

A REPLY  
TO  
WILLIAM T. DWIGHT, D. D.,  
ON  
SPIRITUALISM.  
THREE LECTURES.

BY JABEZ C. WOODMAN,  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW.



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TO JABEZ C. WOODMAN, ESQ., COUNSELLOR AT LAW :

*Dear Sir:*—WE, the undersigned, members of the Government of the Portland Association of Spiritualists, respectfully request you to furnish for the press a copy of your reply to Rev. Dr. Dwight's sermon against Spiritualism. Your argument, substantially based on the Bible,—which is the oldest record of spiritual manifestations, and which modern spiritualists accept as actual occurrences, because they have witnessed the same in kind,—has seemed to us, as also to the most of your audience, so conclusive and irrefutable, that they deem it *their* duty to ask of you this favor, and *yours* to grant it; in order that the public may see that *modern* spiritualism is *Bible* spiritualism *revived*, and not the Bible *rejected*—and that the Bible, in all its essential parts, stands more in need of spiritualism in this skeptical and materialistic age, than spiritualism does of the Bible.

Many good men, and some even of the clergy and the church, are of opinion that, should the old church and other opponents succeed in crushing out modern spiritualism by branding it as a *tremendous delusion*, the Bible, which is full of spiritual phenomena, as exhibited at the present time, would at no distant period, be itself denounced as a delusion; for men would say: "If we cannot believe in the phenomena, or the so-called spiritual manifestations, which millions of us *have* seen and are still witnessing, *how* can we believe the precisely similar ones recorded in the Bible, but which we have *not* seen?"

JAMES FURBISH,  
M. F. WHITTIER,  
VICTOR M. RICHARDSON,  
S. B. BECKETT,

G. A. THOMAS,  
N. A. FOSTER,  
J. R. KING,  
R. I. ROBISON.





## LECTURE I.

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DEUTERONOMY XXIX. 29 — "THE SECRET THINGS BELONG UNTO THE LORD OUR GOD; BUT THOSE WHICH ARE REVEALED BELONG UNTO US, AND TO OUR CHILDREN FOREVER, THAT WE MAY DO ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LAW."

THIS discourse is intended as a reply to the sermon delivered by Dr. Dwight on the twenty-sixth of April past, on the subject of Spiritualism; and the text is selected as a motto, not because the whole discourse will be pertinent to it: but because the first clause of it was selected by him on that occasion. In the sermon, he took pains to inform us, that "he was addressing himself to those who receive the Bible as God's Word." In our reply, we intend to hold him to the standard of the Gospel.

The first idea, presented in the sermon, is the fact, that "there are *secret things belonging solely to God.*" On this point, there is no controversy. Before creation's dawn, God existed absolute and alone. *Then*, all things were secret, and all things belonged solely to God. Even *then*, there were, in the Divine mind, ideas or archetypes of all the men and things and images, that have existed; of all that now exist; and of all that shall ever exist hereafter. So much is implied in the omniscience of God.

The great point of difference between the author of this sermon and the Spiritualists, is, that the former believes the Book of Revelation to be closed, while the latter hold, that God is ever willing to reveal himself, and from time to time continues to do so, by his angels as the ministers of his will. The chapter from which the text is taken, furnishes a notable instance of the progressive nature of revelation. Moses, having given to the Israelites a system of laws by one revelation in Horeb, proceeded, when they came into the land of Moab, to recapitulate the statutes previously given,

and added many more thereto, as recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy. Reference is made to these additional laws, in the first verse of this twenty-ninth chapter, as follows :

“ These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, *besides* the covenant, which he made with them in Horeb.” Hence the name DEUTERONOMY, which is derived from two Greek words, and signifies the second law.

The following declarations are made in the sermon :

“ God has purposely confined the knowledge of these things to Himself. This is the reason why they are secret, or why they have not been revealed : ‘ they belong to him,’ and not to men, not to creatures. \* \* \* It is alike irreligious and fruitless on our part to seek to know them ; ” “ He keeps us in ignorance ; He keeps absolutely secret with Himself what He intends to do, and most of what He is constantly doing.”

On these points we take issue. If it had been the desire of God to keep all his secret things to Himself, He would never have made any revelation at all. But He was desirous of revealing Himself, and consequently of offspring, to whom He might be revealed. Accordingly a universe is produced ; and the earth as a part of that universe ; and man as a Divine offspring, who is capable of receiving revelations from his Heavenly Father. That God was desirous of revealing Himself and of offspring for that purpose, is not more evident from the Book of Nature, than it is from the Sacred Scriptures. In the eighth chapter of Proverbs, (30 and 31,) the *Logos* of God, or the Divine Wisdom is, by a strong figure of speech, represented as making the following declarations by way of anticipation, prior to the creation of man : “ I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him ; rejoicing in the *habitable* part of His earth ; and *my delights were with the sons of men.*” God, having, in advance, this delight in offspring, to whom He might be revealed, brought man into being, not to keep him in ignorance, but that he might be instructed in knowledge and wisdom by revelations from on high, as fast as his constitution and capacity would admit.

Hence the numerous passages of Scripture, wherein man is urged to get wisdom and knowledge ; and wherein their supreme excellence is set forth. These are so numerous, that they cannot now be cited. Only one, from the instructions of Christ, can now be mentioned, for want of time : “ Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father, who is in heaven, is perfect.” (Matt. v. 48.) If “ God keeps us in ignorance ; ” if “ He has purposely confined



the knowledge of these [secret] things to Himself;" if "it is alike irreligious and fruitless on our part to seek to know them;" if "it has been God's intention to keep ourselves and our whole race in this very state of ignorance," as Dr. Dwight asserts; then God, speaking by Christ, never could have urged us to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.

To show that God intentionally keeps us in ignorance, several passages of Scripture are cited by Dr. Dwight—none of which are available for that purpose. One citation is part of a verse from Prov. xxv. 2. The whole passage is as follows: "It is the glory of the Lord to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter. The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable." Another citation is from Psalm cxlv. 3. The whole passage is as follow: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable." Another citation is part of two verses from Romans xi. 33 and 34. The whole passage is as follows: "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" If it is declared in these Scriptures, that the "judgments" of the Lord; the "ways of the Lord;" the "greatness" of the Lord; the "wisdom" of the Lord; and the "knowledge" of the Lord, are unsearchable; the same is asserted of "the heart of kings."

The passages do not mean, that we are altogether precluded from exploring the character of God, by His Divine purpose or by any inevitable necessity. The language simply means, that it is not possible for us so critically to explore the Divine Creator and his attributes, as to find him out fully; not because it is a part of the Divine purpose to keep us in ignorance; but because our limited capacities are not competent for any such critical examination. Such is the signification of the Greek word *ἀνεξερεύνητα*, translated "unsearchable," in Rom. xi. 33. The same is expressed in a better form by Zophar in the Book of Job xi. 7: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" The language implies that, though we may continually explore God and his attributes, and by so doing, greatly increase our wisdom and knowledge, yet there will always remain an infinity of room for farther exploration, which can never be fully compassed, fathomed or exhausted by the finite mind.

The passages of Scripture, declaring, that God desires us to



search into and explore his being and attributes, are numerous. We have time to name only the following: "I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and *the knowledge of God*, more than burnt offerings." (Hosea vi. 6.) "If thou criest after *knowledge*; and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, *and find the knowledge of God.*" (Prov. ii. 3, 6.) In writing to his Colossian brethren, Paul informed them, that he did not cease to pray for them; "that they might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and *increasing in the knowledge of the Lord.*" (Col. i. 9, 10.)

In the first of the passages cited in the sermon to prove, that God purposely keeps us in ignorance, it is asserted, that, "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter." No doubt, the Divine character is glorious in every aspect of it. In this sense, God was always all-glorious, and is still supremely glorious in relation to matters that are concealed. But this glory does not arise from the concealment; it is innate or parcel of His nature. God was aware that a still higher glory of His character would result from manifestation. So He determined upon creation. And so much grander is the glory arising from the manifestation of God, than the glory of His concealment, that the Psalmist in the nineteenth Psalm, speaks of it as embodying the whole of the Divine glory: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work," &c.

The remaining text cited in the sermon, to show, that God intentionally and purposely keeps us in ignorance, is found in Isaiah xlv. 15: "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself." Upon this, the Doctor remarks:—

"It is not only the prerogative, but the choice of God, to hide Himself, or to withhold from His creatures, in many respects, the knowledge of His nature and His operations."

The text is one of great sublimity. God hides Himself behind His works; or, more accurately speaking, He can be found only in His works. It appears to be neither a matter of prerogative nor of choice on the part of God, but a matter of necessity, that He should be hid behind His works, and only seen through them. He fills immensity. Such being the fact, no other being can obtain a standing point outside, on which to rest his foot and look back upon God, even if he had an internal vision opened, sufficiently clear to see His pure spirit.



It is next asserted by Dr. Dwight, that—

“We are in utter ignorance of futurity, and of what is now taking place in any other quarter of the universe, or in any other world.”

Where is the proof of it? It is a mere dogmatical assertion. There is no evidence to support it, in the Scriptures nor in nature. Emanuel Swedenborg stood at the head of the scientific men of the world in his age. He was the most learned man of his generation. The mass or volume of his published works is greater than that of any other writer, who has lived within the range of authentic history, with possibly one or two exceptions. He was one of the purest and best men that ever lived. There is no more difficulty in supposing, that he, in spiritual vision, might be permitted to visit other planetary worlds in the solar system, than there is in supposing, that the apostle John, in the spirit, had presented to him and saw the visions, which he has recorded in the Book of Revelation. It is a rule of evidence, that the testimony of one fair witness, speaking positively to facts, which he has seen and known, will outweigh the testimony of any number of witnesses, who negatively testify, that they did not see the same facts.

Swedenborg, who, in various instances, had been proved to be a true seer in relation to matters upon the earth, testifies, that, in spirit, he was permitted to visit several of the planets of our system; and he gives us a description of their inhabitants and scenery. On the other hand, Dr. Dwight testifies negatively, as follows:—

“We are in utter ignorance of what is now taking place in any other quarter of the universe, or in any other world. It has been also, as we see with perfect certainty, God’s intention to keep ourselves and our whole race [including, of course, Swedenborg] in this very state of ignorance—an ignorance inevitable and absolute, so long as we live on the earth.”

Which will you receive? The clear, unequivocal, and positive testimony of the learned, scientific, and pure minded seer, Swedenborg? or the negative guess of the assuming, dogmatical, and unsupported writer of this sermon?

When Dr. Dwight comes to specify some of the things which are secret with God, he asserts, in the first place, that—

“Everything directly connected with the nature of God Himself, and with his immediate agency, is thus secret exclusively with Him.”

He asserts that—

“God’s spiritual essence, His se’f-existence, His eternity, His omnipotence and omniscience, and His infinite moral perfections;—these are not only subjects, but they involve facts and realities, directly concerning Himself,

which we are as incapable of knowing as the insect; the archangel can as little comprehend them; they are all secret things of God."

Contrary to these assertions of Dr. Dwight, we have the declaration of Paul concerning God, that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." (Rom. i. 20.)

All these matters were originally secret with God. But we think Paul had the right of it, that the eternal existence, unity and power of God are clearly discoverable from His works. We go farther and maintain, that the unchangeableness of God, His spiritual existence and omnipresence, the infinity of His knowledge, wisdom, justice, goodness and truth, are all discoverable in the same manner.

First, as to His existence and eternity, the argument runs thus: "Every house is builded by some man; but He, that built all things, is God." (Heb. iii. 4.) Everything, that is made, must have a maker. This is a principle in philosophy.

"If nought e'er had been, nought still had been."

The things that are made, teach us that there must have been something original, that was not made, That was God. Thus do we obtain our ideas of God and His underived and eternal existence.

In like manner the power of God is found in his works. There must have been sufficient power to accomplish the object—to construct the universe—all the suns of the universe, with all the planets, moons and comets that move around those several suns, with all the varied forms of being that dwell thereon. Imagination shrinks back and hesitates to grapple with this power. We cannot realize that by any multiplication of the powers we possess, we could obtain sufficient force to create the universe. So we call the power infinite.

The unity of God is seen in the unity of the plan, upon which the universe is constructed. His wisdom is seen in the wonderful skill, by which means are so adapted to ends, that the grand mechanism of the universe is kept constantly in uniform motion, without ever varying the millionth part of a hair. This wisdom of God presupposes a measure of knowledge correspondent thereto. We cannot realize, that by any multiplication of the wisdom and knowledge, with which we are endowed, we could have been made competent to plan the universe. So we affirm that the wisdom and the knowledge of God are infinite.



The universe is so constructed, that the same causes always produce the same effects. Hereby we discover the unchangeableness of God and the infinity of His truth.

The unchangeable laws of God are so contrived, that when we obey them, we are gratified with enjoyment, and filled with pleasurable emotions. We cannot stop to particularize. But it is so, in the exercise of all our senses, our appetites and passions, and also in the exercise of our consciences. In this way we discover the infinite goodness of God.

Whenever we violate any of the Divine laws, we cannot do it with impunity. Every transgression is followed by an appropriate and suitable punishment or reward. We cannot stop to enter into details. It is equally true, however, with regard to our material nature, our spiritual nature, our intellectual nature, and our moral nature. "Every transgression and disobedience receives a just recompense of reward." (Heb. ii. 2.) In this way we discover the infinite justice of God.

As the works of God are every where, and all are under His government and laws, we infer, that He must be omnipresent, in order to maintain His government and enforce His laws.

As we find, that man has a principle of life or spirit, diffused through his whole body, and consequently in the form of his body; and that he cannot in his body, without that life or spirit, exercise any of his ordinary powers, we infer, that much less could God exercise the infinite powers He does, without the organism of an infinite spirit, through which He may work. So we suppose, that the body of God is an infinite Spirit. So true is it, that "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen." They were not all seen at once, nor all by any one man. But they have been gradually discovered and seen in the works of God, by many seers, through many ages. Much more is now known of these invisible things of God, than was known of them in the past. Nor is there any reason to doubt, that much more of them will be discovered in the future. Nor have we any reason to expect, that all of these invisible things of the Deity, will ever be discovered by man. Man may search and explore forever, in the infinite ocean of the Spirit of God, and bring to light many new truths, yet never exhaust the subject. "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

All, that man knows of God, was first seen in his works. Nothing of the Divine Being or his attributes, came to man originally by the Jewish Scriptures, the Christian Scriptures, or any other



Scriptures. But sages and seers of ancient days, diligently explored the works of creation, and in them clearly saw the existence of God and many of the things, that belong to His nature. What they saw, they penned down and embodied in those Scriptures; and the same privilege remains to us. "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen his shape." (John v. 37.) Neither did the prophets and seers of ancient days. For God is now invisible; He has always been invisible; and invisible He must always remain.

Dr. Dwight next asserts in his sermon, that

"Among these secret things, are to be included the purposes of God.

It is not supposed by us, that we shall ever be able to discover all of the purposes of Deity. But it is our duty to discover all of His will and purposes that we can, and to conform our conduct to His laws, and to that end to study Him diligently in His works.

By a careful study of the works of God in creation and providence, we may often discover a part, at least, of his purposes.

Again, speaking of "the greatest sage now living," Dr. Dwight asserts, that

"Aside from the word of God, he knows not that the internal fires, which have been ever raging within the earth, may not burst forth ere to-morrow's sun, and consume our race and all the vestiges of humanity."

But this is contrary to the principles of sound philosophy. We have a sure guaranty, in the many millions of millions of tons of coal and iron, that God stored up in the bowels of the earth for the use of man, millions of years before he was brought into being, that this earth will continue to be his abode for myriads of years in the future. If it is not to be so, God has wrought in vain.

God has created the earth as one of the Heavenly bodies to declare His glory and to show it forth forever. He will never destroy any of the worlds which he has made. That "the earth abideth forever," is as much a declaration of science as of Scripture. (Eccl. i. 4.) We find the following in Isaiah: "For thus saith the Lord that created the Heavens; God Himself, that formed the earth and made it; He established it; He created it not in vain; *He formed it to be inhabited,*" (Isa. xlv. 18.) We may safely conclude, that the earth will continue to be the abode of man, so long as children of the two sexes continue to be born in numbers nearly equal; and so long as the coal and the iron continue to be abundant.



The next proposition laid down in the sermon is as follows :

“The future, and by this term is included the persons and the events belonging to all coming time, is also secret with God.”

Where is the proof? This also is a mere dogmatical assertion. There is no more difficulty in supposing, that God has created beings, who can look downward into time ; or that there is an internal vision in man, by which, when opened, he may look into futurity to a limited extent, than there is in comprehending the fact, that he can look abroad many billions of miles into space. If the oyster and the worm could reason upon it, to them both would be equally wonderful.

On a preceding page, Dr. Dwight admits, that God has revealed his purposes of the future “in some few instances in prophecy.” In some few instances ! In what instances ? and to whom ? What is the rule, whereby the Dr. determines the true prophet ? Does he allege, that there are no true prophets now ; that there have been none since the Book of Revelation was written ; and that there never will be any more ? If that is what he means, on what authority does he make the assertion ? Why does he not assert the fact more distinctly ? What reason can be given, why the spirit of prevision and clairvoyance should be imparted to man during four thousand years of his history and withheld forever afterwards ?

There is no truth in such an assertion. It is contradicted by the whole current of history. There were seers among the ancient Jews ; prophets among the later Jews ; prophets among the ancient Romans ; persons gifted with the power of divination among the ancient Greeks ; and persons gifted with second sight among the ancient Scotch. In modern times there have been prophets among the Swiss ; prophets among the French ; prophets in this country ; and seers and clairvoyants in many other countries. All these belong to the same class, and many such, through the ages that are past, have been endowed with power to look into the future, to a greater or less extent.

The rule given in Scripture, for trying the mediums for prophecy, is to look to the accomplishment of the prophecies, and not to the age or country in which the seers live. “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, *that* is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously.” (Deut. xviii. 22.) Swedenborg saw in vision and accurately foretold the precise day



of his own decease; also the very hour of the decease of Olof Olofsohn; and the happening of many other interesting events. These have past into history. Judged by the rule of the Scriptures, Swedenborg was a true seer. By this, the speaker does not mean to assert, that he could foresee all events, nor that he was free from mistakes. He would not be willing to assert nor to admit *that*, in relation to any of the prophets, whose writings are recorded in the old testament. He can ascribe omniscience to none but God.

In our own time, the death of the late Czar Nicholas, was foreseen and foretold in this country three months before the event. The late war in the Crimea, was foreseen and foretold in this country eighteen months before its commencement.\* “When the Arctic was destroyed, her disaster was communicated to four different persons, who were unknown to each other, and that at the same instant it occurred, and long before the news reached the shore.”\* The cases of true prophecy in this country within the last eight years, that are well authenticated, are quite numerous. Judging by the standard of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, in the light of history, there have been true prophets and seers in the different ages and countries of the world, to whom some things of the future have been made known; *and we have them among us still.*

This is precisely what we ought to expect. The Divine law is not changed. The mode of Divine communication is not altered. Paul, writing to his Corinthian brethren, while giving rules for the perpetual guidance of Christians, says: “Follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye might prophesy.” (1 Cor. xiv. 1.) St. Paul never would have urged upon members of the Christian Church to seek for the spirit of prophecy, if he had supposed they could not possibly attain it. Here we leave this point. On one side, is the positive testimony of Moses, Paul, Swedenborg, and the whole volume of history; on the other, the negative testimony of Dr. Dwight and the whole host of skeptics and infidels.

