public attention. Though we discover now that for the previous ten or twelve years there had been more or less of it in different parts of the country, but it had been kept concealed, either from fear of ridicule or from ignorance of what it was. The first public demonstration, however, was about five years ago, through the family of Mrs. Fox, near Rochester, in the State of New York. Through them the manifestations were by rapping on the floor, or a table, and the intelligence displayed itself by selecting from the alphabet as it was called over, letter by letter, until words were spelled out.

For awhile this was the chief, if not only the mode of the manifestation, but since then other modes have been developed. I shall refer only to such additional ones as I have myself witnessed, there being, as I understand, several which I have never seen.

Clairvoyance and Psychometry were, indeed, previously known, but not, that I am aware, much resorted to as means of spiritual intercourse, or, rather, not so much as they have been of late. Now, they are both of them modes frequently used for that purpose.

Some are mediums for physical manifestations; by that I mean the disturbance of the equanimity, if I may so term it, of material objects, without any intelligence being necessarily or usually communicated through them, but done apparently for the purpose of convincing the skeptical of the presence of some invisible, intangible power. In other words, for the purpose of addressing to our senses the idea of a physical communion with a power out of and beyond mere mortal agency.

Connected with this, in a measure, though with the addition of an intelligent communion between the mortal and the invisible power, are the mediums for table tipplings, now becoming very common throughout the United States and in many parts of Europe,* and which are doing more than all else to attract general attention to the matter, and to awaken an inquiring spirit among mankind.

Another class of mediums consists of those who write. Their hands are affected by a power manifestly beyond their own control, and not emanating from or governed by their own will. The numbers of this class are rapidly increasing. A vast amount of matter has been written by them, which will yet be given to the world when it shall be prepared to receive it in a spirit of candid inquiry, and the mass is daily augmented through the instrumentality of new mediums who are being developed.

Another species are speaking mediums, some of whom speak when in the trance state, and some when in their normal condition. In these cases the invisible intelligence seems to take possession of the mind of the medium, and compel the utterance of its ideas, sometimes in defiance of

* I witnessed it last winter, also, in Central America and in Havana.

he will of the mortal through whom it is talking. I have seen one or two of this class, who seem to hear spoken words, and to perform their function by simply repeating what they hear. But generally they utter ideas impressed upon their minds, and not infrequently have their organs of speech controlled by a power independent of and at times in opposition to their own will.

Impressible mediums are still another species. They receive impressions in their minds to which they give utterance, either by writing or speaking, their faculties being entirely under their own control.

The spectator, unaccustomed to this manifestation, would find it difficult to discriminate between it and the ordinary process of speaking or writing the medium's own ideas; but the mediums have generally no such difficulty, nor has the bystander who has become familiar with it, and also become acquainted with the mind of the medium and its ordinary operations. For instance, facts are thus communicated before unknown to the medium, coming events foretold, which are yet in the womb of the future, and thoughts are suggested at variance with preconceived notions, and often too profound and learned for the unlearned and sometimes simple mind on which they are impressed.

These considerations in some measure apply to the speaking mediums also, though there is more frequently some external sign of the power that is operating.

Another, and the last kind of medium that I shall speak of, consists of those who see, or seem to see, the objects presented to their consideration. I do not mean that they actually do see with their physical sight, but the objects are so presented to them that precisely the same effect is produced on their minds as is produced by the habitual exercise of their physical organs of sight. An artist in a neighboring city lately wrote me that he, from being one who had thrown the matter aside as "a barefaced imposture, and who had spared no words in denouncing the whole

affair a stupendous fraud on the weak-minded and credulous," had become such a medium, and had had scenes presented to his vision which, he says, are "impressed upon his mind with extreme distinctness, more so than any picture he ever saw, and that they can not be his own imaginings—the manner of their presentation preclude that idea."

Among the following papers are several which were given through me, and it was in this manner that all were so given, except one, and that was more like the impressible medium.*

Such is the general character of this spiritual intercourse as I have witnessed it.

