



**Figure 9.** Kircher’s “Cryptologic Magnetic Machine” featured five transparent balls in a row, all of which contained pointing figurines holding a spindle, as a means to “translate” letters, one at a time, from a person on one side of the exhibit to someone on the opposite end—what we might call a magnetic telegraph today—except that it had hidden controls only visible to the steward of the exhibit. The patron would turn the top of the leftmost ball (A) to a desired letter. Then, hidden magnets, weights, and pulleys would cause the pointer and spindle of ball E to rotate to the same letter. The magnetic pointers in balls B, C, and D (who are angels, not humans) would also rotate but in a manner less constrained, giving the impression to the onlooker that spiritual magnetism would cause the information to be passed ethereally from globe to globe, and thus, from one end of the exhibit to the other. The inscription beneath the machine said: *Through this distant and absent guide, mute friends are united in their language, and the deaf have ears.*