Dr. Dwight next makes the following declarations:

“The state of the Invisible World is absolutely secret with God.”—“The World of Spirits, and I include here Heaven and Hell, their respective localities—so far as they have locality, the actual condition of departed persons individually, and all intercommunication with such persons and with the dead generally;—all this, excepting the few and general revelations which are

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\* John W. Edmonds.



contained in the Scriptures, is entirely hidden from men." — "God has determined, that we should possess just so much knowledge of the World of Spirits, as can be acquired from His own announcements by inspired prophets and apostles and the Savior ; and he has also determined that we should possess no other knowledge. The fact that he has revealed to us in the Bible, what we thus actually know respecting the invisible world and its inhabitants, is in itself decisive evidence, that He has purposed we should know nothing additional. What we have there revealed to us, He has disclosed to us for our profit : what he has not there revealed, He has withheld for the same reason."—"We know that God, as the Infinite Ruler who has given the Bible to men, and Christ, as the crowned Mediator who now rules directly in the World of Spirits, will permit no such knowledge to be communicated from any other source."

All this is mere dogmatical assertion, and what is worse, it is directly contrary to the doctrines of the Bible. There is no book like the Bible, to prove the progressive nature of revelation, and the faith of Spiritualism. The revelations, that are therein recorded, were given from time to time, in a very gradual manner, and spread over a period of more than four thousand years. One revelation was given to Adam ; another to Noah ; and others still to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. One revelation was given to Moses at Sinai ; another in the land of Moab ; others still to the various Judges, and some very important ones to Samuel. Other revelations were given to David ; many others, through many ages, by other prophets, whose writings have come down to us ; others still, by other prophets, whose writings have been lost in the lapse of time ; and doubtless, many more by seers and prophets, that were never committed to writing. In the fullness of time, Christ came, when higher and still more important revelations were made through him.

How does the fact, that God has made unto us certain revelations, which are recorded in the Bible, furnish "decisive evidence," or even the slightest evidence, "that he has purposed we should know nothing additional," in relation to the world of spirits ? Did God's revelations to Adam furnish "decisive evidence," that it was his purpose that none of Adam's posterity "should know anything additional ?" Did His revelations to Noah furnish "decisive evidence," that it was His purpose, that none of the posterity of Noah "should know anything additional ?" Did His revelations to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob furnish "decisive evidence," that it was His purpose, that none of their posterity "should know anything additional ?" Did His revelations to Moses in Sinai furnish "decisive evidence," that He would not make other



and further revelations to him in the land of Moab? Did the revelations to Moses furnish "decisive evidence," that God would not by His angels, from time to time, make other and further revelations to the various Judges, to Samuel, to David, to Isaiah, to Jeremiah, to Daniel, and the other prophets whose writings are recorded in the Old Testament; to other prophets whose writings have not been preserved; and to others still whose prophecies were never written? Surely, all these questions must be answered in the negative.

The fact, that we have now embodied in the two Testaments a record of many revelations from the world of spirits, no more furnishes evidence, that God is determined, that we should possess no other knowledge from that source, than the fact, that many revelations had been embodied in the Old Testament, before the advent of Christ, furnished evidence, that none of the revelations, recorded in the New Testament, would ever be received. On the contrary, the fact, that revelation, by means of angels, was gradual and progressive from age to age, for more than four thousand years, furnishes strong presumptive evidence, that other and further revelations were to be given afterwards.

This is in accordance with the doctrines of Christ. He distinctly informed his disciples, that spiritual gifts were to continue among his followers, and that revelations would be given from time to time, and become more elevated, as the people became more elevated, and in a fitter condition to receive them. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father." (John xiv. 12.) "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John xvi. 12.) This text distinctly declares, that the truths of the Divine law, are to be communicated to men gradually, as they are in a condition to receive them. If there were higher truths in reserve, which the apostles were not in a condition to receive, how was it with others? The apostles had constantly waited on Christ and heard his instructions for nearly three years. They must have been greatly in advance of the world around them.

Lest some one should say, this applied wholly to the apostles, and that, at their decease, the streams of revelation from the world of spirits, were forever closed up; we have another declaration ascribed to Christ, to meet that suggestion, which certainly applies to those believers, who should come after the apostles. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach



the gospel to every creature. And these signs shall follow *them that believe* : In my name shall they cast out demons ; they shall speak with new tongues ; they shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark xvi. 15, 17, 18.)

This is expressly applied to those, who should become believers through the instructions of the apostles. Of course, it included great multitudes who survived them. It cannot well be denied, that it applies to all who shall become believers, by reading the gospels and other writings of the apostles. If so, we have an express promise of Christ, that revelations and other spiritual gifts shall continue among Christians, so long as men shall become believers by reading the writings of the apostles. Revelations and other spiritual gifts did continue in the Church for about three hundred years after the crucifixion. For the truth of this we have the testimony of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. In his first volume, on page 104, he says :

"The light of the Gospel was introduced into Iberia, a province of Asia, now called Georgia) in the following manner : a certain woman was carried into that country as a captive, during the reign of Constantine ; and by the grandeur of her miracles, and the remarkable sanctity of her life and manners, she made such an impression on the king and queen, that they abandoned their false gods, embraced the faith of the Gospel, and sent to Constantinople for proper persons to give them and their people a more satisfactory and complete knowledge of the Christian religion."

This was in the fourth century. After maturely considering the whole ground and all the authorities, on the next page he says :

"I am willing to grant, that many events have been rashly deemed miraculous which were the result of the ordinary laws of nature ; and also the pious frauds were sometimes used, for the purpose of giving new degrees of weight and dignity to the Christian cause. But I cannot, on the other hand, assent to the opinions of those who maintain that in this century, miracles had entirely ceased ; and that at this period, the Christian Church was not favored with any extraordinary or supernatural marks of a Divine power engaged in its cause."

It will be perceived, that Mosheim, speaking of the spiritual gifts in the Christian church, in accordance with the custom of his times, calls them "extraordinary," "supernatural," and "miraculous." We think there can be no doubt, that they were manifestations from the world of spirits, similar to those, recorded in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and to those, that have been occurring within the last few years in our own country.



If God has revealed to us in the Bible, all that is necessary for us to know; if it is true, that what God has there revealed, "He has disclosed to us for our profit; and what He has not there revealed, He has withheld for the same reason," as substantially asserted by Dr. Dwight, in his sermon; then why did He make the revelations that were recorded in the Books that are lost? If those revelations were not necessary for men in ancient days, why were they given? If those revelations were necessary for men in ancient days, how can it be shown that they are not necessary now? I speak of the revelations in the Books, called, "the Wars of the Lord;" the "Book of Jasher;" the "Acts of Solomon;" the Books of "Sheimaiah the Prophet," of "Nathan the Prophet," of "Gad the Seer," of "Iddo the Seer, concerning Genealogies," and of the "Visions of Iddo the Seer."\*

It will be observed, that our Bible contains references to these Books, as the original sources, from which certain facts were compiled. Scarcely anything, from the Book of Jasher and the Book of the Wars of the Lord, can be found in our Bible. From the other Books, more has been preserved in the histories of David and Solomon. If such revelations, as were given in those Books, that have since been lost, were not important to men then, why were they given? And if they were important to men then, where is the evidence, that those same revelations would not be important to men now? And how can the proposition be maintained, that God has withheld from us those Books and the truths contained in them, for our profit?

Dr. Dwight is himself a notable instance of the progressive nature of revelation. In view of the numerous and continued aggressions of the slave power, working through our national government, trampling upon the rights of the people of the north, commanding them to do acts, known to be contrary to the Divine law, as well as crushing the life out of the poor in our land; in the month of December, 1851, it was deemed advisable, by a number of religious men in Portland, to hold an anti-slavery meeting of Christians of all denominations, at Augusta, for conference and prayer, that we might confer together and ask counsel of God, as to our several duties, in stopping the progress of the dreadful evil of slavery. The meeting was held on the twentieth day of January, 1852.

We desired to have the names of all the Christian ministers, or

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\*Numb. xxi. 14. Josh. x. 13. 2 Saml. i. 18. 1 Kings xi. 41. 1 Chron. xxix. 29. 2 Chron. ix. 29; xii. 15; xiii. 22.



as many as could conveniently be obtained, appended to the call for that meeting. The speaker presented that call to a number of the Christian ministers in Portland, all of whom readily signed it. When Dr. Dwight was asked to sign, as we were informed by the member of the committee who presented it to him, he promptly answered, "No! It could not possibly do any good, but might do much harm."

Since the passage of the Nebraska bill in 1854, the Doctor has become a champion in the cause of freedom. At a meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, held at Hartford, in September of that year, as Chairman of the Prudential Committee, "he reported resolutions and sustained them in an able, impassioned and powerful argument," displaying the wickedness of holding men in slavery, and thereby preventing them from reading the Bible.\*

The Divine law had always been the same. It had always condemned the sin of slave-holding. But it appears this law had been recently revealed to Dr. Dwight. It would not be charitable, to suppose he knew his duty in this behalf, in December, 1851, but refused to perform it *then*, because the cause was unpopular at that time, and so waited, till he knew the majority of the people of Maine would be with him, before he moved. No. We must understand that his duty towards the slave, had been newly revealed or made known to him. But this gospel of freedom for all men, had been revealed to William Lloyd Garrison in 1831, and to a great many other minds in the country, long before it reached the understanding of Dr. Dwight.

In order to maintain his position, that the invisible world, or world of spirits, is absolutely secret with God, and that He will permit no spiritual communications therefrom, Dr. Dwight cites four passages from the New Testament. It is a remarkable fact, that he misrepresents the meaning of every one of those passages, and that every one of them teaches the doctrine of spiritual intercourse. Two of them are from the Book of Revelation.

It is passing strange, that any one, however ignorant, should quote that Book, to prove, that departed spirits cannot communicate with men in the body. That whole Book is a continued series of spiritual manifestations, from beginning to end. It was all dictated and shown to John by an angel or messenger of Jesus Christ, who was the departed spirit of one of the prophets. The

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\* New York Weekly Tribune, Sept. 23, 1854.



manifestations altogether were so grand, that John was bewildered, and on two several occasions, mistook the angel for God Almighty, fell down at his feet, and was about to worship him. On both occasions, the angel informed him, that he was only a man, and one of his brethren, and charged him to worship God. (Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9.)

In the beginning of the Book, it is declared to be—

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants, things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent, and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bear record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

So before this Revelation, which came from God, was communicated to the people, it had to pass through three mediums, two, that were in the world of spirits, and the apostle John. God gave the Revelation to Jesus Christ; Christ sent it by the spirit of one of the ancient prophets; and finally the spirit of that prophet used John, as his medium for communicating it to the people.

John says: “I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.” (i. 10.) This signifies, that the spirit of the prophet, had taken possession of his organs and placed him in the spiritual state or the state of trance, in the same manner as the mediums of the present day, are entranced by departed spirits. John, being placed in the spiritual or trance state, the voice was spiritual and perceived by the apostle’s internal or spiritual organs of hearing. The voice directed him to describe what he saw, in a book, and send it to the seven churches of Asia. Then John gives a description of what he saw:—

“I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one *like* unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hades and of death.” (Rev. i. 12—18.)

This image was not Jesus Christ in person, but was clearly an allegorical picture or spiritual manifestation presented by the angel to John, while in trance, to represent several things in relation to God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Divine Truth. We cannot



stop to explain the allegory ; but that it was a picture, spiritually presented to John by the spirit of the prophet or angel, and not a reality, is abundantly evident. It is not stated, that he *was* the Son of man, but that he was *like* the Son of man. No doubt this was true. But in several particulars it could be true only in an allegorical sense. We cannot suppose, that the head and hairs of Christ, in his glorified state, in any literal sense, are “as white as snow ;” or that his eyes, in any literal sense, resemble “a flame of fire ;” or that his feet, in any literal sense, are “like fine brass burning in a furnace ;” or that a sharp two-edged sword, in any literal sense, “goes out of his mouth ;” or that he, in any literal sense, has “in his right hand seven stars ;” or that his voice, in any literal sense, resembles “the sound of many waters.” All these were spiritual and allegorical. The angel informs John, that it is an allegory, and shows him, that the seven golden candlesticks signify the seven churches of Asia, and that the seven stars signify the angels or pastors of those churches.

Moreover, it is clear, that Jesus Christ was not himself present, from the first verse, in which it is said that “he *sent* and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.” This angel was, on that occasion, alike the representative or medium of God the Father and the Son of man ; and John was the immediate medium of the angel, who, by the power of his will through the organism of the apostle, was enabled to present this allegorical picture to his internal vision, and to hold intercourse with him by conversation, producing an audible voice to his internal sense of hearing.

That this angel spoke as the representative of God the Father, is evident from his language. He says, “I am Alpha and Omega ;” “I am the First and the Last.” This language is appropriate to none but God. That the angel spoke as the representative of Jesus Christ, is also evident from the following language : “I am he that liveth and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive forevermore.” This language was appropriate for Christ, and was doubtless spoken by the angel as his representative, although, in itself, it was appropriate for the spirit of the prophet also.

When Christ, speaking by the prophet, informed John, that although as to his body, he had died, he was still alive, and that he should live forevermore, lest his appearance should excite doubt, perplexity, or surprise in the mind of John, as it had been a long time, since he had made any personal manifestation of himself, he added : “and have the keys of Hades and of death,” to show to John, that, in spite of death, he still had the power to come from



Hades or the world of spirits, and communicate with him, when he chose to do so. This declaration of Christ by the angel, that he had "the keys of Hades and of death," is the first passage cited in the sermon to prove, that all intercourse with the world of spirits, is forbidden by Christ.

Now the truth is, that Christ had himself sent the spirit of this ancient prophet from the world of spirits, to make the revelations in the Apocalypse, and Jesus Christ was himself holding intercourse in that manner with John. The spirit, or Christ by the spirit, makes the declaration, that he had "the keys," to signify that, notwithstanding his death, he was able by the power of his will, through the mediumship of John, to open the gates and come and converse with him. The fact, that the spirit of this prophet had, or that Christ had, the keys of Hades, so that he could return and converse with men in the material form, furnishes no evidence, that other spirits have not keys also, whereby they can come and communicate also.

Christ said unto Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. xvi. 19,) But this did not prevent him from giving keys of the kingdom of heaven to the other disciples also. When he met the apostles, after his resurrection, in different language, he gave unto them the same commission and the same power he had conferred on Peter, saying: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John xx. 23.) But although Christ first committed to Peter the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, that is to say, the power of so presenting the Divine Truth, as to be the means of opening the portals of Heaven, and of introducing many persons into that kingdom; and although he afterwards committed similar keys or the same powers to the other disciples; yet, we apprehend, no one supposes, that Christ himself remains without keys to the same kingdom.

In like manner, Christ had the keys of Hades and of death, that is to say, he had power to come from the world of spirits, and hold intercourse with men, and commissioned the spirit of that ancient prophet, as his angel, to come and make those revelations to John. But this furnishes no argument, that other departed spirits cannot come from Hades and hold intercourse with men in the material body, but the contrary. If one departed spirit was permitted to come, it furnishes presumptive evidence, that, under favorable circumstances, others might come also. "To the law and the testimony." The law says, they can come. The testimony of history



shows, that they have come in thousands of instances. The whole doctrine of the first chapter in the Book of Revelation is in perfect accordance with Spiritualism, and one of the finest specimens that was ever written.

The next passage cited in the sermon to prove that God will permit no communications from the world of spirits, is from Revelation xxii. 18, 19 :—

“For I testify unto every man, that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book.”

In commenting on this text, Dr. Dwight says, God assures us :

“That the account which it gives of the world unseen was in itself complete, and that no further revelations were to be anticipated.”

The passage is found in the last Book in the Bible, and applies to *that* alone. It has no reference whatever to the other Books of the Bible. It simply means, that nothing should be added to the Book of Revelation, or made a part of it, and that nothing should be taken therefrom. To take from that Book or add to it, would be to pass off a forgery upon John, and make him speak something different from what he wrote.

It could not, by possibility, mean that nothing was to be added to the Bible as a Book ; for the Bible did not exist as a Book, at that time. None of the Books of the New Testament had then been collected and appended to the Old Testament. Nor can it mean, that no other Books are to be appended or prefixed to the Book of Revelation and bound up with it. If this were the meaning, then all the publishers of the Bible, including the members of the American Bible Society, would be guilty of violating the command, by adding the other sixty-five Books.

Nor does it mean nor intimate, that no further revelations were to come from the world of spirits. It is a simple prohibition laid upon all, that they must not alter the Book of Revelation itself, and so make it speak what the revelator did not intend.

In like manner Moses laid this prohibition : “Ye shall not add unto the word, which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.” (Deut. iv. 2.) As well might Dr. Dwight, from these words of Moses, insist, that God had assured the people, that the account, which Moses had pre-

viously given “ of the world unseen, was in itself complete, and that no further revelations were to be anticipated,” as to insist upon it, from the passage he has cited from Revelation. According to that logic, all the revelations, after the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, are to be rejected with as little ceremony, as Dr. Dwight rejects the revelations of the present age. Certainly Moses had no such meaning. For he went straight forward, receiving and communicating new revelations, the same as before ; and at length made this declaration : “ The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me ; unto him ye shall hearken.” ( Deut. xviii. 15.)

Moses did not mean to declare, that the Book of Revelation was closed ; but he knew, that the minds of the Israelites were gross and sensual ; and therefore he prohibited the people from altering the statutes, which he had written. But he predicted, that further revelations would be given. In like manner the Revelator, when he wrote the Apocalypse, knew, that the minds of the people were still gross and sensual, and that they could not add to the revelation which he had given, without altering his meaning. So he added the injunction which has been cited. There still remaining the prediction of Christ, that spiritual gifts should be continued among believers. This prediction was known to Paul and John ; and they also knew, that these gifts would be continued by the agency of departed spirits, the same agency, by which the Law and Apocalypse were dictated.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul enumerates a great variety of spiritual gifts in the following language :

“ The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom ; to another, the word of knowledge by the same spirit ; to another, faith by the same spirit ; to another the gift of healing by the same spirit ; to another the working of miracles ; to another prophecy ; to another divers kinds of tongues ; to another the interpretation of tongues : ” and then at the close of the chapter he calls upon all Christians, to “ covet earnestly the best gifts.” ( 1 Cor. xii. 7—10, 31.)

John cautions his Christian brethren as follows : “ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God ; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” ( 1 John iv. 1.)