It is not practicable for me in the limits of this paper to detail minutely all those things which for nearly three years I have been witnessing, and the records of which now fill my volumes of manuscript. I must necessarily content myself with giving only a general view of it, and I do that the more readily, because I repeat my object is not so much to convince others, as to awaken in their minds such an interest as will induce them also to investigate, and thus to bring to bear upon the subject minds more fitted, from leisure and other causes, than mine to conduct such an inquiry as it seems to me the subject demands.

The facts which I have detailed gave rise in my own mind to several questions which will readily suggest themselves to others.

One of the first of those questions was this: What is this which I am witnessing? Is it a departure from nature's laws or in conformity with them? Is it a miracle, or is it the operation of some hitherto unknown but pre-existing cause, now for the first manifesting itself?

The answer I got was: It is the result of human progress, it is in execution, not a suspension, of nature's laws, and it is not now for the first time manifesting itself, but in all ages of the world has at times been displayed

* See *Appendix F.*

I reasoned then, If it is by a law of nature, it must be universal in its application, and it may be discovered and understood by man; and I asked that I might understand it. I was told, however, that my knowledge of nature was too imperfect to enable me to understand it as yet. I asked what I might read to assist me to the requisite knowledge, and I was referred by one present to Von Reichenbach's "Dynamics of Magnetism," and there I found that he had discovered a hitherto unknown power in nature. He named it Od, or Odie force, and described it as an exceeding subtle fluid, existing with magnetism and electricity, found in fire and heat, and produced in the human body by the chemical action of respiration and digestion and decomposition, and issuing from the body in the shape of a pale flame, with sparks, and smoke, and material in its nature, though so much sublimated as to be visible only to persons of a peculiar vision. In my experiments I have myself once or twice seen it, but have met with those who could see it as readily as those through whom that German philosopher conducted his examinations.

I was given to understand that this power was used in these manifestations, but how or in what manner I have not learned. I was also made to know that electricity and magnetism had something to do with them.

Upon that subject it was said to me, "Man physically is composed of one element in three distinct grades of perfection, which grades serve to form a link between the spiritual and physical worlds.

"It is an electricity, but more perfected than that with which you are familiar, that which you term electricity.

"The first or lowest quality which pervades the human system has an essential promotion to its formation, and is what may be termed the *vegetable motive element*. This is a better term to use than electricity, because you would otherwise associate it with electricity, as you see it in its common form, and that would give you an erroneous idea. This is one grade above the common electricity. Its sphere

or function is to give involuntary growth or action. It therefore is a most essential element of all the plant creation. It is to the vegetable creation what the soul is to the human creation. Nearly all nature has a greater or less degree of this element or quality.

"The next may be termed the *animal motive element*. This is still another grand grade or perfected form of electricity, and is that substance which is called magnetism. It is that which pervades the nervous system, and gives voluntary motion. It is that which gives life to the nerves, and which gives us sensation. This element is but one grade below the soul, and is that through which you receive instinct. Animals through this element show instinct which seemingly almost amounts to impressions. Still they are not impressions in reality, though nearly allied. The mind does not grasp the idea, but receives the instinct, and acts accordingly, but not from reason. As the vegetable element is the soul of plants, so this is the soul of animals. You will understand that I do not mean to convey the idea that plants or animals have organized, individualized souls, that will ever exist. Its organization is necessarily confined to organized bodies, and when the body becomes disunited, this element must be disorganized with it.

"Next is the *soul motive element*, which is the grand microcosm of all below the divinity. This is an element which baffles your efforts to analyze, as self can not investigate self. It is that element which forms man, and constitutes him an ever-existing, individualized being. It is superior to the animal element, and therefore exists independently of the physical body. It is the function of this element to individualize man, and gives to each one those peculiarities which may distinguish him from all others.

"The soul of the plant is positive to the plant, and negative to animals.

"The soul of animals is positive to animals, and negative to man.

"The soul of man is positive to man, but negative to God.