

still and wonder. To some it has come as a beacon-light seen in the distance, but never reached—sought in vain; but now the windows open and the light enters.

Thus will it affect different minds; but all will be reached. Some may scoff, and sneer, and cry humbug. Yet there is a feeling awakened within their hearts. They feel that it is other than that. It takes no form save that of universal light, and love, and progression. It absorbs no one spot, but as a mist would envelop the world.

All I can say this evening is, Go on in your quiet and beautiful and soul-cheering work, and God and spirits will assist you. And what more assistance can you ask for?

At the request of Governor Tallmadge the following letters are added to his appendix.

The first was to the "National Intelligencer," at Washington.

COLLAMORE HOUSE, NEW YORK, April 30, 1853.

MESSRS. GALES & SEATON:

A friend has just called my attention to an article in the *National Intelligencer* of the 25th instant, headed "Impostures and Delusions." The article is not under the editorial head; still it is not marked as a communication, and was considered by the gentleman who handed it to me, and would be considered by the generality of your readers, as editorial. Be this, however, as it may, the article is published by you without any dissent from its views, and may therefore be taken by the uninformed as meeting your approbation.

The writer alludes to the "Salem hangings," and says "that there may yet arise, at future periods, similar or analogous disorders of the popular mind, invading and corrupting the whole body politic, which it may in like manner become necessary to suppress by the strong hand of the law. Indeed, we might point, as already coming within this category, the Rochester knockings, with their kindred train of rascalities and abominations."

A little farther on the writer adds: "In like manner it is the general opinion of well-informed and deep-thinking persons, that it is already high time to call in legislative aid, if the execution of no

existing statutes can reach the present evil, for this perilous imposture, or yet more perilous contagion of morbid minds."

This is a sweeping denunciation of all who have investigated these "Spiritual Manifestations," and who have expressed a belief in their truth. And the spirit which pervades the whole article would not only recall the "Salem hangings," but would also invoke the "fires of Smithfield." I have no hesitation in saying I am one "coming within this category." And, let me assure you, there are throughout this widely-extended country some of the brightest and most exalted intellects who have, from a thorough investigation of this matter, come to the same conclusion. Yet such men are to be thus denounced by a writer who is so far behind the intelligence of the age, that he includes in his denunciations mesmerism and clairvoyance, which are considered by intelligent and scientific men as well established as electricity and magnetism. If this were all, he would deserve simply to be laughed at. But, in regard to Spiritualism, he probably never condescended to examine the subject, and yet assumes that he knows more about it by mere instinct, than others of equal talent, to say the least, do by the most patient research and philosophical investigation.

This article, I am persuaded, has been published by you without full examination or due reflection. It runs counter to all the principles of "law and order" which have been so uniformly enforced in the *National Intelligencer*. And I regret extremely that such disorganizing, such abominable, such flagitious sentiments should, even indirectly, have the influence of your names. I feel myself as being included in these denunciations; for, although I do not obtrude my opinions or my facts on any one, still I have communicated freely with those who have voluntarily sought information on this subject. During the last winter, at Washington, I conferred fully, and on their own solicitation, with some of the most distinguished men in the nation. I gave to them my own opinions, and the exalted communications and facts on which those opinions were founded.

Retired from public life, I have desired in this, as in all other matters, to avoid public observation. At the same time, you have been acquainted with me well enough and long enough to know that, when I have deliberately formed an opinion on any subject, I have that rare quality, called moral courage, which enables me to avow it either in private or in public.

So far as the public are concerned, I have as yet endeavored to maintain a profound silence. But considering myself as one of those so vindictively denounced in the article alluded to, further silence on my part would argue pusillanimity, and cease to be a virtue. I have not language to express my astonishment at the suggestions and doctrines there put forth—doctrines which subvert the very principles of civil and religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution under which we live. Who could have conceived that, at this advanced period of the nineteenth century, while we are surrounded by the multiplied evidences of the rapid progress in science and the arts, we should witness such evidences of bigotry and superstition, and such a retrogression toward the “Cimmerian darkness” which spread like a pall over the ancient world? If there was ever a monomania on any subject, it is on the part of those who have, without knowledge or investigation, denounced so madly these “Spiritual Manifestations.” I find no fault with those who do not believe in them; but I can not withhold an expression of my surprise that intelligent minds can be found to denounce those who do investigate them.