But Christ certainly has not assured us, that the account, which the Book of Revelation gives of the unseen world, is “ complete,”



as asserted by Dr. Dwight. We think, that Book has no reference whatever to the unseen world. After the first chapter, which has been already examined, follow the epistles of the apostle to the seven churches in Asia. Then succeeds a great variety of allegorical pictures ; visions of a throne ; of the four and twenty elders ; of four beasts ; of the book with seven seals ; of the opening of the seals ; of the white horse, the red horse, the black horse, and the pale horse ; of the seven angels with their trumpets ; of the great red dragon ; of the beast with seven heads and ten horns and ten crowns on his horns ; of the seven last plagues ; of the seven vials of wrath ; and of other startling imagery. All these are spiritual and allegorical, representative of things pertaining to the earth and the kingdoms and sovereigns thereof. That it is all spiritual and allegorical appears from the tenth chapter and tenth verse, wherein the apostle states, that he ate a book. But this must have been spiritual and allegorical, for we know, that no man can eat and digest a material book.

The first verse in the Book shows, that the vision was to be of "things which must shortly come to pass." In the seventh verse, the revelator, speaking of the coming of Christ, which he connects with the things signified in the vision, says : "Behold he cometh with clouds." This language is similar to that used by Matthew in his gospel in relation to the same event, which, he says, was to take place in that very generation. (Matthew xxiv. 30, 34.) In the last verse but one in the Book, the revelator says : "Surely I come quickly." The whole Book is clearly intended by a series of symbols and images, to shadow forth certain changes, that were to take place on the earth, and which were immediately to commence. I trust it is now made evident, that the Book of Revelation teaches the doctrine, that departed spirits can and do communicate with men in the material body ; and that both of the texts cited therefrom, by Dr. Dwight, were grossly misrepresented by him.

We next have the following declaration in the sermon :

"In affirming that the state of the Invisible World is an absolutely secret thing with God, and in observing that, as one proof of this, God has determined that men while on earth shall possess no knowledge of that world additional to the revelations now made in the Bible respecting it, I would further say, that Christ has distinctly asserted this in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus."

Surely this is a gross misrepresentation ! Christ did not assert and could not have asserted in that parable, that "God had deter-



mined that men while on earth should possess no knowledge of the Invisible World additional to the revelations in the Bible respecting it ;” for when he put forth that parable, none of the Books of the New Testament were written ! None of them were written till nearly thirty years afterwards !

Again Dr. Dwight makes the following declarations :

“Christ represents Abraham as then replying, that these brethren of the rich man possessed the writings of Moses and the prophets which were warning sufficient : and when the rich man then said that, if one went to them from the world of the dead the warning would be more powerful, his request is finally refused, in the declaration that if these brethren would not listen to Moses and the Prophets, a messenger from the world of spirits would have no power to persuade them. Christ has thus declared that the writings of the Old Testament—and far, far, more positively does he affirm this of the entire Bible—that these writings are all that men need for the attainment of their salvation ; that a departed spirit, were he to appear again on earth, could not benefit those whom he might visit and warn ; and that no communication from the world of spirits to man would, accordingly, be permitted.”

All this is a gross misrepresentation of the doctrine of Christ. In this parable he does not assert any thing directly. But as the parable was put forth by him, he may be considered, as asserting, whatever it teaches. Language is put into the mouth of Abraham. He is represented as saying : “They [ the rich man’s five brethren] have Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them.” And again : “If they [these five brethren] hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

Abraham is not represented as making a declaration, that “the writings of Moses and the prophets were warning sufficient,” for mankind in general ; but only that those five brethren had, by their excessive indulgence in sensuality, so increased their natural appetites and passions, and so darkened the light of reason and conscience, that it would be of no use to send a messenger unto them from the dead ; that they would no more give heed to such a messenger than to the writings of Moses and the Prophets. In this, Abraham was doubtless perfectly correct. In all probability their sensuality had driven them into infidelity. If a messenger had come to them from the world of spirits, they would not have received him. They would have denied, that he came from the dead ; or that a departed spirit could possibly return and communicate. They would have denounced it all as the joint production of “trickery,” and “mesmerism,” as readily as Dr. Dwight him-



self. Perhaps and very likely, they would have been the first persons, to appeal from the evidence of their own senses to the records of Moses, to prove that such a manifestation of the spirit, was all a "delusion" and could not be.—

Christ does not "declare, that the writings of the Old Testament are all that men need for the attainment of their salvation," as asserted by Dr. Dwight! We have the best evidence possible, that he never taught and never meant to teach any such thing. If he thought, that the writings of the Old Testament were all, that men needed; why did he come as a messenger to proclaim the Divine Truth more perfectly? Why did he go about among the Jews in the face of danger and of death to bear witness to that Truth? With the certain knowledge in his mind, that his perseverance in proclaiming the Truth of God, in opposition to the retaliatory, revengeful, and formal system of the Mosaic code, would bring him to the cross, why did he continue in that course, if he supposed, that the writings of the Old Testament were all that men need for the attainment of their salvation?

Christ himself speaks of this proclamation of the Divine Truth, as though it was the whole object of his mission: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John xviii. 37.) So necessary for man did he consider this proclamation of the Divine Truth by *him*, that he again speaks of it, as more important than all preceding revelations: "If *I* had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." (John xv. 22.)

Again Christ does not affirm of the *entire* Bible, that its "writings are all that men need for the attainment of their salvation," as asserted by Dr. Dwight! He said nothing about the entire Bible! We have already seen, that none of the Books of the New Testament were written till nearly thirty years afterwards!

Once more, Christ did not affirm, "that a departed spirit, were he to appear again on earth, could not benefit those whom he might visit and warn," as asserted by Dr. Dwight! He did not affirm, "that no communication from the world of spirits would, accordingly, be permitted," as asserted by Dr. Dwight! His pure and truthful lips could not, by possibility, have made any such false assertions. He knew, that such assertions, if he had made them, would have been untrue. He knew that departed spirits had often been permitted to communicate with men while in the material body. He knew, that they had communicated



with Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Daniel, and many others in time past. He knew, that they had communicated with himself personally at the close of the scene of temptation, upon the mount of transfiguration and on many other occasions. He knew and had already predicted, that he should return and communicate himself. (Mark ix. 31.) We think it is now made evident, that Dr. Dwight has grossly misrepresented this parable.

Does it teach Spiritualism? It is a beautiful allegory and we think one of the finest passages, of which the Bible is full, to prove the truth of that doctrine. The scene was laid far back in the past. The "rich man was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." No other charge is made against him. By this language, we understand, that he was a sensualist, and had indulged his appetites and passions to such a degree of excess, as greatly to inflame his natural desires, while he had outlived his capacity for sensual enjoyment. This is represented by his being in torment. In the original it is *ὑπάρχων ἐν βασάνοις* — *being subject to a test or distressing state of trial*.

It is also represented by his being tormented in a flame, and expressing a desire, that Lazarus might be permitted to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue. The good things, which he received in his lifetime, were sensual things. Though good in themselves, they were converted into the greatest evil, by excessive indulgence.

On the other hand, Lazarus the beggar, often suffered from hunger, and would have been glad to have received the crumbs, that fell from the rich man's table. This destitution and want were carried so far, as to produce disease in his physical system,—and at length, his dissolution. The evil things, which Lazarus received in his lifetime, were also sensual. For the time being, they were severe; but they were temporary and closed at death. He had never stimulated his animal appetites and passions by indulgence in any excesses; nor had he in any manner deprived himself of the capacity of enjoyment. It is represented, that both of them went into the world of spirits with all their appetites and passions, and just such characters as they had severally elaborated for themselves.

The parable further teaches us, that when Lazarus died, he was surrounded by angels, who accompanied him to his proper place in Hades or the world of spirits, and that his proper position was in Abraham's bosom or the next place to Abraham. It further informs us, that the rich man also went to Hades at death,



where he met Abraham and Lazarus. Each entered upon life in Hades, in the same state and condition as he was in, when he left this world, in every respect, excepting his external body, which was removed. The rich man carried with him his appetites and passions greatly excited and inflamed by excessive indulgence, but without capacity for enjoyment. The beggar carried with him temperate appetites, and passions moderated by restraint ; but coupled with a capacity for the highest degree of gratification or enjoyment. All this is in precise accordance with the doctrines of Spiritualism.

The parable also teaches, that the great gulf, — χάσμα μέγα — literally, the great chasm, between the rich man and Lazarus, was not a chasm in space, but a chasm or separation in state or condition. For Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man are all represented to be in Hades together, and so near, in locality, that they can converse together without difficulty. No doubt seems to be entertained by Abraham or the rich man, but that Lazarus might come from the world of spirits, and communicate with the rich man's brothers. But Abraham declines to send him, because these brothers have become so sensual, that it will do them no good. This is also in accordance with the doctrine of Spiritualism.

The fact stated, that they who would pass from the rich man to Abraham, could not ; signifies, that a man by excessive indulgence in the exercise of his appetites and passions, may so injure and debase his material, spiritual, intellectual, and moral condition, as to lose all power of gratification by continuing the indulgence ; and that in such case *he can never recover what he has lost*. The fact stated, that they, who would pass from Abraham to the rich man, could not ; signifies, that after a man for many years, has continued to govern and control his appetites and passions, conforming himself to the laws of his being, he at length becomes so fixed and confirmed, in orderly habits of thought and action, that there is comparatively no danger, of his ever changing the course of his life by excessive indulgence of his appetites and passions, and of violating the laws of his being to such an extent, as to deprive himself of the capacity of enjoyment, naturally arising from the legitimate exercise of all his powers. All this is in precise accordance with the doctrines of Spiritualism, and we often see it exemplified in this life.

The last passage cited by Dr. Dwight, to show, "that no communication from the world of spirits to men, would be per-

mitted," is from 2 Cor., xii. 4. The whole passage is as follows :

"I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell ; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth ;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth :) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, *which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* (1, 2, 3, 4.)

The Dr. in his explanation of this text, alleges the meaning to be : "which it was not right for him, or which he was not permitted to utter." The original Greek does not mean, and is not properly construed to signify, that it was morally wrong or unlawful in that sense of the term, for Paul to utter the words. We cannot suppose it would be morally wrong for Paul to utter any words, which he was permitted to hear in the third heaven, if it was possible for him to do so. If God allowed him to hear these unspeakable words, he would also allow him to communicate them to others, if he could ; for "God is no respecter of persons."—(Acts. x. 34.)

After declaring, that the words were unspeakable, it would be simply ridiculous, to add that it would be morally wrong for a man to utter them. The original word, translated "lawful," is *ἐξὸν*. It may signify : "*it is lawful*"—*it is permitted*—*or it is possible*. These three significations are severally adopted in the English, French, and German translations. The common English translation represents, that Paul "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." This cannot be the true meaning : for it would be silly, after stating that the words were "unspeakable," to add that it was unlawful or morally wrong to utter them.

The French translation adopts the second meaning, thus : "*des paroles ineffables, qu'il n'est pas permis à un homme de rapporter,*"—unspeakable words, which it is not permitted for a man to relate.—Neither can this be the correct translation, for it is equivocal. It may mean, that he is not permitted to relate them ; because, while in his material body, he cannot use his spiritual organs of speech for that purpose ; which would be correct : or it may mean, that he is not permitted to relate them ; because it would be unlawful or wrong to do so ; in which sense, it would be liable to the same objection as the English translation.

The proper translation is this : "unspeakable words, which it is not possible for a man to utter." The German translation adopts



this third and true signification, thus: *unaussprechliche Worte, welche kein Mensch sagen kann*—unspeakable words which no man can tell.

These unspeakable words were heard in the third heaven, that is to say, in the world of spirits. They must have been uttered by a spiritual being with spiritual organs, and addressed to the spiritual sense of hearing. Paul was entranced by a spirit or put into the spiritual state. We think there is no reason to doubt, that he remained in the material body. His spiritual senses were opened, so that he could see the spirits and hear their language in the third heaven. If other persons in their normal condition, were present, they did not hear the words. These words could only be uttered by spiritual organs of speech, when divested of external matter. Paul was still clothed by an external body of matter. It was not possible for him to utter these words, because he could not freely exercise his internal organs of speech, for that purpose. Swedenborg was frequently found in conversation with spirits, when the persons present could not hear any sound from the spiritual voice. After having stated, that the words were *unspeakable*, the apostle uses these additional words, to intensify the form of expression.

This passage also teaches the doctrines of Spiritualism. It shows, that Paul was placed in the spiritual state or state of trance by a spirit, in the same manner as the mediums of the present day. He was in some degree unconscious,—(as they often are;) so he was unable to say, whether he left his material body or not. His spiritual senses were opened, so that he was spiritually permitted, to see the spirits in the third heaven or sphere and to hear them speak. All this is in accordance with the experience of spiritual mediums of the present day; and with the doctrines of Spiritualism, which divides heaven into different concave spheres.

Dr. Dwight charges, that the

“Descriptions of the unseen world and of the state of the departed, [by spiritual mediums,] have been stolen from Emanuel Swedenborg, when describing his seven spheres or heavens or from others; or if original, are just fit to fill the pages of a fourth-rate novel.”

Spiritualists might with more propriety, be charged with stealing their descriptions of the unseen world from Paul. He represented the unseen world, as divided into heavens or spheres, many hundred years before Swedenborg was born.

But Dr. Dwight ought to know, that Swedenborg was a Spiritualist himself, as well as Paul. Though this great seer of the

eighteenth century, differed in some respects from the generality of Spiritualists of the present day, yet he did not differ from them more, than some of them differ from others. Dr. Dwight ought to know, that Swedenborg had his peculiarities ; that he never described seven heavens in the unseen world, and never used the word *sphere* with reference to the different localities in that world, in all his theological works. According to his writings, the unseen world was divided into three Heavens, three Hells, and a preliminary department, called the World of Spirits, into which the spirits of all go at first, and from which they migrate into the Heavens or the Hells.

Whether the faith of the Spiritualists, that at death, man awakes to consciousness with a spiritual form in the unseen world, in the very same state and condition, he is in, at the time of his death, excepting his material body, is more ridiculous or more unreasonable than the vague, indefinite views held by Dr. Dwight, is submitted to the common sense of each auditor.

The speaker also submits to the audience, that he has now fully maintained his proposition, which was, that Dr. Dwight, in his sermon, misrepresents every one of the passages he cites from the New Testament, to prove that God will permit no communications from the world of spirits, and that every one of them teaches the doctrine of spiritual intercourse. If you think so, the speaker hopes you will not be too severe in your condemnation of the Dr. ; for you must remember, that he was not originally educated for the Pulpit, but for the Bar ; and it is a very common practice for some gentlemen of the Bar, to misrepresent the evidence, when they have a bad case.

We think we have now fully shown, that revelation is continuous and progressive. After all this labored argument, Dr. Dwight seems to admit this himself. He says :—

“They [the secret things of God,] are secret, because He [God] has not revealed them ; and because, it is His purpose not to reveal them, *while the Christian dispensation continues.*”

This implies, that the Christian dispensation is not always to be continued ; but is to be succeeded by one more religious dispensation at least ; and that when the Christian dispensation is closed, other revelations may be expected. We suppose it will not be contended, that the various religious dispensations have heretofore been, or will hereafter be separated from each other by any precise instant of time, marking the line of division, like a partition wall,



so that they can be distinguished from each other by mathematical accuracy; but on the other hand, it will be admitted, that they blend into each other like the tints of a painting. With this understanding, we would inquire: How long is the Christian dispensation to continue? When is it to close? Is Dr. Dwight sure, that it has not already closed? Or is he sure, that it is not even now gradually passing into a new dispensation? If that is so, then according to Dr. Dwight even, we have a right to expect new revelations. Well, then, if we are *actually receiving* new revelations, that will furnish an argument, to show, that the Christian dispensation is gradually passing into a new and higher dispensation of Divine Truth.

Again it is asserted in this sermon, that other things

"Are made secret now, that will be revealed hereafter; but while thus unrevealed, they are as absolutely secret as is God's self-existence."

No doubt of that. That is just what the Spiritualists allege. But is it not contrary to the doctrine of Dr. Dwight? They will be secret till they are revealed! But when will they be revealed? To whom are they to be revealed? And who is to reveal them? We maintain, that they will be revealed through the ministry of angels or the spirits of men; that God is ever ready to reveal them; and that some of these secret things are in course of revelation now. On the other hand, Dr. Dwight asserts, that they will be revealed hereafter. But he cannot say, *when* they will be revealed; nor, *how* they will be revealed; nor *by whom* they are to be revealed; nor *to whom* they are to be revealed; only he knows, that they are not to be revealed in this age, nor by angels through spiritual mediums.

Dr. Dwight declares, that he speaks

"Literal verity when affirming, that in all the published volumes of these pretended revelations, there is not one original and valuable thought."

We will give you a specimen, and you can judge for yourselves.

In the beautiful Lyric, by Mrs. Hemans, entitled the Land of Dreams, will be found the following soliloquy embraced in the 8th and 11th stanzas:

"They are there,—and each blessed voice I hear,

"Kindly and joyous, and silvery clear;

"But undertones are in each, that say,—

"It is but a dream, it will melt away."

\* \* \* \* \*

"And away, like a flower's passing breath 'tis gone,

"And I wake more sadly, more deeply lone!

"Oh! a haunted heart, is a weight to bear;—

"Bright faces, kind voices!—where are you, where?"

A worthy lady of the Methodist church, in the eastern part of this city, of common education, and not accustomed to write poetry, was reading "The Land of Dreams," about eighteen months since, and when she came to the lines above recited, her hand and brain were deeply influenced by spiritual power, supposed to be the spirit of their author, who wrote through her hand the following response:

"Oh it was not a dream; those voices I heard,

"Which swept o'er my soul, and so thrillingly stirred;

"The deep fount of feeling, stole out from the strand

"Of my sweet happy home, the bright spirit land.

"No; it was not a dream; the soft melting lays,

"That wrapt my whole being in heaven's own praise,

"Came wafted afar from the land of the blest,

"And struck the sweet spirit-chords strung in my breast.

"I have found them all here, the loved and the lost;

"The care-worn and weary, so tremblingly tost,

"On life's troubled ocean, have here found a home,

"No longer to sorrow, no longer to roam.

"I have found them all here; the tendrils of love,

"That lay torn and bleeding nor upward could move,

"Are healed by the breath of affection's deep sigh,

"And bid to spread upward their branches on high

"I hear their sweet voices soft echoed through bowers,

"All mingled with harp-notes, that float 'mid the flowers

"All rising commingled a sweet flood of song,

"While angels, low bending, the anthem prolong."



## LECTURE II.

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The writer of the Sermon next comes to Spiritualism by name. What is Spiritualism? It claims to be a science, based on phenomena witnessed and asserted to be facts by millions of living witnesses. Has Dr. Dwight witnessed these phenomena? If he has not, why has he not? He does not assert in this sermon, that he has seen any of the phenomena. Judging from the ignorance he manifests, in delineating the subject, we think he cannot have witnessed any of them. If he has not, he is not in a position to pass any sentence in the matter. He seems to be in the condition of a fanciful theorist, who, when he was informed, that certain facts had been observed, which conflicted with his theory, exclaimed, "So much the worse for the facts!"

