

"The three elements of the extended universe combine to form man.

"This is man physically. He is superior to the lower organization of nature, because their superior element is his inferior element. The animal's positive is man's negative.

"These three qualities are with, or a part of, the soul after leaving the body. As we spiritually are formed much as you are physically, and as the vegetable is necessary to the growth, and the animal to the motive power, it must exist in the spiritual world, though much more refined and elevated."

In the course of my examination, I asked if I might not know how this odic force was used? I was told that it would be explained to me; and it was afterward attempted through the same medium by whose instrumentality I received the teaching which I have just written.

The manifestations on that occasion were of a very extraordinary character. I give them in the Appendix in the language in which he recorded them.* If my readers knew him as well as I do—if they were as well acquainted with the simplicity and uprightness of his character, they would be aware how firmly they might rely upon his integrity and intelligence. For my own part, I have never doubted the truthfulness of his statement.

This is as far as I have been able to advance in answer to this question. My attention was soon drawn to other matters, namely, to the moral character of the teachings, and I was compelled to leave that inquiry to others. I have related all I know on that subject, in the earnest hope that some one may pursue the investigation until we shall be able to understand it as well as we now do the steam-engine or the magnetic telegraph, for surely it must be that the knowledge is equally attainable by man.

But the law was universal in its action? and therefore

* See Appendix C.

it had probably displayed itself ere this, and now would allow the communion with inferior as well as superior spirits, and through mediums whose physical organization would allow it, whatever their moral condition. Thus it was I argued, and facts seemed to support the position.

In the first place I found that both sacred and profane history was full of accounts of what we are now witnessing. I need not refer to all that is written on that subject in the Bible. It will be enough that I refer to Hagar, Genesis xvi.; to Abraham, Gen. xviii.; to Lot, Gen. xix.; to Jacob, Gen. xxxi.; to Moses, Exodus iii.; to Balaam, Numbers xxii.; to Gideon, Judges vi.; to Elijah, 1 Kings; to Zachariah, Zach. i.; to the two Marys at the sepulcher, Matthew xxviii.; to the Virgin Mary and to the Shepherds, Luke i.; and the opening the door of Peter's prison, Acts v.; and to John, in Revelations xxii.*

The history of the primitive Christian Church agrees at least in this, that for three or four hundred years after Christ, spiritual intercourse was frequent among the believers, and its general diffusion seemed to cease only when the Church began to lose its purity, by being united with and fostered by government, when it was so affected by that union that it was difficult to tell whether it was Christianity paganized, or paganism Christianized, and when it plunged into the dark ages that followed the eruption of the savages of the North, and slumbered for a thousand years amid their gloomy light.

Yet even then, if we may credit the traditions and private histories of the Catholic Church,† it was occasionally manifest.

* The lesson there taught may well be borne in mind by spiritualists as by others. "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book. Worship God."

† I do not speak thus because I doubt the truth of these accounts, for I

After the Reformation, and the minds of men began to be somewhat freed from the restraints which the religious domination of centuries had imposed upon them, spiritual intercourse began again to display itself. But mankind in their ignorance knew not how to deal with it. Instead of meeting the intelligence rationally, as is now done, and asking whence and why it came, it was met with prayers and fumigations, and exorcisms in a dead language, nay! with the fagot and the scaffold. About 200 years ago, under the administration of one of the wisest of the English judges, hundreds were tried and executed for the crime of witchcraft. The act of 1, James I., ch. xii., against witchcraft, was passed when Lord Bacon, one of the greatest minds that England has ever produced, was a member of the House of Commons, and Lord Coke, one of her most distinguished judges, was attorney-general, and, in the House of Lords, was referred to a committee which contained twelve bishops. And Barrington, in his observations on the statute of 20, Hen. VI., says that 30,000 people were burned for witchcraft within 150 years.

In our country, too, where our sturdy ancestors planted amid savage wilds the seed of that freedom which now so overshadows the world, it displayed itself; and the history of Salem witchcraft is but an account of spiritual manifestations, and of man's incapacity to understand them.

In regard to other periods of time, it has been well said by one who marvels at our superstition in believing that which has the testimony of ages to support it, "In any age or period concerning which we have a legend, a record, or a history, we find some mysterious developments

do not. I am willing to make all allowances for delusion and imposture, yet my habits of thought have been such that I can not at pleasure disregard human testimony, especially when supported by irreproachable character. I can not satisfy myself by crying "delusion" or "imposture" as to facts that are established by testimony that has been accepted in all human transactions in all ages of the world, and must be, so long as mankind are to be governed by reason, and not by authority. I must weigh that evidence, and give it its just force and authority.

