

Spiritual Telegraph Tract—No. 1.

SPIRITUALISM:
ITS PHENOMENA AND SIGNIFICANCE.

AN ESSAY READ, BY INVITATION, BEFORE THE NEW YORK CHRISTIAN
UNION, ON TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 22, 1857,

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Together with a Report of an Ensuing Discussion on the Subject.

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SPIRITUALISM;

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AN ESSAY, BY CHARLES PARTRIDGE.

Delivered in response to an invitation of the New York Christian Union, in Clinton Hall, on Tuesday evening, December 22, 1857.

The attendance was large—fully equal to the capacity of the room. The number of persons present, the intelligence and attention manifested during the hour and a half the lecture was being delivered, evince a growing interest in the subject of Spiritualism, and a wider toleration by the Church and people.

Agreeably to the custom of the Association, a discussion of the subject followed the essay, in which the members and clergymen present participated, which continued in a kind, Christian spirit until a late hour, when the general interest to hear and speak on the subject had become so manifest that a motion to adjourn for one week, and continue the discussion on Tuesday evening, 29th, in the same place, was carried unanimously.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

I appear before you to respond to an invitation from the *New York Christian Union*, to read an essay on what is called *Spiritualism, its Phenomena and Significance*.

I am the more pleased to respond to your invitation, because I feel that it comes from a *union* of different religious denominations, characterized by an unusual degree of toleration, and inspired with a righteous endeavor to fraternize and unitize the different sects of Christendom. Let us, then, friends, I beseech you, lay aside all fears, favors, fashions, popularity, superstition, sectarianism, and *all* merely conventional authority, that we may

spend the hour in deep, earnest investigation for *truth*, and meditation on the more stern realities of our being.

All religion has for its basis spiritual manifestations. Sectarianism is based on different fragments of spiritual phenomena. While most phenomena change with unfolding nature, their significance to man in all climes and times must depend, in a great degree, on his observations and his moral and mental state. The significance of words likewise changes with accumulative knowledge.

The scientist investigates man with cleaver, scales, alkalies, acids and crucibles in hand, reduces him to simple elements—carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, etc.—which constitute, with physical science, the interpretation—the *all*—of man. The Spiritualist goes a step farther, and daguerreotypes him, notes his history, his activities, his peculiarity of thought and expression, and observes him moving out of earthly temples, where they are invaded by disease or the rude hand and appliances of material scientists. He sees him in an attenuated human form, rising out of and above the dissolving body, floating off in the more ethereal elements.

Think you, friends, that this *body* presumes to edify you on this occasion? If so, a mummy might serve you as well. Think you these lips originate the thought they convey to you? *No*, friends, but within this ever-changing form I stand unseen, and use it as my present medium of communion with you and external nature. If observation and science be true, this receptive, diffusive, perceptive, living, conscious, thinking, active, speaking energy and entity, signified by *you*, *me*, or *man*, never used this medium, this body, in its entirety, until this moment, and never shall be permitted to so use it again. We all move and speak out from amidst the crumbling tabernacles in which we dwell, and every seven years' cycle finds us in new houses newly furnished, swept and garnished. Most of us have changed this *man* of science, the body, several times during our earthly pilgrimage; but who supposes the *man*—the *spiritual man*—is so changed? And if not, we claim that its surviving these changes to which I allude is a prophecy that we, the inter-

nal, the spiritual man, will survive the entire dissolution of these earthly bodies. The internal Spirit—the resident God in all nature—the real man—the ME of humanity—ever manifests itself through what is relatively called physical nature.

Ladies and gentlemen, by the evolutions of nature we have been cast upon this outer *stratum* of physical existence—this rim of life where conscious Spirit and matter blend—where physical life ends and Spirit-life begins, whose rock-bound shores the *man*, the *Spirit*, in quick succession bursts, and launches into the more ethereal sea of spiritual existence.

We assume that human knowledge comes by observation, and consequently human beings have existed on this or other planets at a time when there were no Spirits to manifest themselves, and there could have been no belief or knowledge of an existence for man beyond the dissolution of his body. We assume, farther, that man must have observed during a long period of human existence, before he discovered and adopted modes of making and preserving a history of his observations and life to transmit to posterity; and that when all things are new, each is to the observer equally important.