To vindicate myself therefore from these aspersions, I inclose you a copy of a letter, which I wrote early last January, to the Hon. James F. Simmons, formerly United States Senator from Rhode Island. The letter was written in the confidence of private friendship, and not intended for the public eye. Such as it is, however, I send it to you, and ask, as an act of justice, that you will publish it, together with this letter, in the *National Intelligencer*.

You need not be told who James F. Simmons is. He occupied a seat for several years with me in the Senate of the United States; and among all the members of that body you did not number two better friends. We were both deemed capable, at that time, of examining satisfactorily any question of finance or of political economy on which we might be engaged. But now, because we have thoroughly investigated these “Spiritual Manifestations,” and believe in their truth, we are included in the general, and Judge Edmonds in the particular, denunciations of this writer. I have given the character of Judge Edmonds in my letter to Mr. Simmons; and I will only add here, in reference to the retailed slander and sneering remark of the writer, in regard to his decisions, that, as a judge, he unites the qualities of two of the brightest luminaries of the English

bench, namely, the profundity of Bacon with the intuition of Mansfield.

Very respectfully yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

LETTER TO MR. SIMMONS (*above alluded to*).

WASHINGTON, January 10, 1853.

My dear Sir—I was pleased to see in the January number of “Putnam’s Monthly,” a statement of your experience in “Spiritual Manifestations.” In our conversation at Washington, during the last session of Congress, you had stated the same to me.

My experience is, probably, more limited than yours; but yours has served, in some measure, to strengthen the impressions made on my own mind, by the investigation I have given to this mysterious subject.

I had heard for a long time of the “Rochester Knockings,” but had paid no heed to them; on the contrary, had considered them a delusion, which would soon pass away. I continued under these impressions till some time last spring, when my attention was called to a newspaper attack on Judge Edmonds for being a believer in these “Spiritual Manifestations.” I had known Judge Edmonds for thirty years; had practiced law in the same courts; had served in the Senate of New York with him; had been associated with him also as a member of the Court for the Correction of Errors, the highest court in the State; had known him since that time as a Justice of the Supreme Court, and more recently as a Judge of the Court of Appeals, where he holds a deservedly high and distinguished rank among his brethren, the able judges of that court of last resort in the State of New York. I also knew him as a gentleman of finished classical education, and as a lawyer of an acute mind, and a decided talent for investigation. And, above all, I knew him to be a man of unimpeachable integrity. Knowing all these things, I concluded that if he had become a believer in “Spiritual Manifestations,” it was at least a subject worthy of investigation.

Accordingly, I determined to investigate it as opportunity should present. I thought I could bring to bear on it a pretty good share of common sense and a reasonable talent for investigation. And knowing, withal, that I had not a great deal of enthusiasm in my

composition, I believed I could enter upon the investigation without much danger of being carried away by any delusion.

In this frame of mind I commenced the investigation of this subject, being an entire unbeliever, but entering upon it with a sincere desire to ascertain the truth. I will not trouble you with the facts which were developed in the progress of my investigation. Suffice it to say, they were of the most astounding character. I soon became satisfied of two things: first, that the "medium" did not know from whence the "raps" proceeded; secondly, that she did not know from whence the communications came. Perhaps I ought in this connection to observe that, in pursuing this investigation, all my questions were propounded *mentally*. The medium did not and could not know what they were, and of course could not tell what answers to give, or what would be appropriate responses to the questions thus mentally propounded.

Objectors can not deny that these answers came from an *intelligent* source; but they sometimes say that they are to be found in the mind of the interrogator. It is true that the interrogator oftentimes knows the answer to the question *mentally* propounded by him; and it is equally true that he frequently does *not* know what the appropriate answer should be, but ascertains its truth afterward. Neither can he in any way anticipate many communications which are made without any questions being asked. I have frequently received such communications of an elevated character, and far above the capacity of the medium. I conclude, therefore, they do not come from the medium, nor from the mind of the interrogator.

These communications, too, are perfectly characteristic of the individuals from whom they purport to come. I have had frequent communications purporting to come from my old friend, John C. Calhoun, which his intimate friends would pronounce perfectly characteristic of him; and some of them, both in style and sentiment, worthy of him in his palmiest days in the Senate of the United States. I have had similar ones purporting to come from Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, of the same elevated order, and peculiarly characteristic of the individual. I can make the same remark of other individuals.