concerning man, his life, and his death. These phenomena have always astonished, but have never been accounted for. Egyptian, Chaldean, Grecian, and Roman history are prolific with statistics to sustain this position. Read Herodotus, Plato, Zenophon, Pliny, Livy, or any other Greek or Roman author from which we glean whatever information we possess concerning antiquity, and upon almost every page we find the writer discoursing upon mysteries, the work of an unseen agency, which he could not comprehend. Homer and Virgil sang about them; Socrates and the philosophers speculated upon them; Demosthenes and Cicero harangued about them in orations, and all were impressed with the same feeling of their incomprehensibility.*

In more modern times, we have, in the early history of the Quakers, the Shakers,† and the Methodists, evidences of the same sort of manifestations; and I have been struck

* Cicero declares his age indebted to such an unseen agency for many valuable discoveries in physic, for warnings, for predictions, and extraordinary deliverances; and he says, "I know not any one nation, polite or barbarous, which does not hold that some persons have the gift of foretelling future events."—CICERO *de Divinatione*, lib. i.

In Plato's "Apology for Socrates," he is made to say: "The cause of this is that which you have often and in many places heard me mention; because I am moved by a certain divine and spiritual influence, which, also, Melitus, through mockery, has set out in the indictment. This began with me from childhood, being a kind of voice which, when present, always diverts me from what I am about to do, but never urges me on.

"But this duty, as I said, has been enjoined me by the deity, by oracles, by dreams, and by every mode by which any other divine decree has ever enjoined any thing for man to do." "Cary's Works of Plato," "The Apology of Socrates," iii. See, also, "Crito; or, the Duty of a Citizen."—*Ibid.*

† The Shakers in this country are an organized band of between four and five thousand individuals, who for sixty or seventy years have lived in the full belief, and the frequent manifestation of, spiritual-intercourse as it is now displaying itself abroad throughout the world. They have superadded celibacy to it, as a matter which, in their view, aids in avoiding the selfishness which spiritualism seeks to eradicate. But the order, economy, neatness, and industry which so eminently characterize them, are living evidence of the falsity of the charge so often urged against spiritualism by the ignorant and the designing, that it tends to produce insanity.

in my researches with the remarkable resemblance between some of the incidents which are happening now, and those which happened one hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago.

Now these remarks are but a general allusion to the facts with which sacred and profane history both teem, going to show how, for thousands of years, mankind have been dealt with by an unseen and incomprehensible agency. And to me these facts prove, not that men for so many ages, and amid all their cultivation, have been deluded, and have not seen and heard what their senses told them that they had; not that, with all their intellect, which has sent their wisdom down the stream of time to enlighten us, they have been the victims of an imposture which has taken their belief by storm, and which only ordinary sagacity might have detected, but that (herein agreeing with Dr. Johnson) there must be something in that which has thus challenged belief in all ages, and if so, that there must be in nature some such law as that whose operations we are now witnessing, and which we are told is thus universal through all earthly time and space in its domination.

In other words, to make myself understood, from this universality of the effect I infer the existence of the law, for it can not exist as a law of nature unless it has that universality, and if I did not find that evidence of its general operation, I should doubt its existence.

Again, I reasoned if the doctrine of this new philosophy is correct, that man is the creature of Progression, and that he does not instantly upon dying change into a state of perfection, but only into a condition where he can more readily progress toward perfection; and if this law exists, and is thus universal, then it must be applicable and available to all disembodied spirits, as well those who have as those who have not begun to progress.

Now we find that to be the fact. The experience of almost every one who has gone into the investigation of this matter demonstrates this. Among the following papers

will be found occasional instances; but our records contain many more, and show us beyond all peradventure, that at times ignorant, unprogressed, inferior, and sometimes positively mischievous spirits do commune with us through the instrumentality of this intercourse.*

I pass to another consideration which has much weight with me, and that is, the remarkable manner in which the distinctive characters of those professing to commune with us are delineated and preserved. Thus through a female, gentle, simple, unsophisticated, of not much education, and with no more than ordinary powers of mind, I have received communications purporting to be from different persons, each bearing the distinctive characteristic of the person professing to speak, each different from the other, and none of them like the qualities of the mind of the medium. It was utterly impossible for her to fabricate these manifestations. Her powers of mind were not equal to the task, nor do I believe that it was in the power of any human being to do so. Rapidly and instantaneously changing from one mind to another, and for two or three hours on a stretch preserving the distinct characteristics of each! Why! even Garrick in his best days, and after all previous preparation, could not have done it.

I will give from my records a few instances of this exhibition and preservation of the distinctive character of those professing to speak.