Hence it is reasonable to suppose that human history would commence, as we find it, with simple affirmations of traditions and appearances, rather than evidences of realities. We affirm that mankind to-day are more capable of rightly observing, discriminating and comprehending phenomena than at any other period of human existence; and it is not only our privilege, but our duty, to observe all phenomena, compare the past with the present, and interpret them—not according to the traditions, ignorance, superstitions or duplicity of the past, but—in consonance with the revelations of nature, universal reason and unfolding analogies.

Now, friends, I invite you to traverse with me, so far as we are able, the world's history, and briefly note the evidences which tend to elucidate and interpret spiritual phenomena.

We learn by the Sanscrit writings, that tribes of Central Asia made oblations to the departed, and performed, twice a year, obsequial rites in honor of them. It is now admitted by Orien-

talists, both among the clergy and laity, that these writings are anterior to any part of our Bible.

The learned Higgins, in his "Anacalypsis" (vol. I. page 387), proves, beyond any doubt, that Abraham was originally a Brahmin who, refusing to worship the Female Principle in the Godhead, emigrated from Ur of the Chaldees (1922 B. C.), to Haran, in Assyria; from Haran (1921 B. C.) to Canaan or Phœnecia, and thence (1920 B. C.) to Egypt, because of a famine. He was the Hindoo Protestant who would not worship Abaia, the Queen of Heaven, or the Hindoo Virgin Mary. Like the Pilgrim Fathers, he went westward and sought freedom to worship his God. Thus the westward tide of empire rolled two thousand years before Christ.

Higgins farther proves (p. 389 and 592) that Ur of the Chaldees was in India, and is the same as the district on the river Jumna, now called Uri or Ur. He is corroborated in these assertions by other sources of authority.

History teaches that Nimrod founded the Assyrian empire (2233 B. C.), that Mizraim founded the Egyptian (2188 B. C.), and that Phœnecia, (with the Cadmian and sixteen letter alphabet) must have been a pretty well civilized country when the Hindoo Apostle visited it.

That the Chaldeans, or Assyrians and Phœnecians believed in Spirit-intercourse with mortals, is so well established, that Copland, in his Medical Dictionary, page 524, devotes a paragraph to it. He there states that the Chaldeans and Phœnecians believed that insanity proceeded from demons or evil Spirits. The ancient Egyptians believed that the Spirits of the deceased were translated to, and shining from, the stars. Hence we conclude that the belief in the Spirits of the departed, and in their intercourse with mortals, was anterior to, and coeval with, Abraham, and that he was imbued not only with the ideas of his own native countrymen, but with those of the Assyrians, Phœnecians and Egyptians, whose countries he visited. These ideas he must have transmitted, in a measure, to his posterity, who to this day look upon him as their founder.

The Persians gave their *Magic* (wisdom of the Magi) a scien-

tific form: it was "*Theosophia*" (Divine wisdom), when the assistance of God was used to cure disease; "*Theurgia*" (Divine action), when disease was cured through good Spirits; and "*Goetia*" (witchcraft), when it was cured by bad Spirits.

The Romans also reduced their faith in the Spirits of the departed to a regular system; first, they called the souls of the dead "*Lemures*;" afterward, they divided them into "*Lares*," souls of the virtuous; "*Penates*," household gods, or souls of their relatives and friends; and "*Larvæ*," specters or souls of the bad.

The intercourse between Numa and *Ægeria* (715 B. C.) is too well known to be told here. According to Suetonius, the specter of Caligula was often seen in his palace. The *Getæ*, a large tribe inhabiting the country along the Black Sea from the Danube to the Dnieper, believed that the souls of men returned after death.

The first settlements of Greece were anterior to Abraham and Moses, for Aquilaus founded Sycion 2084 B. C. Inachus founded Argos (1856 B. C.) Cecrops, Athens (1556 B. C.), and Cadmus brought the sixteen letter alphabet into Greece, and built Thebes (1493 B. C.) As that country was mainly colonized by Egyptians and Phœnecians, it is natural to suppose that they brought their belief in Spirits and dæmons with them to Europe.

The story of Orpheus and Eurydice (1263 B. C.) is familiar to us all. He saw, identified, and endeavored to embrace her Spirit; but her ethereal form escaped his arms. In commemoration thereof the Greeks erected a temple on that spot, which became celebrated for the worship of the *manes* (spirits of the departed). Centuries after, Periander went there to consult the spirit of his beloved Melissa. *Æneas* escaped from the burning of Troy (1184 B. C.) The touching interview between him and the spirit of his father Anchises is beautifully described by Virgil, *Æneid* lib. vi. line 700, etc., (900 B. C.) Homer and Hesiod mention *Hades* as the abode to which the souls of the dead of the brazen age descended. Jupiter, Apollo, and all the other gods they celebrated, had been men on the earth before they ascended to Olympus, whence they descended and communi-

cated with mortals, as Jehovah and as angels did with the Israelites.