I have seen rapping mediums, writing mediums, and speaking mediums, and have received communications through all of them. I have witnessed physical manifestations, such as the movement of

tables, without any visible agency. These *physical* manifestations are more satisfactory to the mass of mankind, because they appeal directly to the senses. I am better pleased myself with the *moral*, if I may so call them, than the physical manifestations.

The next question is, from whence do these manifestations, whether physical or moral, proceed? Judge Edmonds was told that they were all according to natural laws, which would in due time be fully developed; and he was directed to read Von Reichenbach's "Dynamics of Magnetism and Electricity" (a book he had never heard of before), as a means of enabling him to understand these laws. I have read the book myself. The writer proves conclusively the discovery of a new element, which he calls *od*, or the *odic force*. He proves that this element pervades not only the human system, but the material world and the whole universe. He finds it in the rays of the sun, moon, and stars. Late English writers of high reputation consider the existence of the *odic force* as well established as that of magnetism and electricity. It combines many of the qualities of the two latter, and is antagonistic to some of them. It may be presumed, therefore, that this newly-discovered element enters, in some sort, into these manifestations. It is said that this accounts for the *physical* manifestations. But no one can show *how* this force produces them. And even if this were proved, it still remains to account for the *intelligence* in the communications which are received. That intelligence does not come from tables, or chairs, or other material objects. It must come from mind, or from a spiritual source. This new element may be the medium of conveying it to us. To illustrate, let me suppose that a friend in New York wishes to communicate with me in Washington. He sends his communication to me through the electric telegraph. The communication is received and written down here, the same as a communication is received and written down through the rapping medium. I ask how is that communication from my friend conveyed to me? The answer is, by the electric fluid. But does the electric fluid *make* the communication? The answer is no; the *mind* of my friend does that. So in the case of the rapping medium, the communication comes from some source of *intelligence*. This intelligence, as every one knows who has investigated these matters, does not come from the table that is moved by some invisible power, nor from the medium, nor from any one present. It is therefore to be inferred that it comes from a *spirit-*

ual source, and more especially when communications are received on subjects exclusively known to those communicating.

Some have attempted to account for all those things by mesmerism, clairvoyance, and psychology. Let it be remembered that twelve or fifteen years ago, mesmerism, clairvoyance, etc., were as much denounced as "Spiritual Rappings" are now. They were called humbugs and jugglery then, as these manifestations are at this day. This prejudice and denunciation continued in England till the publication of the philosophical treatise of the Rev. Mr. Townshend, which changed the whole current of public sentiment. There have been many able publications on these subjects since that time, and they are now considered as well established as magnetism or electricity. Suppose these denunciations had deterred philosophical minds from investigating them, how much light would have been lost to science and the world? Now, all the magic, the mysteries, the witchcraft, and necromancy of the ancient world, from the time of the Delphic Oracle, are explained by these modern investigations; and all popular delusions, however exaggerated, are now shown to have truth for their basis. I have read many of the ablest writers on these subjects; but to my mind not one of them has been able to account for these "Spiritual Manifestations." Hence the greater importance of continuing these investigations. To denounce, therefore, those engaged in them is as unwise as it is unphilosophical; and more especially if such denunciations come from those who never witnessed any of the facts and manifestations which have convinced the judgments of men equally intelligent, equally honest, and as little likely to be deluded as themselves.

But what is the objection to investigating this matter? Is it feared that there may be some discrepancies between the religious sentiments communicated and the tenets of the different religious denominations among us? Such discrepancies are heard every Sunday from our different pulpits throughout the land. And still all denominations of Christians, though differing about particular tenets, maintain the great and leading doctrines of Christianity. And from the investigation I have given the subject, I agree with the Rev. Adin Ballou, who has written the most candid and satisfactory explanation I have seen, that "*whatever of divine fundamental principle, absolute truth, and essential righteousness there is in the Bible, in the popular religion, and in the established Churches, will stand. It can*

not be done away. On the contrary, it will be corroborated and fulfilled by Spirit Manifestations."