The Dr. is not slow in his censure. If he has witnessed any of the facts, he should have told us, that we might be able to give greater weight to his testimony. If he has not seen any of the facts; how does he fulfil that scripture which requires him to "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good?" (1 Thess. v. 21.) He certainly is justly amenable to that other scripture, which commands us to judge not, lest we be judged. (Mat. vii. 1.) And if he has passed his sweeping sentence of condemnation, without having seen or examined any of the facts of Spiritualism; that is to say without looking at any of the evidence in the case; he has certainly violated that rule of Scripture, which commands us to "Judge not according to the appearance, but [to] judge righteous judgment." (John vii. 24.) His judgment is harsh and severe. It ought to be based on evidence.

Does Dr. Dwight mean to deny all the distinguishing facts of Spiritualism? We have carefully studied this sermon and have been puzzled to know. But on mature consideration, we think

he does mean to deny all the distinguishing facts of Spiritualism as a science. Three times at least he pronounces it all "a delusion." And on the last page, he says, "it is all earthly, all delusion, all to be shunned, and if any have been heedlessly led to participate in it,—as doubtless many have been—to be wholly renounced." Now if the facts are real, Spiritualism cannot be a delusion. True the Dr. admits on the previous page, that, "There is something constantly operating in the manipulations and machinery of Spiritualism," which he terms "Mesmerism."

But as in order to obtain the spiritual manifestations, it is never necessary to have any operator in ordinary Mesmerism present; and as none of the higher and more interesting forms of these manifestations can ever be produced by any operator in Mesmerism, while in the material body; it would seem, that Dr. Dwight does intend to deny all the distinguishing facts of Spiritualism, sweeping them all away under what he is pleased to term "tricking," "credulity," and "most contemptible and most mischievous delusions." If he does not deny the main facts of Spiritualism altogether, he should follow the direction of John, who commands us to "try the spirits." He should not without examination denounce Spiritualism as an "earthly, "contemptible," "mischievous" and "wicked delusion."

Above all, he should not require his hearers to renounce it without examination; but should preach to them the truth proclaimed by Paul to "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good." Does Dr. Dwight feel, that the ground on which he stands, is caving away beneath his feet? *We* do not feel afraid of investigation. We court examination of the facts. We say to you, go and hear Dr. Dwight; then come and hear the speaker, if no abler advocate presents himself. But above all, go and see the Spiritual manifestations. Examine the facts for yourselves.

In denouncing Spiritualism, and in urging his hearers to "shun" it, passing it by without examination, he imitates those Pharisees, who, after Jesus had given the power of vision to the man that was born blind, found fault with him. Some of them did not believe concerning the man, that he had been blind and received his sight. They said it was all "trickery." They denounced Jesus because he did not keep the statutes of Moses; but violated the Sabbath day. They said, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." And when they repeated their inquiries to the man, to tell them how Jesus opened his eyes; and the man



answered, that he had told them once already, and that they did not regard it; and inquired of them, why they wished to hear it again; and whether they would also become the disciples of Jesus; then these self-sufficient, bitter, persecuting Jews turned upon the man, who had received his sight, and reviled him, saying, Thou art his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know, that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not whence he is. You were altogether born in sin; you are totally depraved. You must not rely on your own senses; but rely on our instructions and the Books of Moses.

Substantially the same complaints were made by the Pharisees, who were the leading sect in the Jewish church of the spiritual manifestations and doctrines, that came through the mediumship of Jesus, as are now made by such men as Dr. Dwight of the manifestations through the mediums of the present age and the doctrines they teach. It is said they are Sabbath-breakers; they violate the statutes of Moses; that they are sinners; that they eat and drink with sinners and keep their company; and sometimes it is said, that the phenomena are all "trickery," or all of the devil.

If any person like the speaker, daring to follow the directions of Paul and John, feels it his duty, to examine into the facts and ascertain, where the truth lies; he is told, that he is a poor, insane, deluded Spiritualist; a disciple of the mediums; that he was "altogether born in sins;" that he is totally depraved; that he is wholly unworthy to look for himself; that it is his duty, "wholly to renounce" Spiritualism; to refuse to credit the evidence of his own senses; and to rely on Moses as interpreted by them.

But who have been some of these deluded Spiritualists in ages that have past? We can name only a few for want of time. Prominent among those in the Scripture history stand Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Peter, Paul, John, and Jesus Christ. All these were Spiritualists and mediums for spiritual communications. Among the Greeks we name Socrates, who was also a medium for spiritual intercourse, and Plato his disciple, who has given us the spiritual experience of Socrates. Among the Romans we name Cicero, who wrote a treatise on the subject. In the seventeenth century we name James 1st, King of England, under whose auspices we had perfected our common translation of the Bible, Sir Mathew Hale, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas during the administration of Cromwell, George Fox, the founder of the sect called Quakers or Friends, William



Shakespeare, the immortal dramatist, Joseph Glanvil, a distinguished writer on Theology and Philosophy, and Cotton Mather, a leading man among the Congregational ministers of New England. In the eighteenth century we name Joseph Addison, the most beautiful writer in the reign of Queen Anne, Sir William Blackstone, author of the Commentaries on the Common Law of England, Dr. Samuel Johnson, the most vigorous writer of his age, and compiler of the most valuable English Dictionary at that time, and Emanuel Swedenborg, the seer of the north and most distinguished man of his age. In the very opening of the nineteenth century we name Rev. Abraham Cummings, then of North Yarmouth. He was one of the best and most learned of the Baptist ministers in Maine. All these were among the insane and deluded Spiritualists, and with efforts, the number might be increased to any desirable extent.

In this sermon it is asserted, that,

“If the Bible and the God of the Bible are not both a lie, Spiritualism in all its claims to supernatural communications, is the most contemptible, the most mischievous and one of the most wicked among existing delusions.”

In this Dr. Dwight shows his utter ignorance of Spiritualism. The Spiritualists do not claim nor admit, that there is any thing supernatural about it. Supernatural signifies, “beyond or exceeding the laws of nature.” The laws of nature are none other than the laws of God. So far from claiming that there is any thing supernatural in Spiritualism, we assert that God and his natural laws are uniform and unchangeable, and that nothing ever did or ever can occur in violation of these laws. Uneducated men are very apt to think that all those events, which cannot be explained by their limited philosophy, are supernatural. But we are taught by the principles of science as well as by the Scriptures, that God and the Divine laws are unchangeable. “I am the Lord; I change not.”—(Mal. iii. 6.) “One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all things shall have been accomplished,”—*ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται.*—(Matt. v. 18.)

We are informed, that while a Missionary to Southern Asia was relating to a man, in that remote region, some of the wonderful things recorded in our Bible, the man listened very attentively. But when at length, the Missionary told him that at one season of the year in his own country, water became so hard and solid, that men and horses could walk upon it, the man replied substantially, *Hitherto I have been inclined to regard you as an honest man; but now I know you lie.* The fact transcended his philosophy. In



like manner when the wonderful things of the Scriptures, were presented to the mind of David Hume, they transcended his philosophy, and so he rejected them as fabulous. He did not stop to consider, that there might be other laws of nature, with which he was unacquainted; and so he rejected the evidence of the facts. Under like circumstances, weak and superstitious minds at once arrive at the conclusion, that the laws of God are reversed; that the events are supernatural—miraculous.

But the true Spiritualist or Christian philosopher will receive the facts, if the evidence be amply sufficient to prove them. He is aware how little he knows of the divine laws. If he knows of no laws, by which such phenomena can be produced, he will not infer, that the universe has got out of order; that the laws of God are reversed; nor that the facts occur contrary to those laws. He will reasonably suppose, that there may be and probably are other laws, with which he is unacquainted, and patiently wait, till he discovers them.

The natural condition of water in Southern Asia is fluid, and it always remains fluid, unless artificial means are employed to convert it into ice. The conversion of water into ice, was to the mind of that Asiatic, just as much a miracle, as any that are recorded in the Bible. There is a law of God, however, according to which, when water is exposed to a greater degree of cold than  $32^{\circ}$  above zero, it is converted into ice. The Asiatic was unacquainted with this law; and therefore, it seemed to him impossible, that water could ever become ice.

In like manner, when Mons. Chabert, the Fire King, was in this country, he took Prussic Acid, the most deadly poison in nature. The poison of this acid, when concentrated, is so active, that one drop placed on the tongue of a dog, will kill him in a few seconds. To some uneducated persons, the fact, that Mons. Chabert took this deadly poison into his stomach without harm to his person, would seem supernatural or miraculous. But there is another law to be taken into the account. The chemist knows, that this acid has a strong affinity for earths and alkalies, and readily combines with them; and that when in combination with some other substances, it becomes perfectly harmless. Mons. Chabert took advantage of this other law. He guarded the surface of his gullett with a coating, and took his antidote in advance. The prussic acid was not allowed to come in contact with his corporeal system, until it had been converted into a harmless salt.

So it is with all the Spiritual manifestations. None of them



are supernatural or contrary to the Divine laws. They are all produced by laws, which are perfectly natural; but which we have not been accustomed to observe. The same is true in relation to the spiritual manifestations, recorded in the Scriptures. They were all produced in perfect conformity to the laws of nature or the Divine laws; although in many cases the people might not have been acquainted with those laws. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions, it was in accordance with ordinary expectation, that those ravenous hungry beasts should have torn him, limb from limb, and devoured his flesh. But when we find Daniel answering to the King: "My God hath sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me;" — (Dan. vi. 22) we see another law was brought into exercise for the preservation of Daniel's life. If the lions were confined and held by the power of spiritual beings, there is no reason to suppose, that there was anything supernatural in the case.

In like manner, when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast into the burning fiery furnace, it was in accordance with ordinary expectation, that their bodies would have been consumed in the fire. But we have learned from experience, that disembodied spirits or angels, under some circumstances, have means within their reach, to neutralize the power of fire, so that it will not consume in the ordinary way. It seems Nebuchadnezzar was a seeing medium — "a discerner of spirits," — and on this occasion had his spiritual vision opened, so that he saw one at least of the spirits, employed for the deliverance of the three worthies. The king, "answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, and walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." \* \* \* Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his *angel* and delivered his servants that trusted in him." (Dan. iii. 25, 28.) If the power of the fire was neutralized by the interposition of spiritual beings, there is no reason to suppose, that there was anything supernatural in the case.

In like manner, when Jesus attempted to walk on the water, it was in accordance with ordinary expectation, that he should sink. But he was constant in the exercise of prayer and faith, and lived in constant intercourse with angels from the world of spirits. It is written in the ninety-first Psalm: "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." This was applicable to Christ. Although when this Scripture was presented to his mind; as an argument to induce him presumptuously to cast



himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, he resisted the temptation ; yet on a subsequent occasion, relying upon this scripture, in the exercise of supplication and faith, he committed himself to the trust of the angels, and walked upon the sea. (Mat. xiv. 25.) If he had not been supported by the angels, he would have sunk in the water, like any other man. When we consider, that spiritual beings supported him, it becomes evident that there was nothing supernatural in the case.

Dr. Dwight seems to suppose, we think, that the mode of intercourse with spiritual beings "has been lately discovered" as an original thing. The mode of communication by raps, was undoubtedly discovered a few years since in Hydesville, New York, by the Fox family. The raps were not new ; they had been made occasionally for several years preceding in the same house ; but the first occupants did not establish a mode of communication, and failed to discover the cause. Many other modes of holding intercourse with angels or spirits, have been newly discovered since that time. But we do not suppose, that all or any of these were *original* discoveries. On the contrary, if there is any truth in history ; if the Bible is not all "a lie," the science of Spiritualism is founded in fact, and as old as the races of men.

It was the faith of the world generally, civilized as well as heathen, from the earliest ages till the reign of Louis XIV in France. During that reign, the progress of materialism and infidelity, was so great, as well nigh to banish from the country all faith in present revelations or past revelations, and even all faith in the world of spirits and a future life. It had its effect in introducing into France during that reign, the two succeeding reigns, the reign of terror, and the republic, and until the advent of Napoleon, a gross system of immorality never equalled in the civilized world. This system of materialism and infidelity, passed over into England and spread over most of Europe. From that system of materialism and infidelity during the first half of this century, there was a partial return to the doctrines of Spiritualism and Christianity. The churches have professed a belief in the Spiritualism of the past ; but denied the possibility of it in the present age.

The present age of Spiritualism is nothing less than a full return to the ancient faith of the Church and a complete revival of the doctrines of Christianity. There have been mediums for spiritual intercourse in all or nearly all the ages of our race. During



the gross materialism and infidelity of past ages, mediums without the pale of the church, were persecuted 'and hung. And in the fierceness of their rage, the infidels of the seventeenth century, under the assumed garb of Christianity, persecuted unto death, by false accusation, many, who were not mediums at all. Among the ancients, aside from the mediums mentioned in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, Socrates stands most prominent. He asserted, that for many years he was accompanied by a demon, guardian spirit, or angel, who, whenever he was tempted to do anything wrong, cautioned him against it.

There is a sea-captain belonging to this city, [Portland] whose name I am not at liberty to mention, who, as I am informed on good authority, has been an excellent medium for "the discerning of spirits," and the perception of spiritual sounds ever since 1818. He has frequently been permitted to see a daughter in the world of spirits, and hear her sing; but so bitter was the spirit of ridicule against all, who believed in the doctrine of spiritual intercourse, that he kept his mediumship entirely to himself, until after the spiritual manifestations at Hydesville, through the Misses Fox, became public; when he communicated his experience to two or three individuals.

In the year 1855, I was informed by an aged lady of good character, then in this city, that she had been a medium for the raps ever since 1820. The raps followed her; but she established no communication with them, and never knew the cause, till after the spiritual manifestations, at Hydesville, became public. Doubtless the same thing has been true with regard to many others.

One of the most interesting cases of modern spiritual manifestations, was by the spirit of Mrs. Nelly Butler in the town of Sullivan in this State. What made it exceedingly interesting, was the extensive manner, in which she made herself manifest by the exhibition of her own form and voice. She first became manifest by raps and by conversation with her own natural voice in the year 1799; and by the exhibition of her own form in the year 1800. Originally the principal medium was Lydia Blaisdell, who afterwards became Mrs. Lydia Butler. On the 13th of August 1800, this spirit went in company with Mrs. Butler and forty seven other persons about half a mile. Rev. Abraham Cummings, who was uncle to the late Dr. Asa Cummings, wrote a history of the appearances of this spirit, and published it in 1826. He took and printed the testimony of thirty-one witnesses, who had seen or conversed with the spirit in the year 1800. Mr.



Cummings in his narrative says: "With all these witnesses I am intimately acquainted. I took these testimonies from their lips, for the most part, separately." After giving the testimony, Mr. Cummings says: "The above witnesses are exhibited not for the want of more, (for more than a hundred have seen the spectre, or have heard her words,) but because repetition is tedious." The testimony, part or all of it was taken in the year 1800. One witness, Dorcas Johnson, speaking of the manifestation on the 13th of August, says: "There I heard and saw the spectre. Her voice was distinct from any other, and her music the most delightful, that I ever heard. When she walked with us, *she moved without stepping*. And when we arrived at the house, by direction of the spectre, given to my brother, James Springer, and by him to the company in our hearing, we opened to the right and left, so that the spectre and Mrs. Butler passed together between our ranks. Then she vanished from my view and I saw her no more." The testimony of others is equally explicit.

The principal medium soon died, I think in 1801. But the spirit continued to be seen afterwards. Mr. Cummings himself had the pleasure of seeing her form in July 1806. It appears that the character of each witness was good; that the spirit was manifested on one occasion in the presence of twenty persons; and on another occasion in the presence of forty-eight persons. Not all of these, however, saw her at those times. But most of those, who did not see her on one occasion, were permitted to have their vision opened and see her on other occasions.

After waiting twenty-six years, Mr. Cummings felt it his duty to publish the history. He met with great opposition from his family and professed friends. They said he was insane. And as we are credibly informed, the persecution from his infidel friends, did not end in defaming his character by their preposterous charge of insanity; but they proceeded to overt acts, and in imitation of the Catholics, burnt up the whole edition of his pamphlet, except a few copies that he had previously scattered. I have been the more particular in relation to this case, because the manifestation by personal form and natural voice, was more extraordinary, than any other I have heard of, since the personal manifestation of Jesus Christ.

Among modern mediums the most prominent of all, stands Emanuel Swedenborg. He stands prominent, on account of his eminence and high position as a man of learning and science;



also because he was in constant or daily intercourse with the spiritual world for twenty-eight years; and also on account, of the mass and value of the spiritual communications, which he committed to writing, amounting to about thirty printed volumes. But very few have yet received the doctrines taught by or through him, or even read his works. The world was so steeped in materialism and infidelity, that his doctrines have been generally rejected without examination. By such self-sufficient and dogmatical persons, as the author of this sermon, he was denounced as an insane man. Ten thousand such could not fill his place in the world.

To say nothing of other countries; in this country alone, at the present time, the mediums cannot number less than one hundred thousand. We think that the men and women, who have become believers in the doctrines of Spiritualism, with their children, would now number full three millions in the United States. Among them are included, Judges, Senators, Orators, Clergymen, Poets, Mathematicians, Chemists, and Philosophers. All these are denounced as insane by the whole host of infidels. Why should we be surprised at this? When Paul gave an account of the spiritual manifestations, that he witnessed on his way to Damascus, to Festus and Agrippa, Festus charged him with insanity. (Acts xxvi. 12-24.)

But the most remarkable Spiritualist and medium, of whom we have any account, was Jesus of Nazareth. His whole history was surrounded by spiritual manifestations. Before he was begotten, an angel of the LORD announced his birth to his mother. (Luke i. 26-38.) Before he was born, an angel gave notice to Joseph concerning him in a dream. (Mat. i. 20-21.) Soon after his birth, angels announced his advent to shepherds in the open field, while they watched their flock by night. (Luke ii. 8-14.) While he was still an infant, an angel of the LORD gave warning to Joseph in a dream to flee with him into Egypt, in order to escape the fury of Herod. (Mat. ii. 13.) After the death of Herod, an angel of the LORD gave notice of it to Joseph in another dream, and that he might return into the land of Israel again. (Mat. ii. 19-20.) After his baptism, there came from heaven, a voice, apparently human, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mat. iii. 17.) At the close of the scene of temptation and trial, "angels came and ministered unto him." (Mat. iv. 11.) Moses and Elias came from heaven and held intercourse with him upon the mount of transfiguration. (Mat. xvii. 1-6. Mark ix. 2 7.



Luke ix. 28-35.) On this occasion, a cloud overshadowed them; the face of Jesus "did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light;" and there came out of the cloud a voice, apparently human, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him."