* I do not pause here to dwell upon the mischiefs that may flow from this consideration, or to utter any warnings against the consequences. That would be foreign to the purposes of this paper. I refer now, for some things relating thereto, to the following papers, *passim*, and I shall hereafter have occasion to speak more at large upon the subject. I will here merely remark, that much of the difficulty we encounter arises from our own erroneous notions as to the nature of spirit-existence, from the wild speculations in which, in man's ignorance, he has at all times indulged on the subject, and the almost impracticability in our material existence to comprehend the nature of that which is so much more sublimated and refined. But it is enough for the present, merely to refer to a correspondence, recently published elsewhere, and which will be found in *Appendix D*.

May 15, 1852, it was spelled out through the rappings, "The work goes bravely on. The great men of earth are engaged, and the self-conceited wonder at so much credulity. You have only to keep still and let the work go on. When the ignorant abuse and ridicule you, take no notice of what they say. God is omnipotent. You have a pilot at your helm that will guide you safely through."

I inquired, "What has produced this train of remark? It is not responsive to any thing we have asked."

"The *Herald* man's abuse toward you is one thing which you yourself have risen above. Still many are afraid your feelings are injured."

I inquired, "May I know who it is that is saying this to us?"

"Fennimore Cooper."

At the same meeting it was said: "Oh, my friends! how pleasant a thing it is to see brethren dwell together in unity! One week only have I spent in the holy society of just men made more perfect. Friends, bear with me a little longer. I came to tell you that a great and important development is about to be made to man. I have been blessed with the society of the poor depressed ones who met me on the shore of this blessed land and hailed me as their deliverer.

ISAAC T. HOPPER."

On 30th June, 1852, at Albany, it was written: "Brother Edmonds, you will do more good with spiritualism, than ever I did in politics. Go on. HENRY CLAY."

"There is joy in heaven at the opening of this intercourse with man. The spirits there never rest, they never tire. Be ye like them. Go on. Go on. Heaven shall crown your efforts," etc.

I remarked, that I wished I knew whether he believed in spiritual intercourse while in the body? He answered:

"I wish I had only told what I did believe. Oh, the darkness! Oh, the darkness! Preach away, every time you get a chance."

May 22d, 1852, against the earnest protestations of the medium, the following was spelled out to us through the rappings. I give it as it was written.

"You have got to hear my story fust. I am happy now, since I have larnt how for to wrap. You must pity my ignorance instead of laughing. I can tell you, I am sorry I lived as I did; but no decent man would speak to me when I wanted to reform, and now I am not abel to converse as wel as a littel infant, because I have nobody to larn me how. Now do remember the poor; and remember that poverty makes them bad. You must not pas them by."

He said his name was John Jones, and had died in this city the previous January, and he said: "I leived any where where they would keep me. Good-night, Sur."

The following purported to come from William Penn: "Purify thy physical system, and that will make thee more susceptible to spiritual influence. Thou art capable of doing much good to thy fellow-creatures, and relieving many sorrowing spirits in the body. Thy mission is an arduous one, and it is thy duty to fulfill it truthfully and faithfully.

"If the ignorant censure thee and believe thee not, heed it not. Thou wilt yet triumph over all, for thine will be the cause of truth. Don't be afraid to let the world know what thy belief is. Truth must prevail."

What purported to be Elias Hicks, said: "My dear friends, I have only to say to you this evening that you have done your duty to God, to the spirits, and to man in this instance, and you shall see before long time shall elapse that you shall reap benefit from the charity and good-will to the poor which ye have shown to the poor spirit who was in your midst to-night," etc.

And finally on this topic, I annex an appendix from Governor Tallmadge, bearing on its face unmistakable evidence of this identity of character of several who have made their mark on the age in which they lived,

and in which they have been actively engaged with him.*

But I must stop here too, long before I exhaust the stock of kindred matter with which my records are filled; not, however, till I call attention to the marked difference in thought and expression between the following papers purporting to be written by Bacon or Swedenborg, and to the remarkable resemblance between the style of each in those papers, and that which characterized the writings of each when on earth. Any one at all familiar with their writings must be struck with it.

This, however, is not all. There is something peculiar about the handwriting. All that purports to come from Bacon is always in the same handwriting; so it is with Swedenborg. The handwriting of each is unlike the other, and though both are written by Dr. Dexter's hand, they are both unlike his; so that with ease, when he is under the influence, he writes several different kinds of handwriting, and some of them more rapidly than he can write his own. This he can not do when he is not under the influence; and I have never seen any person that could, in his normal condition, write with such rapidity, at one sitting, four or five different kinds of handwriting, each distinctly marked, and having and always retaining its peculiar characteristic.

This, however, is not a peculiarity of the Doctor as a medium. It distinguishes most, if not all the writing mediums whom I have seen; and sometimes there is a very close imitation of the handwriting that marked the person when alive, though this is not always so.