It is generally admitted that poets express the popular ideas and religious sentiments, anterior to and contemporary with them; whereas historians relate transactions and events. The intercourse between Socrates and his Demon is well authenticated. We are told that after the Spartans had starved Pausanias to death in the temple of Minerva, they had to call Thesalian priests to exorcise and drive away his manes, haunting the edifice night and day. The Athenians had annual festivities in honor of the manes, during which no marriages could be performed. Aristophanes called the worst kind of insanity *mania*, implying origin in *bad Spirits*. (500 B. C.)

Pythagoras taught that the air is filled with Spirits, from whom emanate dreams, health and disease, and that the good Spirits tend toward union and harmony, and the bad toward disunion and discord.

At burials the Bythinians supplicated the Spirits of their departed friends not to leave them. (400 B. C.) Herodotus mentioned a savage tribe in Africa, called Nasomanes, who used to sleep on the tombs of their friends, in order to receive inspirations and dreams to cure disease. Strange that this belief in, and intercourse with, the Spirits of the dead should have lasted for twenty-two centuries among the African tribes; and yet it evidently has; for the recent African traveller, Livingston, whose work is just issued by the Harpers, says, p. 471: "All believe that the souls of the departed still mingle among them." He relates some interesting anecdotes on this topic.

We now come to the Bible accounts of spiritual phenomena, from which we propose to collate the more important spiritual manifestations which address the human senses of sight and hearing. Before proceeding with these, the scriptural *tests* by which the *character* of the super-mundane intelligence has hitherto been generally determined, seem to require a few remarks, in order that the mind may be free to apprehend and interpret them in consonance with their true significance, and the highest exercise of reason.

TRY THE SPIRITS.

Down to about the year 1451 B. C., we do not find that the claims of the spiritual communicators were ever seriously questioned. People were then observers, and not thinkers. It was only necessary for Spirits to *claim* to be Gods, Lords, Jehovah, Angels, etc.—to flatter people's vanity—to be worshiped and obeyed. Men and Spirits in those days were ambitious only to multiply, fight, make conquests, and rule over large tracts of country. There was but one Protestant in the land, who was called Pharaoh. Power has ever been the active God of humanity, even down to our own time. Success transformed a Washington from a traitor into a hero. When presumption and power wax equally valiant between their Gods, Lords, Angels, Spirits, and Men, it was difficult to determine which was the true humanitarian prophet.

The first religious test as to the *true* prophet is recorded in Deut. 18 : 22, which reads as follows :

“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.”

This is certainly a very judicious test, since it throws authority finally back on the internal divine man, which in its normal activity no charmer, necromancer, wizard or familiar Spirit in heaven or earth ever can deceive.

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar Spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter, should not a people seek unto their God ? for the living to the dead ? To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them”—Isaiah 8 : 19, 20.

Here we find the true test very distinctly pointed out, namely, “the law and the testimony” of nature, observation, analogy, experience and reason. If Spirits or mortals speak not according to these, it is because there is no light or truth in them. Instead of this passage being authority, it is a repudiation of all authority except that in man, which is based on investigations and analogies. It is manifestly a mistake which many Christians have made in twisting this and similar language of Scripture into heavenly edicts against investigating spiritual

phenomena ; for how otherwise can we know whether Spirits speak according to common sense, unless we hearken to them ? Is it wise to pronounce judgment upon what they say before we know what it is ? How can any person say whether Spirits speak in consonance with universal nature or not, without understanding the two, and comparing them ? Instead of considering these and similar passages in Scripture as authorities or prohibitions against the investigation of Spiritualism, they are to us invitations to hearken thoughtfully and kindly to all Spirits and mortals, and to compare their manifestations and utterances with nature, observation and common sense ; and having governed ourselves accordingly, we have no occasion to complain of ever having been deceived.

The last spiritual test is recorded in 1 John, 4 : 2, 3, and reads as follows :

“ Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God.”