There is reason to believe, that angels assisted him in the performance of all his wonderful works. An angel from heaven appeared unto him in the garden, strengthening him, shortly before his arrest. (Luke xxii. 43.) He taught the doctrine of special providence by the interposition of angels; declared, that guardian spirits were assigned to little children; (Mat. xviii. 10.) and that he could pray to the Father, and that he would presently give him more than twelve legions of angels. (Mat. xxvi. 53.)

At the time of his death, he rose out of his dead body, and in the spirit, manifested himself by form and voice on the third day. He made frequent manifestation of himself to his disciples, both by form and voice; and Paul declares, that on one occasion "he was seen, of above five hundred brethren at once." (1 Cor. xv. 6.) To his apostles, "He showed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts i. 3.) There is no evidence, that Jesus was ever seen after the resurrection, by any of the unbelieving Jews, except Saul of Tarsus, who forthwith became a most devoted believer and faithful disciple.

Notwithstanding all the evidence of the resurrection of Christ *from or out of* his body, and the manifestation of himself to his disciples, the rest of the Jews persistently denied it, and have continued to deny it unto the present day, in the same manner as Dr. Dwight and his friends deny the spiritual manifestations of this age. The Pharisees said of Jesus, "This fellow doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons." (Mat. x. 24.) "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of the household?" (Mat. x. 25.) Jesus was not only surrounded and assisted by angels in the performance of his wonderful works; but he asserted that he was a medium for God the Father, and that the Father communicated through him directly. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John xiv. 10.) The members of the Jewish Church denied his claim. They asserted, that he was a Samaritan and had a demon. (John vii. 20; viii. 48.)



Since the whole body of the Jewish Church denied, that Christ was a medium for God or the good angels; charged him with gross sins; by way of reproach, reviled him as a Samaritan; alleged, that he was possessed by a demon or evil spirit; called him Beelzebub, the prince of the demons; and denied that he rose out of the dead and manifested himself to his disciples; since they charged the foremost and most faithful of his apostles with insanity; we need not be surprised at any defamatory words, which the members of the present church may speak of mediums and Christian Spiritualists at the present day. We need not be surprised, when they treat us as "deluded," or charge us with "insanity;" nor when they charge us with gross sins or total depravity; nor when they deny, that our departed friends have risen out of their dead bodies and manifested themselves unto us. We need not be surprised, that they do all this without examination and in entire ignorance of all the facts. "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." (Prov. xxvi. 16.)

Leading men in the Jewish Church, brought false accusations against Christ, charging him with Blasphemy in claiming to be God; and with treason to the Roman Emperor. They arrested him and gave him a mock trial; condemned him as a malefactor; derided him; smote him; spit upon him; pierced him with a spear; and finally put him to death by crucifixion. Most of his apostles suffered in the same manner.

In later times, it has been no uncommon thing for leading men in the Christian Church, to arrest, try, and condemn the most virtuous citizens of the age for the crime of Heresy, and put them to death in a manner still more barbarous, by burning them alive. There is bigotry enough in the Church to treat Spiritual Christians in the same manner to-day. But we see evidence of progress. Thanks be to God, there is at length so much of Christian Civilization outside of the Church, even if there were none inside of it, that the sect of Christian Bigots cannot carry their malicious designs into execution, and dare not attempt it. So they are all consummated in slander and vituperation, as witnessed by the sermon under consideration.

In his virulent attack upon Spiritualism, Dr. Dwight twice represents that nothing "involving true science, acute discrimination, or practical knowledge, is ever imparted" from the spirits. If this were so, although it would be a discouraging fact, it would by no means, disprove the truth of Spiritualism. No person can be competent to pronounce this sweeping sentence of condemna-



tion, unless he is a man of true science himself, nor unless he has read all the printed volumes on the subject. How is it with Dr. Dwight? The number of printed volumes exceeds one hundred. Has he read them all or even one half of them? If he has read them, he has been quite busy. If he has not read them all, he could not honestly nor competently pronounce the sentence he did.

But in the light of this sermon, how does the author of it, show himself to be posted in matters of science? We hesitate not to say, that he shows himself to be grossly ignorant, in Siderial Astronomy, in Anthropology, and in Biblical Science.

First, he represents, that the distance of "the inhabitants of the fixed star Sirius, or of those, who occupy the nebula in the belt of the constellation Orion, is so vast," "that a beam of light moving two hundred thousand miles in a second," cannot shoot over the intervening space, "until after the lapse of sixty thousand years." This is all assumption and based on no ascertained facts. It must have been taken from some of those lecturers or writers on Astronomy, who in order to gratify the taste of their hearers or readers for the marvellous, launch out into the regions of poetry and fancy, and state upon certain conditions, the time, it will take light, from the most distant stars, that can be seen through Lord Rosse's telescope, to reach the earth.

The conditions are these: that all the stars are of equal magnitude in fact; that they all shine with equal splendor; and that the rays of light pass on continuously through infinite space, without any of them being lost or absorbed in the etherial medium, through which they move. Now there is no reason to believe, that any of these conditions are true in fact. All analogies are against it. Consequently all inferences, drawn therefrom, fall to the ground.

We will speak first as to magnitude. Our sun is a star, and as such appears to all those, who reside beyond the limits of the solar system. By means of the photometer, we can compare the light of one star with that of another star, with that of the full moon, or with that of the sun. So, if we can ascertain the distance of any one star, admitting, that all the stars shine with equal splendor, and that the rays of light continually spread into infinite space, without any loss or absorption, in passing through the medium, by comparing its light with the light of the sun, whose diameter is known, we can ascertain the diameter of the star and the contents of its disk.



Now the distance of one star, a double star, or rather of two stars with light blending into one, it is agreed by Astronomers, has been determined with sufficient care and accuracy to rely upon as a basis of argument. After careful observations for three years continuously, the late Prof. Bessel of Koningsburg, determined, that the double star 61 in the constellation of the Swan, was the point of an angle subtended by the diameter of the earth's orbit of only '348 of one second of arc. Prof. Peters of the Pulkova Observatory, after careful observations, determined the angle to be about the same. Further observations tend to confirm the result of Prof. Bessel.

We may therefore consider it settled, that those two stars are 56,410,975,924,725 miles from the earth. Light, moving with the same velocity, with which it comes from Jupiter's satellites, would come from the sun in eight minutes, thirteen seconds, and three-tenths of a second. This velocity is very nearly one hundred and ninety-two thousand miles per second. And if the direct light from these two stars in the Swan, comes continuously with the same velocity, as the refracted light from Jupiter and his satellites, it will reach the earth in nine years, ninety-three days, seven hours, twenty-five minutes, and forty-five seconds.

It is generally supposed, that the distance of these two stars, has been determined with very great exactness. Still it would be nothing strange, if Prof. Bessel's calculation should be a billion of miles wide from the truth, or even more. If the distance of these stars as ascertained by Bessel, be taken as correct, then by comparing their light with the light of the sun, we can determine, that neither of them, can have a diameter much exceeding one-quarter of the sun's diameter; and neither of them can have a disk much exceeding one-sixteenth of the sun's disk; unless there is a loss or absorption of a portion of their light by the medium through which it comes. Thus is it shown, that one star differeth from another star in magnitude, as well as in glory.

The same thing would be inferred by analogy from the planets. No two of the planets are of equal magnitude. Jupiter is about fourteen hundred times as large as the earth. The earth is about fifteen times as large as Mercury. While Mercury is a thousand times as large as some of the asteroids.

Neither is there any reason to believe, that the stars all radiate from their surfaces equal quantities of light, or shine with the same intensity of splendor. One star shines with a bluish light; another with a red and fiery light; and another with a smooth



white light. So also with the planets. Mars appears fiery red; Venus shines with a beautiful white light; while Jupiter presents a disk filled with belts or clouds in his atmosphere. The inference is, that the stars shine with unequal degrees of effulgence.

Nor is there any reason to believe, that the rays from a star pass on continuously through infinite space, without any loss or absorption of light, by the medium through which they pass. When beams of light pass through glass, some portion of the light is absorbed. It has been estimated, that four-tenths of the light, received on the object glass of Herschel's four feet telescope, were lost in the process of reflection and transmission. Upon principles of analogy, it seems reasonable to suppose, that some portion of a beam of light is lost or absorbed in process of transmission for billions of miles through any medium whatever, however etherial or rare.

There is no mode, by which we can ascertain, how long it will take light to come from any given star, whose distance is unknown. The speaker has a letter from a gentleman, whom he regards as the best Mathematician and Astronomer in the United States, dated April 24th, 1857, in which he says: "With the exception of 61 Cygni and  $\alpha$  Lyræ, I cannot see, that the parallax of any star is determined, with sufficient certainty or precision for a general basis of argument." It cannot be pretended, that the parallax of  $\alpha$  Lyræ, has been determined with any great certainty. M. Struve determined from his observations, that the parallax of  $\alpha$  Lyræ, was  $\cdot 261$  of one second of arc, which would give a distance, that could be passed over by light in twelve years and one-third. Various other angles of parallax have been given for this star, some of which are so small, as to increase its distance, so that it would take thirty years for light to come down to us. The whole matter is very uncertain.

Different Astronomers have made their observations and assigned a parallax for several other stars. But there appears to be no other star, whose distance is ascertained "with sufficient certainty or precision for a general basis of argument." With regard to Sirius, Mon. d'Assas, a French Astronomer, assigned to it a parallax of  $1''\cdot 24$ , which would place it so near, that light would come over the intervening space in two years and sixty-eight hundredths of a year. While Prof. Henderson of Edinburgh, assigned the same star a parallax of only  $\cdot 23$  of a second. This angle would remove the star to such a distance, that its light could not reach us under nearly fourteen years. The speaker

thinks that no reliance is to be placed on the observations of either of them. To show how extremely uncertain, this matter of ascertaining the parallax of the stars, is ; we would state, that Mr. Faye assigned to star 1830 of the catalogue of Groombridge a parallax of  $1''.08$ , which would give it a distance, over which light would pass in about three years. While Otto Struve assigned the same star a parallax of only  $.03$  of one second, which would give it a distance, over which light could not come in less than about one hundred and eight years. Thus one Astronomer assigned the same star, a distance thirty-six times as great as the other.

With regard to the length of time, it would take light to reach us from the nebula in the belt of the constellation of Orion, we have no means of knowledge. It may take fifty years, or a hundred years, or a thousand years, or sixty thousand years, or millions of years. At present, *it is one of the secrets that belong to God.*

Dr. Dwight says :

“It is entirely a secret of God, how spirit and matter in the form of the human body are united so as to constitute but one conscious being.”

He seems to suppose, that spirit and matter constitute the whole man, and herein betrays his ignorance of the science of Anthropology, and not less of the Scriptures. The science of Psychology has rendered it certain, that the mind or soul of man is distinct from his body and spirit alike ; that the spiritual part of man, is either fluid or analogous to a fluid, of which portions can be communicated from one person to another ; and that this spiritual communication may be produced by the will of the operator.

This is also in accordance with the Scriptures. “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul.” (Gen. ii. 7.) Here we have the body or dust, the spirit or life, which pervades the whole body, and is consequently in the form of the body, and the mind or soul. Again the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares, that “The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of *soul and spirit.*” (Heb. iv. 12.) In the Book of Job, Elihu declares, that “there is a *spirit* in man ; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them *understanding.*” (Job xxxii. 8.) Again it is related, that Christ laid down



the royal law as follows: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." (Mark xii. 30.) Although the writers of the Scriptures were not philosophers; we believe, they every where represent, that man is composed of three parts at least, the body or earth; the spirit or life; and the mind or soul.

That all men, as to their bodies, are earthy and born of the earth, is evident to all. For these, at length, are disorganized, return to the earth, and again become a part of the common mass. But as to his life or spirit and his mind or soul, man is a Divine offspring, begotten of God. And so the Scriptures teach: "For we are also his offspring." (Acts xvii. 28.) This declaration of Paul was quoted from a Greek poet. That, *as to his mind or soul*, man is a child of God, is held by the writers of the New Testament in common with the poets and philosophers of the Heathen world.

Not only so, but the New Testament asserts, that man, by nature, is also a child of God, *as to his life or spirit*. The Divine Essence is an immense ocean of Spirit, that flows through and fills the universe. This doctrine is fully asserted in the Scriptures:

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into Heaven, thou art there; if I descend into Sheol (Hades) thou art there." (Psalm. cxxxix. 7, 8.) "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord," (Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.) "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will *pour out* my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I *pour out* my spirit." (Joel ii. 28, 29.)

This infinite ocean of Spirit or Life, is the body of God, and He imparts a portion of it to every man. Hence Jesus taught: "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself." (John v. 26.) And Paul, speaking to the Colossians, said: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. iii. 3.)

Again Dr. Dwight shows his gross ignorance of Biblical Science. This appears throughout the whole sermon. It has been indirectly proved, by showing that he misrepresented the four passages he cited from the New Testament, in his attempt to prove, that "the Invisible World is absolutely secret with God." It has

also been shown by a number of texts cited by the speaker to show in opposition to the Dr.'s view, that revelation was not to be closed up with the Books of the Bible, but was to continue and be progressive. It is also shown, by the fact, that the Dr. has wholly ignored those numerous texts, cited to prove, that Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Daniel, Jesus, Peter, Paul, and John were Spiritualists and Mediums for spiritual communications. It appears also from the fact, that he has wholly overlooked those passages just cited to show, that man in his construction, consists of three parts, earth or matter, spirit or life, and mind or soul.

This is an important point. For the moment, it is seen, that besides his mind or soul, and the matter or earth of his body, man has a spiritual form of organized life, correspondent to the exterior form of his material body, that fact well nigh establishes the doctrine of the Spiritualists as to the resurrection, namely, that the resurrection is spiritual; and that the soul and spirit, which constitute the essential and eternal man, rise from or *out of* the dead at the time of death.

Again the Dr. shows his gross ignorance of Biblical science in the following passage :

"Neither good angels, for they would utterly loathe the whole matter; nor bad angels, for God will not permit them thus directly to act in the affairs of men; nor departed saints, for they are at rest and in transport with their Saviour; nor lost spirits, for they are in prison;—*are active here.*"

In this passage, it is asserted by implication at least, that the angels are an order of beings distinct from men. There is no foundation in the Scriptures for the assertion of any such doctrine. The word *ἄγγελος* means a messenger. The winds, waves, flames of fire, and other forces in nature of the like kind, being means or messengers of God, for the execution of his will, are, in Scripture by a figure of speech, frequently called angels. The term is also often applied to men in the material body. Thus in the Book of Revelation, the pastors of the seven churches in Asia, are called angels. So the Gospels are called *Evangelists* or good messages; and the writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, *Evangelists* or good angels; because they proclaim a good message from God to the world of mankind.

The term is also applied to departed spirits in numerous instances. The angel, who, as a messenger of Jesus Christ, dictated the Book of Revelation to John, as we have already seen, informed the Apostle in the ninth verse of the 22d chapter, that he was one of John's brethren, the prophets; that is to say, that he was



the departed spirit of a man. When Moses and Elias visited Jesus in the presence of Peter, James, and John, upon the mount of transfiguration, they were certainly messengers from the world of spirits, and so angels, but they did not lose their identity nor cease to be departed human spirits.

In the account of the communication, which Gabriel made to Mary, the mother of Jesus, Luke calls him "an angel from God." When he was sent to Daniel, as a messenger to communicate information to him, he was represented as "a man." By this we are to understand, that he was the departed spirit of a man, and not a man in his material body; because it is said, "that he was caused to fly swiftly." (Daniel ix. 21.) This could not have been done by man, while dwelling in his gross external body.

In his account of the resurrection of Jesus, Matthew says, "the angel of the Lord descended and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it." (Mat. xxviii. 2.) Mark says, that "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, entering into the sepulcher, saw a *young man*, sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment," who delivered unto them a message concerning the promised appearance of Jesus. (xvi. 1-7.) So, though he was a man or the spirit of a man, he was also an angel or messenger from the world of spirits, and might have been the same one who rolled back the stone. Luke says, the women "entered in the sepulcher and found not the body of the Lord Jesus, and as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, *two men* stood by them in shining garments," and delivered a message unto them concerning Jesus. (xxiv. 1-8.) So though they were men, they must also have been angels and messengers from the world of spirits. John says: "Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping: and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where Jesus had lain." (John xx. 11, 12.) These also delivered a message, and very likely were the same, as the two, of whom Luke speaks, as "men in shining garments."

It is recorded in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis, that the Lord appeared unto Abraham, *by three men*, in the plains of Mamre, who delivered unto him a very important message from the world of spirits concerning the birth of Isaac, the child of promise. They are not expressly called angels, but they must have been such, notwithstanding they were men, for they brought a highly important message from God. The angels, who were the messengers of God, to bring Lot out of Sodom and destroy



the cities of the plain, were men, that is to say, the departed spirits of men, and repeatedly so called in the nineteenth chapter of Genesis. These passages are sufficient to show, that except when the word *angels*, is figuratively used to represent winds, flames of fire, and other inanimate forces of nature, it is generally applied in the Scriptures, to men in the body or to the spirits of men departed from the body.

There is no evidence, that it is ever applied to any other and higher order of beings than men. There is no evidence, that God has created any higher order of beings than men. There is, in the account of the creation in Genesis, negative evidence, that he has not. He created the mineral world, the vegetable world, and the animal world, including beasts, birds, fishes, and insects, creeping things and flying things, and finally man. There the account of creation stops. Now if God had really created a higher order of beings than man, an account so minute, as that in Genesis, would not, we think, have omitted the most important link in the whole chain of created beings.

By way of answer to this line of argument, the objector may refer to the use of the word in the Book of Hebrews. This Book is anonymous. The unknown writer uses this language: "Thou madest him [man] a little lower than the angels." (Heb. ii. 7.) The writer quoted this text from the Septuagint translation of the eighth Psalm and fifth verse. The Septuagint translation was made by Jews, very little acquainted with Greek, and is a very poor translation. In this instance, the Hebrew word translated "angels," is אֱלֹהִים; which signifies — God, a god, the gods, or departed spirits. It is the same word which is translated God in the first verse in Genesis, and is not properly translated angels, as representing an order of beings intermediate between God and departed spirits. The great Hebrew Lexicographer, Gesenius, one of the first Hebrew scholars in the world, if not the first, says, the word is improperly translated, *angels*, in this very passage.

Dr. Adam Clark says, "literally translated it is: *Thou hast made him less than God.*" We think the translation should be: *Thou hast made him little in comparison with God*; or perhaps, *Thou hast made him a little lower than a god.*

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, was misled by the erroneous translation of the seventy, to suppose that God had created a higher order of rational beings than man, and in several instances uses the word in that way. Dr. Dwight seems to labor



under the same delusion. It may however be considered as established, that all the angels in the world of spirits, appertaining to the earth, whether good or bad, are the spirits of men or men in the spiritual form. And in every instance, where angels or demons, who in the Scripture use of the term, are bad angels, are represented as communicating with men, those angels or demons are also departed spirits or men in the spiritual form.