There is another consideration which I ought to mention while on this topic, and that is, that as no two human beings are exactly alike, and as the medial power is more or less affected by the peculiar characteristics of the person used as a medium, so it must necessarily be that no two

* See *Appendix B.*

† See *Appendix A.*

mediums can be alike. And this is found to be so invariably. I never saw two mediums exactly alike, but always differing from each other with as minute and varying shades as mark the human character as it is exhibited daily before us, thus conveying to me strong evidence against collusion, and as strong of the naturalness of the whole manifestation.

And there is still another consideration which goes to show its naturalness, and that is, that like every other human faculty, either of body or mind (and this seems to be a mixture of both), it is capable of being greatly improved and perfected by exercise and cultivation. When a medium is being developed, it is very much like a child's learning to walk, to talk, or to write, and to use its arm; and the progress afterward, whether fast or slow, is like all our learning, dependent very much on the will of the scholar.

Now all these considerations are arguments to my mind, not only against the idea of collusion, but in favor of the proposition that this is what it purports to be, the product of a law of nature, universal in its operations, and now being developed by human progress.

Whether my deductions are right or not I leave others to judge. My object will be answered, if by stating the effect on my own mind I induce others to investigate also, and thus bring forth to view more of the knowledge of this hidden mystery.

Such was the phenomenon which I myself witnessed very frequently, almost daily, for a period of three years. At the same time I have received accounts of incidents of a similar character having occurred in various other parts of the country, witnessed by others with whom I had no acquaintance, and who I knew could not be acting in collusion with those who surrounded me. Aware of the impression it made on my mind, I looked abroad to see how it affected other minds, as thus I could be assisted in judging of the soundness of the effect produced on mine.

This I observed—they were most vehement in denouncing it as an imposture or a delusion who were most obsti-

nate in refusing to witness it at all, who were most resolute in persisting in entire ignorance of all its features. The political demagogue who deemed it no sin to pander to the ignorance of the populace, sneered at it. The mountebank, aiming to replenish his coffers by his juggling tricks, professed to expose it, or at least to liken it to the sleight-of-hand by which he earned his daily bread. Men possessing character for education, if not learning, hazarded that character by explanations which satisfied no one, and which were founded on investigations whose superficiality would have shamed a child. They who claimed to be our spiritual teachers and guides, and to whom we naturally looked for instruction and advice in a matter seemingly at least within the scope of their calling, either refused to examine it, or carelessly and slightly looking at it, ventured to condemn. They were daily sending up the prayer, "Thy kingdom come;" and when many who hungered for its coming pointed them to these things, as perhaps indications of its advent, they answered by denouncing without investigation, and, as of old, asked, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" When affectionately and earnestly entreated to examine, that they might guide us by their wisdom, they contented themselves by advising us to abstain from looking into it, and be satisfied with our ignorance. And many, very many, either refused to know any thing about it, or denied their belief from fear of the ridicule which was so unsparingly poured out upon those who did believe or would investigate.

My mind was so constituted—fortunately or otherwise, no matter—but it was so constituted, that none of these things would satisfy its cravings for a knowledge of what this was, this novel and most extraordinary phenomenon, this new power connected with man, and evidently capable of wielding a mighty influence for good or ill over him, and I turned with unfeigned sorrow from such a mode of treating a grave and most important subject to contemplate the other aspect of the picture.

I saw that that which had its origin among the poor, the humble, the obscure, had in half a decade spread among mankind with a celerity which the Christian religion had not equaled in a hundred years. I saw that it sought no private haunts, enveloped itself in no useless mystery, but came out boldly before man, challenging his closest scrutiny. It sought no blind faith, but demanded always, and under all circumstances, the exercise of calm reason and deliberate judgment. I saw that the "exposures" of the philosopher and the mountebank were alike unavailing to turn back a single believer, that the denunciations from the political rostrum and the pulpit were alike powerless to arrest its progress, and that ridicule, all-powerful, because almost universal, was yet unable for one instant to retard its onward march. I saw that wherever it received the investigation it so earnestly demanded—calm, wise, deliberate investigation—it never, never failed to work conviction. I saw that it sent forth no preachers, it sought no proselytes, aimed at building up no sect, yet that thousands upon thousands of free, intelligent people were daily crowding its ranks. I saw many, very many shrewd, calm, and capacious minds examining and never failing to believe. I saw the Atheist bowing to its supremacy, and acknowledging his responsibility to his God and the future. And I saw without an exception that the believer was wiser and better, both as to God and his fellow.

All this I saw—this consonance with the laws of nature and of God, these marks of a divine origin—and I could not resist the conclusion: this is indeed of God, and man may not withstand it!

And I asked myself, if this is indeed so, why has it come now? What is the great lesson it is designed to teach, and how is it to have a practical influence on the conduct and condition of mankind?

This was an inquiry not so easily answered as the others, for it required the manifestation of an intelligence far above that which showed itself in rappings, or tipping of tables,