It has been objected, that there have been cases of derangement arising from these manifestations. If there be such cases, I apprehend they are less numerous than they have been represented, and may have arisen from other causes than the one to which they have been attributed. But be that as it may, and be the number great or small, it has no possible bearing on this question. Derangement has often followed from religious excitement, and the over-excited passions of the human heart. Still this is no objection to the investigation of the truths of religion, or of the emotions and passions of our nature. Neither is it an objection to investigating the subject under consideration. Denunciations can not stop it, but, on the contrary, tend to encourage it. But for the denunciations of Judge Edmonds, an old acquaintance and friend, I doubt whether my attention would have been called to it. If it be true, it should be known; for great and mighty results must follow. Already we hear of many who have been converted from infidelity, and now proclaim the immortality of the soul, and that "death is" *not* "an eternal sleep." If it be not true, that can only be ascertained by investigation; and the sooner it be done the better. In either case, therefore, all good citizens, all intelligent minds, should unite in ascertaining the truth or falsity of this, the greatest phenomenon of the present or any preceding age.

It is understood to be a general belief, at this day, among all Christian denominations, that spirits visit this earth; that they attend us; that they impress us, and thereby protect us from accident and danger. Every one's own experience will confirm the truth of this observation. A communication to me, purporting to come from Mr. Calhoun, conveys the same idea; wherein he says, "We, by our united will, acting upon spirits clothed in flesh, influence them to perform duties which benefit mankind." If, then, such be the general belief, is it any great stretch of that belief, after the astounding facts we have seen and heard, to suppose that there may have been discovered a mode by which spirits can now communicate with us, in addition to attending and impressing us, and that they are permitted so to do? To my mind the conclusion is perfectly rational and philosophical. With all the evidences of progress which surround us here, how can we discard such evidences from the

spirit-world, which is believed to be one of "everlasting progression."

Many persons, unable to resist the evidence of the spiritual source of these communications, are finally compelled to admit them, and, as a last resort, charge them as emanating from evil spirits. I consider this as giving up the controversy. There *may* be communications from evil spirits. But that does not conflict with the communications which bear internal evidence of coming from the "spirits of just men made more perfect." There is an abundance of communications purporting to come from such a source, and of the purest, most elevated, and most religious character. If the "evil one" has prompted these, I confess I have heretofore formed a very wrong estimate of his character.

On the whole, the result of my investigations thus far is, that the weight of evidence is in favor of the truth of these "Spiritual Manifestations." But I shall continue to investigate as opportunity offers. And if, hereafter, the preponderance of evidence shall incline to the other side, I shall as readily announce that result, as I have above communicated the other.

In the mean time, let us exercise all possible charity for those who do not believe; and especially those who denounce without investigation and condemn without knowledge; for they are those that most need it.

Excuse this desultory communication, and accept the assurance of the high respect and esteem with which I am, very truly, yours,
HON. JAMES P. SIMMONS. N. P. TALLMADGE.

The next appeared originally in the *New York Tribune*, communicated by the lady to whom it was addressed:

BALTIMORE, Tuesday, April 12, 1853

Dear Madam—I seize a few leisure moments, while detained here a short time on business, to give you a more extended account of the "Physical Manifestations" to which I alluded in a former letter. In this account, I shall confine myself to those which purport to come from the spirit of JOHN C. CALHOUN.

I have received numerous communications from him, from the commencement of my investigation of this subject down to the present time. Those communications have been received through rap-

ping mediums, writing mediums, and speaking mediums. They are of the most extraordinary character. In style and sentiment they would do honor to him in his best days on earth.

After the arrival of the Misses Fox in Washington city, in February last, I called on them by appointment, and at once received a communication from Calhoun.

I then wrote down and propounded *mentally* the following question:

Can you *do* any thing (meaning physical manifestations) to confirm me in the truth of these revelations, and to remove from my mind the least shadow of unbelief?

To which I received the following answer:

I will give you a communication on Monday, at half-past seven o'clock. Do not fail to be here. I will then give you an explanation.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

It is proper here to remark, that all the communications referred to in this letter were made by Calhoun after a call for the alphabet, and were rapped out, letter by letter, and taken down by me in the usual way. They were made in the presence of the Misses Fox and their mother.