On what authority then does Dr. Dwight assert, that neither good angels, nor bad angels, nor departed saints, nor lost spirits are active here? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that the Book of Revelation was dictated to the Apostle John by an angel, and that the same angel was the spirit of one of the prophets? Does he deny those three scriptures, which assert, that Moses and Elias came from the world of spirits and held intercourse with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration?

Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that Samuel came from the world of spirits and held intercourse with Saul through the spiritual medium at En-dor? (1 Sam. xxviii. 7-20.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that the *man* Gabriel came from the world of spirits and held intercourse with the prophet Daniel, and gave him a message? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that Gabriel was an angel of God, and came from the world of spirits, and made the annunciation of the Messiah to the mother of Jesus? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that two angels of the Lord, came from the world of spirits, as messengers and agents for the overthrow of Sodom and the other cities of the plain, and that they were men in the spiritual form or the spirits of men, and that they held intercourse with Lot? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that the Lord appeared unto Abraham by three men in the plains of Mamre; that these men were in the spiritual form; that they were messengers from God or angels; and that they came and held intercourse with the father of the faithful, and announced the birth of Isaac, the child of promise? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that Jacob had a spiritual manifestation presented to him by night in a dream, and saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it? (Gen. xxviii. 12-15.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that on his return from Padan-aram, Jacob had another manifestation from the world of spirits by night, and wrestled with *a man*, who was a messenger or angel of God, until the break of day, and that God speaking by this angel or man in



the spiritual form, conferred upon Jacob, the name of Israel to signify, that as a prince, he had power with God and man and had prevailed? (Gen. xxxii. 24-28.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that an angel of the Lord came from the world of spirits, and manifested himself in Horeb, and that God by means of this angel held intercourse with Moses from the burning bush? (Ex. iii. 2.) Does he deny those three scriptures, which assert, that at the close of the temptation of Christ, angels came and ministered unto him? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that shortly before the arrest of Jesus, while his soul was in great agony of distress at the bitter cup, that lay before him, an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that guardian angels are assigned to little children, and that in heaven they do ever behold the face of the Father, that is to say, such clear appearances and manifestations, as the Father is pleased to make of himself through his works in heaven? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that Lazarus, the beggar, was surrounded by angels at the time of his death, and that they conducted him to his proper location in the world of spirits, in the immediate vicinity of Abraham? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts in the form of interrogatory, that the good angels are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them, who shall be heirs of salvation? (Heb. i. 14.) Does he deny, that the angels, messengers, or spirits of men, referred to in these scriptures, were all good spirits? If Dr. Dwight admits these assertions of Scripture, and that the angels or spirits, referred to in them, were all good angels or spirits, then he must admit, that the good angels or spirits, so far from loathing the practice of holding intercourse with men in the body, delight in it, and have in the various ages of the world, freely indulged in it. But if the Dr. rejects these Scriptures, we should be glad to know why and on what ground? and whether, he receives any of that portion of the Scripture, which asserts the doctrine of spiritual intercourse with man in the material body? If not, he must reject nearly the whole of the Bible. For the Bible is full of the doctrine of spiritual intercourse, in one form or another from the beginning to the end of it. Whatever Dr. Dwight may think, the Spiritualists receive these Scriptures and these doctrines, being fully satisfied of their truth.

Does Dr. Dwight deny those scriptures, which assert the doctrine of demons? and the possession of men by demons? Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that Jesus was met in the



country of the Gadarenes, by a man, who being a medium for spiritual intercourse, fell into the hands of a legion of evil demons, who drove him from the habitations of men to dwell among the tombs; who received from the demons such an infusion of strength into his corporeal system, that no man could bind him and confine him with chains, because he was able by this infusion of great strength, to break the fetters and chains, with which he was bound, and pluck them asunder; and that he was driven by the spirits to roam in the mountains, crying and cutting himself with stones? Does he deny the additional scripture, which asserts, that Jesus expelled those evil demons and drove them into a herd of two thousand swine; and that the swine were forced into the sea and choked? (Mark v. 1-14.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that Mary Magdalene was a medium, and held in control by seven evil demons, and that Jesus cast them out? (Luke viii. 2.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that on a certain occasion there was a man in the synagogue, who had the spirit of an unclean demon, that cried out, "Saying, let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the holy one of God;" and that Jesus commanded the demon to come out of the man; and that the spirit threw the man down, and came out of him without hurting him? (Luke iv. 33-35.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that on a certain occasion, a man brought his only child to Jesus, and informed him, that his son was often seized by a spirit, and would suddenly cry out; and that the spirit would tear him, so that he would foam at the mouth; and after bruising the child, he was with difficulty, induced to leave him; and that the disciples could not cast out the demon for want of sufficient faith, and that he was cast out by Jesus? (Luke ix. 38-42.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that when Jesus was in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, a Canaanitish woman brought him her daughter, who was grievously vexed with a demon, and that when Jesus saw her faith, he cast out the spirit? (Mat. xv. 21-28.) Does he deny that scripture, which asserts, that on a certain occasion, when Jesus was in Capernaum, the people brought unto him many, that were possessed by demons, that is to say, many mediums, that had fallen under the control of evil spirits, and that Jesus cast out the spirits with his word? (Mat. viii. 16.) Does he deny those scriptures of the evangelists, which assert, that Jesus communicated to the Apostles power to cast out demons or evil spirits? (Mat. x. 8. Luke x. 17-19.)



Does he deny that scripture, in the twenty-second chapter of the first Book of Kings, wherein it is asserted, that in the days of Ahab, a council was held in the world of spirits; and an inquiry was made to know, who would persuade Ahab, that he might go up to Ramoth-gilead and fall; and that after various propositions had been made, a spirit came forth and said he would persuade him; that he would go forth and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets; and that this spirit did go forth and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets, so that he was deceived and went up to Ramoth-gilead and fell? Does he deny, that the demons, angels, or human spirits, referred to in these scriptures, were all evil spirits or angels? If Dr. Dwight admits these assertions of Scripture, and that the demons, angels, or spirits referred to in them, were all bad spirits or angels, then he must admit, *it is not true*, that bad angels or lost spirits are not active here, because God will not permit them, thus directly to act in the affairs of men. But whatever Dr. Dwight may think; whether he receives these scriptures or not; the Spiritualists receive them all, and fully believe, they establish the fact, that bad angels or the spirits of bad men, can communicate with men in the material body, as well as good angels or the spirits of good men

The speaker thinks he has now maintained his proposition, namely, that Dr. Dwight, in the sermon under examination, has shown himself grossly ignorant in Siderial Astronomy, in Anthropology and in Biblical Science. This being the case, he is in no wise competent, to declare, that "nothing involving true science, acute discrimination, or practical knowledge, is ever imparted from the spirits," even if he has read all their books.

In tracing out this argument, to show the ignorance of Dr. Dwight in Biblical science, we have in an incidental manner, from the readings of the Bible, established the fact, that both good and evil spirits can and do communicate with men in the form. As to some of the modes of spiritual intercourse, it seems to the speaker, the subject is well nigh exhausted, and the argument full to repletion already.

If Dr. Dwight should attempt to turn this argument by insisting, that the good angels and evil angels did formerly communicate with men, in the times of the Scripture history, but that they cannot now, he is already answered. There is nothing laid down plainer in the Scriptures, than the unchangeableness of God and the Divine Law. If it was ever permitted in accordance with the



Divine Law, that good spirits and evil spirits should communicate with men in the material body, the same law permits it now. Moreover, as we have already seen, while in his earthly pilgrimage, Christ declared, that the spiritual gifts, then in the church, should continue to his disciples after his departure to the world of spirits; and that their power to exercise those gifts should increase; also that those gifts, then in the church, should continue to others, who should believe through the preaching of the gospel. And in point of fact, as we have before shown from Ecclesiastical History, they did continue in the church for about three hundred years after the crucifixion. The same is taught by the preacher, who says: "That, which hath been, is now; and that, which is to be, hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Eccl. iii. 15.) The past reproduces itself in the future. If the spiritual manifestations, recorded in the Bible, ever occurred, as there set forth, we had reason to expect similar manifestations again.

Having shown the incompetency of Dr. Dwight to declare, that "nothing involving true science, acute discrimination, or practical knowledge is ever imparted from the spirits;" we now frankly admit, that a very large proportion of the communications from the spirits, are of a low order, and except that they all alike speak the doctrine of a future life and immortality for every man in the same character he elaborates for himself here; they add nothing to true science or practical knowledge. And if it were not so, we could never believe, that the communications come from the departed spirits of men. How is it with men in this life? Nineteen-twentieths of them add nothing or next to nothing to true science or useful knowledge. As they go into the world of spirits, the same identical persons, they were here, in every respect, except the material body, we conclude, that very few of them, will be able to add anything to our stock of knowledge.

But while this is true of a large majority of the spirits, it is by no means true of all, as asserted by Dr. Dwight. In the month of May, 1855, a spirit, speaking through Miss Emma F. Jay, then in this city, gave three sermons of rare merit. One of these was upon the controverted text: "There are three, that bare record in heaven." For one, the speaker must say, that the peroration of that discourse, in which the Father was compared to the natural sun; the Son to the moon, that receives and reflects the light of the natural sun; and the Spirit to the infinitude of stars,

scattered through space ; was delivered in the sublimest strain of eloquence, that ever he heard from mortal lips. All the lectures, delivered through her organs in this city, have been extremely beautiful, and the speaker doubts not, extremely useful in advancing the cause of truth. The Rev. R. P. Ambler was employed here last autumn for ten weeks, and the discourses delivered through him, were highly artistic and finished. The language employed, in every instance, was ornate and chaste ; the logic consecutive and close ; and the manner of delivery, unsurpassed.

On the evening of the Sabbath, when Dr. Dwight delivered this discourse the first time, it was criticized and answered from the scientific plain, by a spirit through Miss A. W. Sprague, then in this city. This young lady, we understand, is only about twenty-five years of age. But in point of acute discrimination, close consecutive reasoning, and as a matter of pure science, this effort from the world of spirits, was, in our judgment, as much superior to the sermon under consideration, as a man is superior to a child. Has Dr. Dwight heard any of these performances ? If not, how then does he dare to condemn them, as unscientific or wanting in acute discrimination ? How does he fulfil that scripture, which commands us, to " Judge not, that we be not judged ? " How does he obey that scripture, which commands us " to try the spirits ? " How does he fulfil that other scripture, which commands us to " Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good ? "

So far as we have examined, the communications from the world of spirits, have been exceedingly rich in the poetical department. Three volumes of Poetry, dictated through the Rev. Thomas L. Harris, have been pronounced by competent judges, equal to the finest Poetry of the age. Wherever we open these volumes, and read a page, the Poetry seems to us exceedingly beautiful. Some other very valuable works have been dictated through Mr. Harris. From the best information we can obtain, the sermons spoken through him from week to week, are excellent ; burning and glowing with the rays of Divine Truth and Love. As a specimen of the Poetry from the world of spirits, we give the following from " The Lyric of the Morning Land," on page 82.

#### THE SONG OF JUPITER.

" I sit on my throne in the vastness of space,  
 " And I rule o'er my orb like a queen in her grace,  
 " And my children are sages with wisdom sublime,  
 " And my land is majestic, my language divine,  
 " For I chant as I roll through the infinite sky,  
 " And the Angels of Wisdom above me reply.



"The forms of my children are azure and gold,  
 "But their soul-life in vestures of purple they fold,  
 'For their robes correspond to their goodness and truth,  
 "With azure and gold are they clad in their youth,  
 "When the firmament sings to them out of its joy,  
 "And they find in the magic of Nature employ;  
 "Till working the Wisdom of God, the divine,  
 "Their robes become purple, and splendidly shine;  
 "Their sacred adornings bespeak their degree;  
 "In spirit the Infinite Spirit they see.

"I sit on my throne, and my children below  
 "With Love in the light of eternity glow;  
 "And like rainbows that span the great dome of the skies,  
 "Bespangled with rays that are fed from the eyes  
 "Of worlds filled with Angels, my Sphere-lands ascend,  
 "And into the light of the Infinite blend."

Nearly allied to the former statement, are the allegations, "that in all the published volumes, there is not one original and valuable thought;" and that "one proverb of King Solomon outweighs in value all these revelations." We would not disparage the Proverbs of Solomon. The Book of Proverbs contains a great many valuable truths, beautifully expressed. The Book, however, is not free from defects. Several of the proverbs are repeated a second time *verbatim et literatim* in the same Book. But these proverbs did not all originate with Solomon. They were the accumulated wisdom of ages. They do not all appear to be marked with equal wisdom. With regard to a few of them, if wisdom shines in them, it is not discernible by our intellectual vision.

Take an example, "The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes, the inward part of the belly." (Prov. xx, 30.) We are not able to perceive the wisdom of this, nor even the meaning of it. Take another: "Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; but if he be found, he shall restore seven-fold; he shall give all the substance of his house." (Prov. vi, 30, 31.) If he is so poor, that he has to steal to satisfy hunger, it seems probable to us, that he will not have any house nor much substance to put in one, and we do not see how, he can restore seven-fold, if he has not got it. If a man has to steal food, when he is hungry, it appears to us, that it must be to satisfy the wants of his body, rather than those of his soul. We cannot see the wisdom of this proverb.

Compare these with the three following proverbs, from "The

Healing of the Nations," dictated by a spirit through Charles Linton, found on page 239 :

98. "A violent, headlong Philanthropy, so termed, is a dangerous thing for man. It binds his spirit with the worst of passions, and in every action, thwarts that which true Philanthropy would accomplish.

99. "A slave to passion is a slave to ignorance and error, the worst and most debasing slavery on earth. All true freedom commences in the spirit of man, when the first ray of God's pure Love and of his Light falls upon him.

100. "If God be the only perfectly free, the Godlike must approach nearest freedom. There see thy task; strive to make men Godlike. All mankind are his children; hence thou canst be bound in thy sympathies by no sectional creed or influence without danger of losing thy inward power."

These three were selected at a venture, taking those on the right hand page, where we first opened the Book. To us they appear far more valuable than those we have quoted from Solomon. This whole Book, so far as we have read it, is filled with treasures of Divine Wisdom and Truth.

We close this lecture with a few lines from the spirit of Robert Burns, through the mediumship of Mr. Harris.

"Full oft we wake from weary dreams

"Of want and woe and scorning,

"When through window shine the beams

"Of sunrise in the morning.

"The dewy rose is fresh and sweet,

"The gay parterre adorning;

"And meadow daisies press our feet

"At sunrise in the morning.

"Though outward life is dark with dreams

"Of want and care and scorning,

"Thank God! it ends with Angel beams

"Of sunrise in the morning.

"Love's dewy roses open sweet,

"The heavenly sphere adorning,

"And death shall stoop to kiss our feet

"At sunrise in the morning."

"Then let us wake from idle dreams,

"No child of sorrow scorning,

"To scatter far the blessed beams

"Of sunrise in the morning.

"Then heart and soul shall blossom sweet,

"The Heaven of Love adorning;

"And we shall with the Savior meet

"At sunrise in the morning."



## LECTURE III.

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We commence with another specimen of Poetry from the World of Spirits, given through Rev. Thomas L. Harris. It will be found in the Epic of the Starry Heaven, on page 130.

“The second truth I must perforce declare  
“Is this : God ever worketh, everywhere,  
“And everywhere, from one Divine decree,  
“Urging all forms to one high destiny,  
“Shaping all things in wisdom from His will,—  
“And oh, how calm He works ! and oh, how still !  
“And works from centers outward to extremes,  
“Diffusing through all forms the tempered beams  
“Of love and wisdom perfect and divine,  
“Through them outworking through all space and time,  
“And everywhere outfashioning the same  
“Great purpose into being. His true name  
“Is Maker, for He works with master hand  
“In every sun and every grain of sand,  
“With perfect skill. His work is never done,  
“Or, being ended, is anew begun.”

On page 15, Dr. Dwight undertakes to state the pretensions of Spiritualism, and expresses himself shocked, because

“It professes to hold direct and constant intercourse with the Invisible World, or with the region of departed spirits.” He says : “Christians who have died in the Lord ; and reputable men of the world—together with murderers, drunkards, and harlots, who have not died in the Lord ;” “can at almost any time be brought into immediate communication with any persons who desire it.” “Primitive martyrs and Christ’s apostles may be thus summoned. Ancient prophets and patriarchs may be thus summoned.” &c  
“We are assured that at spiritual meetings which are now held in certain regions in Europe,—whether such blasphemies are yet practiced in our own country, we know not,—the Lord Jesus Christ is thus summoned and catechised ; and He communicates the desired information.”

It seems to the speaker, this representation betrays either great ignorance of the whole subject or great perversity of heart. No question, the spirits of the eminent men, who have lived in the past, may be summoned from the world of spirits : but whether they will obey the summons, is altogether another affair. Owen Glendower, the Welshman, one of the characters in Shakespeare's Henry IV., claimed, that he could "call spirits from the vasty deep." The fiery Hotspur Harry Percy freely admitted, that Glendower might call them, but begged leave to doubt, whether the spirits would come, when called.

As we understand it, intelligent Spiritualists do not believe, that the mere article of death works any change in the intellectual, affectional, and moral nature of man. They believe, that the tender-hearted, affectionate mother does not and cannot forget her children, nor lose her interest in them. They think it perfectly reasonable to believe, that this continued affection for her offspring, will beget in her bosom a desire to communicate with them, to teach them the immortal truth, that *she still lives* and in an improved condition, if such be the fact ; to show to them, that because she lives, they will live also ; and that they may again be united and once more occupy the same mansion in their Father's house in the Heavens. They believe this feeling of interest for her children is so strong, that she will resort to any means in her power to communicate this truth of the future life and immortality for man, if it be nothing more than to produce a rap on a table. On the testimony of a thousand facts stated in the Scriptures, and of millions of living witnesses, as well as of their own senses, the Spiritualists *know*, that under favorable circumstances, the mother may and does exercise this power.

But the Spiritualists also believe, in accordance with the doctrine of the Scriptures,<sup>1</sup> that the Heaven of the earth is upward ; that it is upward from every part of the earth, and consequently a hollow sphere concentric to the earth. They further believe, that the world of spirits, is a place of activity and progress ; that in accordance with that scripture, which commands us to be perfect, "even as our Father in Heaven is perfect," an opportunity is offered for perpetual progress towards the perfection of Deity ; and that as spirits increase in knowledge and virtue, they become more ethereal, and find their natural home or dwelling, correspondingly elevated in the Heavens.

In consequence of this law of their being, spirits gradually find it more and more difficult to descend through the lower and gross-



er strata, which are next to the earth. In a few years, all their near relations are removed by death. And when all their companions are transported to the world of spirits, and they find them in the Heavens, they become more and more attracted to the societies of Heaven, and lose their former desire to visit the earth and communicate with men in the material body. For these reasons, we think Spiritualists do not believe, that spirits often communicate with men upon earth, after they have been out of the material body for a period of two hundred years or more. They do not deny, that this can be done ; nor that it is sometimes done, especially by spirits, who have a strong desire for Missionary labor and reform. But they think it is not common.

There is no doubt, that "murderers, drunkards, and harlots" may become mediums for evil spirits, as readily as moral men and Christians can become mediums for good spirits. Mediumship depends upon a peculiar organization and the physical condition of the person. Every man, whether in the material world or in the spiritual world, is naturally attracted to the society of others who are like him. So if "murderers, drunkards, and harlots" can become mediums, the spirits of such persons can communicate through them. I am surprised that Dr. Dwight should doubt it. Why should not spiritual communications come through immoral men now, as well as in ancient days? David was a polygamist, an adulterer, and a murderer. Does Dr. Dwight deny, that he was a medium for spiritual communications? Solomon was a sensualist, an adulterer, and a polygamist. Does Dr. Dwight deny, that he was a medium for spiritual intercourse? Mary Magdalene has, by many, been supposed to have been a harlot. She was a medium for spiritual communications. Seven evil spirits took possession of her and made themselves manifest by communications. Why should not evil spirits or the spirits of evil men do the same thing now?

For our part, we do not believe, that Jesus Christ has communicated through any medium *directly* during the present century, though we do not pretend to know. If he should come to communicate, how would he be known? No living person would know him by his form, his voice, or his writing. No person could be induced to recollect by the relation of unpublished facts in his life, or by any peculiar marks, or idiosyncracies of character, for all these are unknown. So far as we can see, there could be nothing to identify his person. If the communication should be in any respect impure or immoral in its tendency, it would stand



self-condemned. If it should be found in perfect harmony with the Divine law, still it might come from some other intervening spirit. And the speaker would be inclined to regard it in that light.

But pray, what is there shocking or blasphemous in the idea, that Jesus Christ should communicate from the world of spirits? Does not Dr. Dwight go to the communion table monthly in the celebration of the last supper? Does he not profess in that act, to communicate with the spirit of Jesus Christ? If he does, how does he suppose Christ communicates with him? Can it be, that it is more objectionable, to converse with Christ or any other departed spirit, by writing, by the voice, or in any other form, than it is to hold communication by the less reliable mode of impression? When Christ came from the world of spirits to hold intercourse with his disciples before the ascension; and afterwards when he came and held intercourse with Saul of Tarsus; he did so by his spiritual voice, which was audible and understood by certain chosen mediums, who had their spiritual hearing opened; but which was not heard by others. If it is allowable for spirits to communicate from Hades by impression; it must be far more uncertain than communication by the voice or by writing; and if communication from the world of spirits by the voice or by writing, is blasphemous or wrong; intercourse by mere impression must be still more objectionable on account of its uncertainty.

As we have already seen, when Jesus Christ gave the Book of Revelation, John was the remote medium and was thrown into the state of trance, in the same manner as the trance mediums of the present day. But this Revelation was not communicated directly to John, but indirectly through an angelic and higher medium, who was the spirit of one of the prophets. When Jesus visited his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, he removed certain fishes to the shore, kindled a fire, and cooked them. If Jesus could and did after his death, while his disciples were still living in the body, visit them, open their spiritual hearing, and converse with them by spiritual voice; extemporize for them from surrounding matter, a thin, temporary, material form; throw one of them into a trance by the introduction of a third spirit; remove fishes from the sea of Tiberias, kindle a fire on the shore and cook them; if he can and does *now* visit Christians and communicate with them by impression at the celebration of the supper; no valid reason is perceived, why he may not visit them and communicate with them in other and more intelligent modes, if he chooses; nor why there should be anything wrong in his so doing.



We now come to the phenomena of Spiritualism. What are they? Dr. Dwight has given a very lean account of them, and as he denies them altogether, except so far as they are produced by some operator in Mesmerism still in the body, or by fraudulent tricks, the speaker prefers to state them himself. Spiritualism alleges, that departed spirits, under favorable circumstances, can and do communicate with men in the material body; that they can and do produce raps with or without contact; that they can and do move ponderous bodies with or without contact; that they can and do produce their own natural handwriting, with or without the use of the medium's hand; that they can and do produce their own handwriting with or without the medium's hand, in languages unknown to the medium and to all others present; that they can and do take possession of the medium, throw him into a trance, and utter through his organs, thoughts, of which he is incapable, and oftentimes in languages which he has never learned; that they can and do play on piano-fortes and other musical instruments, with or without the hands of the medium, beautiful music, which neither the medium nor any other person present ever heard; that they can and do, with or without the hand of the medium, prick off music unknown to all in the family, and *that*, whether the medium is a musician or not; that they can and do open the spiritual vision of seeing mediums, and exhibit their forms to such mediums, remaining still invisible to all others; that they can and do move small articles about the house without contact, and in sight of the medium, at the same time concealing such articles from all others present; that they can and do open the spiritual hearing of suitable mediums, and utter spiritual words, and make them audible to such mediums, which words cannot be heard by others though present; that they can and do produce the odic or spiritual light, and make it manifest to all present; that they can and do intervene to cure certain diseases, such as paralysis, rheumatism, neuralgia, fevers, scrofulous affections, and in some instances to restore sight to the blind; and that they can and do in rare instances produce the human voice.

The performers, who do these things, claim to be the spirits of deceased persons. They identify themselves in the most unmistakable manner, by exhibiting their spiritual forms to seeing mediums, (sometimes many mediums seeing the same spiritual form at the same time; ) by writing their own handwriting; by relating facts in their history long since forgotten by all present;



and other facts that none present ever knew ; by recitals of poetry, which they were accustomed to repeat, when living in the material body ; and sometimes by taking possession of the medium, and exhibiting in pantomime the motions and habits of body, to which they were accustomed while living here ; and sometimes the motions and habits of persons that were insane ; and sometimes speaking through the organs of the medium in a voice to imitate their own natural voice before death. To most of these facts we have millions of living witnesses. We have seen and observed them ourselves. To use the words of Jesus, "We speak that we do *know*, and testify that we have seen ; and ye receive not our witness." ( John iii. 11.)

This is the same testimony on which the Christian religion rests, multiplied a thousand-fold. "Him," says Peter speaking of Christ, "God raised up the third day, and showed him openly ; *not to all the people*, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he, who was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." ( Acts x. 40, 41, 42.)

The people were not able to see Jesus in his spiritual form, but were under the necessity of relying upon the testimony of the Apostles. Even the Apostles were not all of them sufficiently developed as mediums to see Jesus in the risen or spiritual state ; for we are informed by Matthew, that "the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him ; *but some doubted.*" ( Matthew xxviii. 16, 17.) It appears evident to us, that part of the eleven had not their spiritual vision sufficiently opened to see the spiritual form ; and that they did not themselves see Jesus ; and as they were unwilling to rely on the testimony of the others, *they doubted.* We think, if they had actually *seen* Jesus, they could not have doubted the evidence of their own senses.

Even those among the disciples, who were seeing mediums, could not see Jesus, till their spiritual vision was opened. This appears in the case of the two disciples, that were met by him on their way to Emmaus. The Evangelist writes : "Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were *holden*, that they should not know him." That is to say, after their spiritual vision had been partially opened, so as to enable them to discern the form of a man, their spiritual eyes were purposely "*holden*"



or kept in that state, partially opened, but not sufficiently, to enable them to distinguish the form of Jesus from that of a stranger. Their internal vision was held in that state of partial openness, until at supper, when Jesus "took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight." (Luke xxiv. 15, 16; 30, 31.) The same was the case with Mary Magdalene as recorded in John xx. 14. The same was true of the seven disciples, who met Jesus on the shore of the sea of Tiberias. (John xxi. 4.) It seems, that while at supper, Jesus fully opened the spiritual vision of the two disciples, that were on their way to Emmaus, for a moment, so that they knew him, and immediately closed it again, which made it appear, as though he vanished out of their sight. We have then the same kinds of manifestations and the same evidence of them, as the Jews had of those recorded in the Scriptures.

But it is inquired, if the speaker has been present and a witness to all the various kinds of manifestations himself. He has not; and he never witnessed any of those recorded in the Scriptures. He has heard the raps produced with contact and without contact. He has seen the table move with contact and also without contact. He has been present when writing has been produced without the use of the medium's hand. He has seen the proper handwriting of the spirit produced through the medium's hand, and has had it produced for him without the medium's hand in considerable quantity under a lock and key. He has seen a spirit produce his own handwriting through the hand of the medium in languages, which the medium did not understand nor any other person present except the speaker, and using a word, whose signification was at the time unknown to him. He has, in many instances, known mediums to be entranced by spirits, and has heard the medium speak in a language alike unknown to him and his auditors. He has seen the spiritual light produced. He has heard music produced on instruments without the aid of the medium's hand. Besides all this, he has clearly and distinctly seen the spiritual form of one departed friend in a few instances, himself, and also the forms of some others, imperfectly. But it is said, this is all "delusion," because it is contrary to Scripture.

We have an impression, that there is some mistake about this. It strikes us, that these facts are precisely in accordance with the spiritual manifestations of the Scriptures, and furnish the strongest evidence we have of the authenticity of those writings. Small



bodies, as hats, bonnets, shawls, watches, pencils, and carpet bags are now moved without being in contact with the medium. So was the axe, that was borrowed by one of the sons of the prophets, raised through the mediumship of Elisha without contact. (2 Kings vi. 6.) Large bodies, like piano-fortes are now moved without contact. So was the stone rolled away from the door of the sepulcher; and so were the walls of Jericho, thrown down without contact. Mr. Gordon a modern medium, was taken up and carried fifty feet by spiritual power without contact. So Philip, after baptising the eunuch, was caught away by the Spirit, and carried some part of the distance towards Azotus. (Acts. viii. 39.) Writings, in these days, have often been produced, without the hand of the medium, that is to say, by a spiritual hand. So in the palace of Belshazzar, there "came out the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." (Dan. v. 5.)

Though in the production of these modern writings without the hand of the medium, we are not aware of any case, where the spiritual hand has been seen, while producing the writing; yet such hands have often been seen, while playing on musical instruments, as well as on other occasions. Musical demonstrations without the hand of the medium in these days, are common. What is more remarkable, at the advent of Christ, a multitude of the heavenly host sang an anthem, saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men." (Luke ii. 14.) In these days, the odic or spiritual light has often been produced for a short space. What is more remarkable, if the account we have in Matthew, as it now stands, is to be received, at the birth of Christ, this light was produced and continued for a considerable period of time, and made to assume the appearance of a star in motion. (Mat. ii. 1-10.)

In these days, languages, which the medium had never learned, have frequently been produced, through his hand or voice. So on the day of Pentecost, the disciples of Christ, "were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 4.) In these days, seeing mediums are often permitted to see the spiritual forms of their friends, which are invisible to others, that are present. So the spiritual or risen form of Jesus, was seen by more or less of the disciples, "not by all the people," nor even by all the disciples, who were present when he manifested himself; but only by those



whose spiritual vision was opened, and the rest were obliged to rely upon their testimony. In these days, mediums, whose spiritual hearing is opened, often hear sounds, that are inaudible to others, that are present. So when Jesus met Saul on his way to Damascus, and spoke spiritual words to him, those, who journeyed with him "heard not the voice," because their spiritual hearing was not opened. (Acts xxii. 9.) We have an account of a child, that was recently cured of a fever in answer to the prayer of the mother, the fever leaving the child one side at a time. So it is related in the Gospel, that Jesus cured Simon's wife's mother by a simple touch. (Mat. viii. 15.) We have a recent account of a person blind for twenty years, whose sight was restored by the laying on of hands. In the Gospel we are informed, that Jesus gave sight to one, who was born blind, by means equally simple. (John ix. 1-7.) But why do I proceed? Is it not evident, that all the spiritual manifestations of this age, are analogous to those recorded in the Scriptures and produced by similar means?

But it is alleged, that Animal Magnetism accounts for all of these manifestations, which are real. Animal Magnetism is curiously described in this sermon. It is called,

"An influence or element, in some respects, resembling electricity and natural magnetism, and in others independent of both; an influence or element partly physical, and partly pertaining to the human body, in which in different persons, it exists in different degrees."

"*It is partly physical and partly pertaining to the human body,*" says Dr. Dwight. So then, what pertains to the human body, according to Dr. Dwight, we are to understand, *is not physical or natural*; and what is "physical" or natural, *cannot pertain to the human body*. Really Dr. Dwight shows himself as completely ignorant of the meaning of the word "*physical*," as he is destitute of all true knowledge of Human Magnetism, Siderial Astronomy, or Biblical Science.

He ought to know, if he undertakes to instruct others, that Practical Psychology or Mesmerism is the actual communion between two spirits, while both are in the body. He ought to know, that ordinary experiments in Mesmerism, require two parties, a subject or medium and an operator. He ought to know, that the operator establishes the spiritual communication by means of his will; and that consequently, if his soul and spirit survive the process of death, no good reason can be assigned, why the opera-



tor in Mesmerism, should not retain all his Mesmeric power, and even find it increased by throwing off his external body. This is what we find to be the fact. And this is the way, in which the phenomena of Spiritualism are produced.

But no operator in Mesmerism, while in the material body, has been able to produce any of the higher phenomena of Spiritualism. The operator in Mesmerism, is able to throw his subject or medium into a trance; to control him in most cases at will; to deceive his senses; to present to him imaginary pictures and induce him to receive them as real. But so far as we can learn, no operator in ordinary Mesmerism, from the beginning of the world, has ever been able to produce a *real* rap without contact; to move a table without contact; to induce the medium to speak or write in any language, which was alike unknown to the medium and the operator; or to conceal present material objects from the vision of all others present, while the subject or medium is permitted to see them. These and many others of the phenomena of Spiritualism, are a higher branch of the art, which the operator in Mesmerism, cannot produce by the power of his will, until after he passes into the spiritual world.

The operator in Mesmerism, when he is freed from his external body, and becomes a free spirit, if he can find a medium, through whose organization he can freely work and upon which he can act as a lever, by his Mesmeric or will power, can produce the raps; move the table; and take up the pen and write in the same manner, as the speaker can, by the power of his will through his own organism. He can write through the hand of the medium or without it, in any language, which he understands, in the same manner, he formerly could through his own bodily organs. He can enter into the medium and express himself and speak in any language, which he understands, provided he has perfect control of his subject, in the same manner, as the speaker can through his own organs. In order to obtain spiritual manifestations, it is never necessary to have any Mesmeric operator present. When such operators with a strong will, are present, they have power, in some degree, to counteract the will of a spiritual operator. But the finest spiritual manifestations are obtained, when only one, two, or three are present, and when all present are mediums.

But if all the spiritual manifestations of the present day, are produced by Mesmeric operators in the body; then, no doubt, all those, recorded in the Scriptures, were produced in the same way; for they appear to be entirely similar. If piano-fortes, are now



taken up from the floor by ordinary Mesmerism and without contact; then the walls of Jericho were pulled down by the same means. If writing, without the medium's hand, is now produced by human Magnetism or ordinary Mesmerism; then the writing in Belshazzar's palace, was produced in the same manner. If spiritual hands are all now produced by ordinary Mesmerism; then the hand seen by Belshazzar, was produced in the same way. If the ward of the lock is thrown back, and the bolted door opened by ordinary Mesmerism in this age; then Peter was brought out of prison by the same means. If the spiritual mediums, in all cases, now see the spiritual forms of their deceased friends by ordinary Mesmerism; then all the manifestations of the form of Jesus to his disciples, were produced in the same manner. If spiritual mediums in all cases, hear spiritual sounds by ordinary Mesmerism in these days; then the disciples heard the voice of Jesus, after his death in the same way. Then we have no reliable evidence, that Jesus ever *rose out* of the dead. And so I might say of all the spiritual manifestations recorded in the Scriptures. Then is our faith vain, and Christianity a fable.

Mesmerism is only one branch of the infinite system of Spiritualism. Mesmerism is wholly confined to that intercourse, which may be established between two human spirits, while both still reside in their material bodies. Spiritualism regards all that intercourse, which exists or may be established between any two spirits in the universe; whether they are both human spirits or not; whether they are both in the body or not; whether they are both equally elevated; or whether one is the Deity, and the other one of the lowest spirits, that has been organized by His power. Spiritualism explains the origin of the doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls; it shows the mode, in which nearly every system of idolatry was introduced into the world; it is a key to unlock all the dark volumes of Ancient History and Mythology, and furnishes a scientific basis for all true religion.

Dr. Dwight next attempts to cast ridicule upon the Spiritualists, because they have avoided the odious system of taxing pews; because some of their lecturers have been paid by the ticket system, in the same manner as the lecturers of our Lyceums; and because they work too cheap. This is small business; we cannot descend to it. The Spiritualists believe in the continual improvement of the human race. President Lord of Dartmouth College, came here to give a lecture "Upon the other side,"—to show that



man is retrograding — going back to the brute. Suppose the speaker should say, that President Lord made a public exhibition of his dark and chilling doctrines, “like those of a theatre or travelling menagerie, to all spectators,” who would pay twenty-five cents a head; what would be thought of his regard for good breeding?

For ourselves we have never received anything for lectures. We think no person can complain, that this is a deviation from the example of Jesus Christ. And we further believe, if Dr. Dwight carefully examines the subject, he will find, that those who receive the least compensation, in that respect, copy most nearly the example of Jesus, the great pattern. Though we have never received any thing for lectures ourselves, we are aware, that the laborer is worthy of his hire; and we have always been ready to contribute our full share, to pay others for lectures or sermons.

The scheme of taxing pews, was invented by men of wealth, to enable them to avoid paying their share of the expense of religious instruction. The only just mode of taxation for the ministration of the word, is to assess a tax upon all in a Parish, according to their polls and estates, in the same manner, as is done for the purposes of government. Under the system of taxing pews, the poor widow must pay as much as the man of wealth, who is worth two hundred thousand dollars. This is so, if the privileges are equal. But this gross injustice does not fully expose the iniquity of the system. The men of wealth are generally efficient in building houses for worship, and are able to obtain the best pews, and to fix their own valuation upon them. For the purpose of taxation, they are generally able to fix and maintain a valuation upon the poorer pews, far above their proportionate value.

If any thing is said about correcting the valuation, they forthwith declare, that a new valuation of the pews, will break up the Parish;—the plain meaning of which is, that if they cannot have the best pews, without paying a tax justly proportionate, they will do nothing to support the preaching of the Gospel. The speaker has himself known a case in this city, where pews, that were not worth a cent, were valued for taxation, as high within ten per cent. as the best in the house; and yet the valuation could not be corrected, because it was alleged by men of wealth, that a change in the valuation, would break up the Parish. He has known another case in this city, where a female and member of the church, who was under the necessity of laboring for her bread, refrained from constant attendance on public worship, because she felt unable to



pay the tax of five dollars upon a seat, without depriving herself of articles necessary for her bodily comfort.

The speaker understands, that the Spiritualists, who first established public worship in this city on the sabbath, were few in number; under the ban of the church; and without wealth. They were unable to pay for lectures by subscription. They had no legal organization and could not levy an equal tax upon property. They had no pews to tax and would not tax them, if they had. We are aware, that the support of lecturers by the ticket system, is not free from objection; but think it is not so odious, as that by the taxation of pews, by which we understand, Dr. Dwight receives his support.