I called on Monday at the hour appointed, and received the following communication:

My friend, the question is often put to you, "What good can result from these manifestations?" I will answer it:

It is to draw mankind together in harmony, and convince skeptics of the immortality of the soul.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

This reminds me that, in 1850, at Bridgeport, in the presence of other mediums, among many questions put and answers received, were the following—the answer purporting to come from W. E. CHANNING.

Q.—What do spirits propose to accomplish by these new manifestations?

A.—To unite mankind, and to convince skeptical minds of the immortality of the soul.

The coincidence in sentiment of the answer of J. C. Calhoun and of W. E. Channing in regard to the object of these manifestations is remarkable, and worthy of particular notice. The concurrence of two such great minds, whether in or out of the body, on a subject

so engrossing, can not fail to command the attention of every admirer of exalted intellect and moral purity.

During the above communication of Calhoun, the table moved occasionally, perhaps a foot, first one way and then the other. After the communication closed, we all moved back from the table, from two to four feet—*so that no one touched it*. Suddenly it moved from the position it occupied some three or four feet—rested a few moments—and then moved back again to its original position. Then it again moved as far the other way, and returned to the place it started from. One side of it was then raised, and stood for a few moments at an angle of about thirty-five degrees, and then again rested on the floor as usual.

The table was a large, heavy, round one, at which ten or a dozen persons might be seated at dinner. *During all these movements no person touched it, nor was any one near it*. After seeing it raised in the manner above mentioned, I had the curiosity to test its weight by raising it myself. I accordingly took my seat by it—placed my hands under the leaf, and exerted as much force as I was capable of in that sitting posture, and could not raise it a particle from the floor. I then stood up, in the best possible position to exert the greatest force—took hold of the leaf, and still could not raise it with all the strength I could apply. I then requested the three ladies to take hold around the table, and try altogether to lift it. We lifted upon it until the leaf and top began to crack, and did not raise it a particle. We then desisted, fearing we should break it. I then said, "Will the spirits permit me to raise the table?" I took hold alone, and raised it without difficulty!

After this the following conversation ensued:

Q.—Can you raise the table entirely from the floor?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Will you raise me with it?

A.—Yes; get me the square table.

The square table was of cherry, with four legs—a large-sized tea-table. It was brought out and substituted for the round one, the leaves being raised. I took my seat on the center; the three ladies sat at the sides and end, their hands and arms resting upon it. This, of course, added to the weight to be raised, namely, my own weight and the weight of the table. Two legs of it were

then raised about six inches from the floor; and then the other two legs were raised to a level of the first, *so that the whole table was suspended in the air about six inches above the floor*. While thus seated on it, I could feel a gentle, vibratory motion, as if floating in the atmosphere. After being thus suspended in the air for a few moments, the table was gently let down again to the floor!

Some pretend to say that these physical manifestations are made by electricity! I should like to know by what laws of electricity known to us, a table is at one time riveted, as it were, to the floor, against all the force that could be exerted to raise it; and at another time raised entirely from the floor with more than two hundreds of pounds weight upon it?

At a subsequent meeting Calhoun directed me to bring three bells and a guitar. I brought them accordingly. The bells were of different sizes—the largest like a small-sized dinner bell. He directed a drawer to be put under the square table. I put under a bureau drawer, bottom side up. He directed the bells to be placed on the drawer. The three ladies and myself were seated at the table, with our hands and arms resting on it. The bells commenced ringing in a sort of chime. Numerous raps were made, as if beating time to a march. The bells continued to ring, and to chime in with the beating of time. The time of the march was slow and solemn. It was beautiful and perfect. The most fastidious ear could not detect any discrepancy in it.

The raps then ceased, and the bells rang violently for several minutes. A bell was then pressed on my foot, my ankle, and my knee. This was at different times repeated. Knocks were made *most vehemently* against the under side of the table, so that a large tin candlestick was, by every blow, raised completely from the table by the concussion!

I afterward examined the under side of the table (which it will be recollected was of cherry), and found *indentations* in the wood, made by the end of the handle of the bell, which was tipped with brass. Could electricity make those violent knocks with the handle of the bell, causing indentations, and raising the candlestick from the table at every blow? Or was it done by the same invisible power that riveted the table to the floor, and again raised it, with all the weight upon it, entirely above the floor?

Here the ringing of the bells ceased, and then I felt sensibly and