It is asserted in the sermon, that

“These very practices [the practice of holding intercourse with departed spirits] under other names, are sternly rebuked and condemned in the Old Testament.”

If this were true, it would raise no presumption against Spiritualism. Many things are prohibited in the writings of Moses, which are not contrary to the Divine law; and many others are allowed, which are contrary to it. In the law of Moses, are found the following commands: “Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds; lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.” “Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together.” “Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture.” (Deut. xxii. 9, 11, 12.) “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” (Ex. xxii. 18.) These statutes, *on their face*, are in no respect based upon the Divine law. The last one is directly contrary to that precept which declares: “Thou shalt not kill.” (Ex. xx. 13.)

The law of Moses prohibited the gathering of sticks on the Sabbath day under the penalty of death. (Num. xv. 32–36.) This statute, *on its face*, was also directly contrary to the Divine law. Jesus taught, that the Sabbath was made for man; that it was lawful to do well on the Sabbath day; to save life and not to kill; to travel for useful purposes; to heal the sick; to rub out the standing corn and eat it, when hungry; and to do any other work of charity. All this he taught and practiced, justifying himself from the known fact, that his Father worked constantly and just as constantly on the Sabbath as on any other day. (John v. 17; Mark ii. 23–27; Luke vi. 9; xiii. 15.

On the other hand, many things were permitted by the writings of Moses, that were directly contrary to the Divine law. The Mosaic code permitted divorces for frivolous and fanciful causes. (Deut. xxiv. 1.) Christ declares, that this was contrary to the Divine law. "Moses, because of the hardness of your heart, suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." (Mat. xix. 3-10.) The Jews were prohibited from eating anything that dieth of itself, as unhealthy; but were allowed to give it to a stranger, or to sell it to a foreigner. "Ye shall not eat of any thing, that dieth of itself; thou shalt give it unto the stranger, that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien." (Deut. xiv. 21.) They were allowed to take usury to an unlimited extent from foreigners; but were prohibited from receiving any interest from those of their own nation. "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother, thou shalt not lend upon usury." (Deut. xxiii. 20.)

These statutes making odious distinctions of injustice against strangers and foreigners, *on their face*, are directly contrary to the Divine law. "God is no respecter of persons." Peter was entranced by a spirit, and a beautiful allegorical picture presented before his mind, to teach him, that God had no more regard for the Jews, than he had for the surrounding Gentiles. (Acts x. 10-35.) The parable of the good Samaritan was given to teach us, that God has no regard to persons or nations, but only to genuine goodness. (Luke x. 30-37.) The scriptures, declaring the Divine injunction, that we should not respect persons; but should regard the stranger as ourselves; are numerous. (James ii. 1-9: Ex. xxii. 21; xxiii. 9; Lev. xix. 15, 33, 34; xxiv. 22; Deut. i. 17; xvi. 19.)

In Genesis we find the following:

"And it came to pass, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: And he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains, which I will tell thee of." (Gen. xxii. 1-21.)

In its *literal sense*, this passage is directly contrary to the Divine law, and unless understood in an *allegorical or spiritual* sense, it cannot be Divine. In its *literal sense*, it comes directly into conflict with three principles of the Divine law. First, That human life is sacred and we have no right to kill. (Ex. xx. 13; Luke ix. 54, 56.) Secondly, That God tempts no man. (James i. 13.)



Thirdly, That God requires no sacrifices. (Hosea vi. 5 ; Mat. ix. 13 ; xii. 7 ; Isa. i. 13.)

So if intercourse with departed spirits, was prohibited by the Old Testament, that circumstance would furnish no presumption, that it was wrong. Again, if in the Old Testament, God prohibited this intercourse, it must have been, because it was real. He never could have been so destitute of wisdom, as to prohibit what was not possible. Solon, the Legislator of Athens, was wiser than this. History relates, that in his code, he refused to provide any punishment for parricide, because he would not seem to recognize the fact, that it was possible for any man to kill his own father.

In order to show, that all intercourse with departed spirits, was prohibited in the Old Testament, Dr. Dwight cites two texts to wit : Deut. xviii. 10, 11, 12 ; and Isa. viii. 19. Both texts are *in pari materia*, — (upon the same matter.) The former covers all the ground ; so it will not be necessary to allude to the latter. In citing this text, several of the practices, which are named and prohibited therein, are omitted by Dr. Dwight. The whole text reads as follows :

“There shall not be found among you any one, that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord.”

Every book must be interpreted so as to be in harmony with itself. It cannot be supposed, that by this passage, Moses intended to prohibit all intercourse with the world of spirits, for he practiced it himself. As already seen, he received a spiritual message of extraordinary interest from an angel of the Lord in the burning bush. Upon this message he acted, and it was the means of changing the whole course of his life and fortune. This angel assisted him in the performance of the wonderful works, that he was permitted to do before Pharaoh, in the land of Ham, and by the Red Sea. He went before the children of Israel in a pillar of a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, during their journey through the wilderness to the land of promise.

If we may trust to the interpretations of Stephen as reported by Luke, of Paul, and of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews ; Moses was in constant intercourse with spirits, and the whole of the Mosaic law was dictated by angels. In the discourse of Stephen to the Jews, which provoked them to stone him to death, he



charged upon them, that they had “received the law *by the disposition of angels* and had not kept it.” (Acts vii. 53.) Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, says : “The law was *ordained of angels* in the hand of a mediator.” (Gal. iii. 19.) And the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of the law as well as the revelations, that had been previously made to the patriarchs, says : “For if *the word spoken by angels* was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation ?” (Heb. ii. 2, 3.)

Bearing in mind, that Moses was in the constant practice of intercourse with departed spirits himself : and that from the character of the communications he received, we may infer, that they were the spirits of his ancestors or of the earlier Jews ; let us examine the passage in Deuteronomy, and see if we can extract the meaning. We give to each word, except “necromancer,” the definition or paraphrase of the learned Hebrew scholar Dr. Adam Clarke, thus : *To pass through the fire* ;—“Probably in the way of consecration to Molech or some other deity :” *Divination* ;—“One who endeavors to find out futurity by auguries :” *Observer of times* ;—“One who pretends to foretell future events by present occurrences, and who predicts great political or physical changes from the aspects of the planets, eclipses, or motions of the clouds :” *Enchanters* ;—“One who inspected the entrails of beasts, and observed the flight of birds and thence drew auguries :” *A witch* ;—“Probably those who by means of drugs, perfumes, &c., pretended to bring certain celestial influences to their aid :” *A charmer* ;—“One who uses spells as tying knots for divination :” *A consulter with familiar spirits* ;—“One who inquires by the means of one spirit, to get oracular answers from another of a superior order :” *A wizard* ;—“A knowing one—was formerly considered the masculine of witch, both practicing divination by similar means.” These definitions we take from Dr. Adam Clarke. We take the definition of “necromancer” from Dr. Dwight himself. He says, “It means those impostors among the ancient Israelites, *who pretended*, that they were able to summon back departed spirits, and thus to reveal the knowledge of the future.”

The practice of causing children to pass through the fire to Moloch was heathenish, idolatrous, and cruel. We know also, that the Heathen observed the flight of birds ; inspected the entrails of beasts ; watched the planets, eclipses, and the clouds for the purpose of augury and divination ; also that they used drugs, per-



fumes, and spells for the same purpose. In most of these modes, no revelations could ever be obtained ; and in fact by none of them could revelations ever be obtained, except by the use of drugs, and these were exceedingly injurious to the health of the mediums. By those, who consulted familiar spirits, we understand those who, neglecting the rule of the Apostle John, "to try the spirits," kept up constant intercourse with low, inferior, or evil spirits. Moses prohibited the heathenish practice of causing children to pass through the fire to Moloch ; and we think it was an object with him, to avoid every custom and practice of the nations around ; and to that end, to prohibit them from holding intercourse with the spirits of the Heathen, lest they should thereby be led to adopt their other practices, and especially their system of idolatry.

We know, that the Jews were very tenacious of their rights, as citizens, as well as exclusive and intolerant of foreigners and foreign customs. Taking the whole passage together, we think the purpose of it was to prohibit the Jews from idolatry ; from sacrificing their children to Moloch ; from holding intercourse with the spirits of foreigners ; from holding intercourse with low, inferior, or evil spirits ; from consulting mediums, who used drugs ; and those who were impostors and pretended to be mediums, when they were not such in fact. Surely it never could have been intended to prohibit intercourse with good and pure spirits from the angelic world ; because not only Moses, but Jesus, and all the patriarchs, and prophets were in constant exercise of this very practice.

It is asserted in the sermon, that

"They who did this [sought unto the spirits of the dead] were, by God's own appointment, as the Pentateuch informs us, to be capitally punished, as traitors to God, the theocratic sovereign of the nation. That punishment indeed ceased, and properly with the final overthrow of idolatry among the Jewish people."

It is true, that witchcraft and practice with familiar spirits, were prohibited under the penalty of death. "A man also, or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death : they shall stone them with stones." (Lev. xx. 27.) In like manner witchcraft was prohibited under the penalty of death throughout Europe until a very recent period ; also in England, and in the United States—then colonies, until the year 1736. But all these statutes were barbarous. On their *face*, they are directly contrary to the Divine law ; and unless Dr.

Dwight can show, that the prohibition, cited from Moses, *has a spiritual sense under the letter*, as asserted by Swedenborg, it will be very difficult for him to show, that it ever came from God at all. It has already been seen, that God, in his Divine law, regards human life as sacred, and prohibits man from taking it under any pretence. It may here be added, that Christ represented the Mosaic law, which inflicted capital punishment by stoning upon the adulteress, as by no means Divine, but barbarous and unreasonably severe. (John viii. 3-11.) But if the law, for inflicting capital punishment upon the crime of witchcraft, ever came from God at all, there can be no doubt, it is in full force *now, and among all nations*. No part of the Divine law has ever been repealed. We challenge Dr. Dwight to show proof, that any part of the law of God, has ever been abrogated.

Again Dr. Dwight alleges, that

“It is not hyperbole but literal verity, when he affirms that its spirit [the spirit of Spiritualism] is anti-Christian and heathenish.”

He further declares, that the worship of the Spiritualists is not given

“To the Jehovah of the Bible, for Spiritualism has disowned His authority over the invisible world.”

Again he asserts, that

“Another deity is then worshipped, [by the Spiritualists] whose name has never yet been heard of in heaven or hell, a deity whom the universe knows not, the God of Spiritualism.”

He further asserts, that, as indispensable to the general prevalence of Spiritualism in New England,

“The three thousand temples, which have been consecrated to the God of the Bible, must have been first closed; the Saviour whom it reveals, must have given place—as the Great Teacher of mankind—to Andrew Jackson Davis, to John W. Edmonds, and to Robert Hare, and the Bible itself have become an obsolete volume, except to a few superannuated believers.”

No, Dr. Dwight, you entirely misunderstand Spiritualism and the Spiritualists. They will never pin their faith upon Andrew Jackson Davis, nor Judge Edmonds, nor Dr. Hare, nor any other man. Having become emancipated from the dark and dismal creeds of men, in which they were educated, they will be in no hurry to go into bondage again to any creed, that has been or may hereafter be formed by any other man or any departed spirit. If they find anything in their works, which seems to them, to be



in accordance with truth, they will receive it. All the rest they will reject. They believe with Paul, that the Divine law is written in the hearts of all men ; (Rom. ii. 13—15.) and with John, that the light of Divine Wisdom shines for every man that comes into the world ; (John i. 9.) and they will be guided by that law and that light.

Dr. Dwight has made severe charges against the Spiritualists, but not severer than the charges, which the Jewish Doctors brought against Jesus. Suppose *we* should assert, that Dr. Dwight was a heathen and an infidel ; that he had renounced the entire Bible and the God of the Bible ; that he did not worship the Jehovah of the Bible ; for his system had disowned His authority over the invisible world ; that he had set up and worshipped another deity, unknown to the universe, whose name had never yet been heard of in heaven or hell, the God of Calvinism ; what would he think of it ? We think we have shown, that he has misrepresented nearly every passage, he has quoted from the Bible, and that we have far more cause to make these assertions of him, than he had to make the assertions he did in his sermon against the Spiritualists. But we shall not do it. The speaker was formerly laboring under the same delusions himself. He received the same system of doctrines, as Dr. Dwight now receives. He received them honestly and sincerely. He has no reason to denounce Dr. Dwight, nor to assert, that he does not honestly and sincerely receive the system of doctrines, which he teaches, and he will not make any such assertion ; but will give thanks for that truth, which has wrought out for the speaker his own personal deliverance.

Before closing this reply, it is necessary for us to give a summary of the doctrines, which we suppose, the Spiritualists generally receive, though we can only speak for ourselves.

I believe in one God, and that God exists in one person ; that the universe is filled with an immense ocean of life or spirit, which is the body of God ; that in this ocean of spirit dwells an infinite mind, which is the Divine mind ; that as God fills the universe, He is invisible, always has been invisible, and from the nature of the case, must always remain invisible ; that God is the Framers of all worlds, the Father of all men, and the Author of all other beings ; that his power, wisdom, and goodness are adequate to this great end—that is infinite ; that God and all His laws are unchangeable ; that all His ways are infinitely just and true ; that all men are composed of three parts at least, viz :



matter or dust, spirit or life, and soul or mind ; that the earth is the mother of all men ; that all men, as to their external or material bodies, partake of their mother earth, and are earthy ; that all men, as to their spirits and souls, partake of the nature of their father, and are Divine ; that death is a separation of the soul and organized spirit from the material body and unorganized spirit : that at death, the external body of man, again mingles with the common mass of the earth, never more to be reclaimed or needed by the man, who gives it up ; that the soul and spirit survive the shock of death, and that in them man is immortal ; that the spirit of man is in the same form as his external body possesses, when complete and without mutilation ; that after death and the resurrection, this spirit constitutes man's spiritual body ; that it has senses correspondent to all of the external senses, which for the most part remain dormant in the present state of being ; that in the present life, these senses are sometimes opened more or less perfectly, as in cases of Mesmerism and in some cases of Spiritualism *proper* ; that at death, the real man, that is to say, his soul and spirit rise *from or out of* his dead body ; that in the New Testament, this is denominated *Ἀνάστασις* or the resurrection ; that death works no change in the intellectual, affectional, spiritual, and moral nature of man ; that locally the world of spirits is a hollow sphere concentric to the earth, and extending out indefinitely into space in every direction ; that in order to give man an opportunity for the highest state of happiness of which he is capable, God made him free to choose the best good ; that this freedom necessarily gave him the power to reject good and to choose evil ; that the highest state of happiness, possible for man, consists in living in perfect conformity to the Divine law ; that after God had conferred on man the power to choose evil or good, it was not possible for Him even, according to his plan, to prevent the introduction of moral evil into the world ; that man, having within him the power so to do, introduced moral evil into the world by violating the Divine law, or committed sin ; that the Divine law is so constituted, that evil or sin works its own appropriate punishment ; that man, having violated the Divine law, became unhappy, just in proportion to the nature and extent of that violation ; that when by violation of the Divine law, man becomes unhappy, in order to restore him to happiness, it is necessary, that he should be regenerated or reformed, and be brought again to act in conformity with the Divine law ; that he will become happy again, just in proportion



as he is led to conform to that law ; that the instrumentality of regeneration or reformation, is the Divine Truth, leading men to conform their lives to the Divine law, by the performance of every duty ; that God requires of man perfect conformity to the Divine law, and that in all worlds, an opportunity is given him for progress and improvement ; that God does not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men, nor punish any vindictively ; that in all the universe of God, it is a law, that whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap ; that on account of the ignorance of men in the world generally, in relation to the Divine law, it became necessary, that they should have a more elevated Teacher ; that Jesus Christ was sent from God, as a special messenger, to proclaim the truths of the Divine law to mankind ; that in his doctrines, as recorded in the Evangelists, are found the most perfect written revelations of that law ; that God requires no sacrifices ; that the angels of the spiritual world appertaining to the earth, are the spirits of men ; that intercourse may be established between the spirits of two men, while both remain in the body, which is a branch of Spiritualism, commonly called Mesmerism ; that the spirits of two angels in the world of spirits may communicate with each other in that world ; that God may communicate with the angels of that world, and that these are other branches of Spiritualism ; that angels from the world of spirits, can and do communicate with the spirits of men in the body. This is what is more commonly called Spiritualism. On the proof of this, is founded the certainty of man's future life and immortality.

This is the Theory. But the actual measure of every man's religion, is the amount of good he does in the world. I believe that all these doctrines are in perfect harmony with the teachings of Jesus ; but that it is my duty to give up any one of them, the moment I discover it to be erroneous. If to embrace these doctrines, is to renounce the entire Bible and the God of the Bible, then am I guilty. But if these doctrines are in perfect harmony with the doctrines of Jesus Christ, then how stands Dr. Dwight ?

NOTE.—Some of the Spiritualists have thought the matter in these lectures upon Siderial Astronomy and the iniquity of the system of taxing pews, might have been omitted. But they should remember, that the lectures were given, at the request of the President, *as a reply to the sermon of Dr. Dwight*, and not wholly nor merely as a defence of Spiritualism. Although these subjects had no reference to Spiritualism, they were strictly germane to the sermon, and pertinent in the reply.

If it had been our purpose to furnish a complete defence of Spiritualism; to remove all objections that stand in the way of doubters; to enunciate, explain, classify, and arrange all the phenomena; to compare and identify the same, with the phenomena of like kind, recorded in Ancient History,—Sacred and Profane; to erect upon the science a system of morality correspondent thereto: our lectures would have been many, and would have filled two volumes of five hundred pages each, and perhaps more.

To Spiritualists such a work, would seem unnecessary. Various works upon these subjects have been published; and to those works no valid answer has been given. But although the rapidity of the reformation has been unprecedented in the history of the world, such a work might be useful. The great majority of the people still remain in darkness and doubt, and unless enlightened, *will, "through fear of death," remain "all their lifetime subject to bondage."* They need "*precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little and there a little.*" Although numerous valuable works upon different branches of the subject have been published, there is no single work, which covers the whole ground.

There have been witnessed in this city, phenomena more interesting for the basis of such a work, in our judgment, than any which have been recorded in any publication we have seen. If we could have been allowed to use the evidence, we should have commenced such a work more than two years ago. At that time private and special reasons precluded us from using the testimony. Those private reasons still stand in our way. Whether they will ever be removed is uncertain.

Some Spiritualists have expressed a fear, that we have attached too much importance to this sermon, and wasted too much ink upon it. We think not. They think there is no merit in the sermon. Very well; they should look at the position of Dr. Dwight. He is a Doctor of Divinity. He stands as one of the first of his Denomination in New England. His parishioners thought so highly of the sermon, that they induced him to repeat it. The house was filled to overflowing, and hundreds were unable to obtain admission. We think the Dr. stands as the representative of three-quarters of all the Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists and Episcopalians in the State; and if this is so, then the sermon deserved a complete answer.