This test is certainly no improvement on the others. The very idea of applying a test signifies a suspicion of deception and falsehood, and if there *be* lying Spirits in heaven or earth, there is nothing in this test to detect them. If they wish to testify or to exercise authority or power through religious superstitions or otherwise, what shall prevent them from answering to this test accordingly, yea or nay ? The test is all in their favor, while truth and honest men and Spirits must suffer.

The words God, Lord, Angel, Spirit, Men, are used indiscriminately, to signify intelligences in more etherealized conditions than the natural earth-man, and since the hitherto religious tests are found to be useless, we are under the necessity of determining the moral *status* of men and Spirits, by what they *say* and *do*, rather than by their own claims. Accordingly, we will go back and cast up the more important Bible accounts of spiritual manifestations to the human senses of sight and hearing, and extend it down to the present time, including the *modern* spiritual manifestations.

We shall refer to those Bible records of manifestations of power and intelligence to the natural senses of sight and hearing of men, generally considered spiritual, without intending at this time to raise or discuss the question, whether some of them were produced by God, the Lord, or by a distinct order of angels, or whether all of them were produced by Spirits who have lived as human beings in earth-forms on this or some other earth.

The first Bible account of spiritual manifestations is recorded in Genesis 2 : 16 (4004 B. C.), and reads :

“The Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.” “They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden.” Gen. 3 : 8. “The Lord said unto Cain, Where is thy brother Abel.” Gen. 4 : 9. “The Lord God said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth.” Gen. 6 : 7. (B. C. 2448.)

“And the Lord came down to see the city, and the tower which the children of men builded” (Gen. 11 : 5.—B. C. 2247). This is the first account we find of buildings and towers made of brick and mortar.

We have no parallel in Modern Spiritualism, of any Spirit coming down to inspect our buildings, notwithstanding Spirits have directed where and how all our so called Spirit rooms should be built, and the materials have generally been logs, from which have been erected what are called log cabins.

In Genesis 15, it is recorded that the Lord spoke to Abraham, saying, “I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit.” The only parallel to this in Modern Spiritualism that we remember, is what was called the Mountain Cove movement. A few persons conceived that they were directed by the Lord or the ancient Apostles, to remove from New York State, chiefly from Auburn, to Mountain Cove in Fayette county, Virginia. These people did not go there, as did Abraham to his lands, to *multiply*, but to receive communications from the Lord, and instruct the people in his wisdom. The lands were not given to them to inherit as were the

lands to Abraham, but they purchased them, made a small settlement, and remained together about eighteen months, and then broke up and scattered abroad among other people and nations. For further account of this movement we refer to the *Mountain Cove Journal*, published by these people during their sojourn at that place.

“The angel of the Lord found Hagar, and talked with her.” Gen. 16. This, we believe, is the first Bible account of spiritual intelligences being styled Angels.

The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, “I am the Almighty God. I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.” Gen. 17. (B. C. 1910.)

There came two Angels to Lot while setting in the gate of Sodom. He got up, bowed, and invited them into his house to tarry during the night. They went in and ate unleavened bread. The men of Sodom came to the house, and said to Lot, “Where are the *men* which came in to thee this night?”

This, we believe, is the first instance in the Bible where the words angels and men are used interchangeably to signify a human being, whether in Spirit or mortal form.

God tempted Abram to offer his son Isaac. The Angel of the Lord called, and stayed the murderous hand of authority. (Gen. 22.)

This seems to have been the inauguration of mere authority and faith in the world. Abram heard a voice speaking out of heaven, which he interpreted as that of God as stated in the record; but he did not stop to consider whether the requirement was right, just, humane or useful. It was enough for him to know (as he thought he did) that God commanded him to take the life of his son. Here is the first fruit of mere *authority* and *faith* which has characterized the thoughts and acts of authoritarians through the ages down to the present hour. Authority and faith have been the bane of humanity, the stumbling-block to progress, and have caused more human suffering and human blood to flow than any other idea or cause whatsoever. These words and ideas have ever stood godfather to suffering and sacrifices by fire, sword, fighting, rack, thumb-screw, gibbet,

guillotine, gallows, etc. Blind faith and authority have pervaded all Spiritualism, even down to these modern times. By faith and authority do Catholics confess unto men; by faith and authority was the Wakeman murder committed; by faith and authority did people go to Mountain Cove, to commune with Christ and the Apostles; by faith and authority have people engaged in various unsuccessful, irrational enterprises. There is need, for humanity's sake, that people get rid of blind faith and authority—that people come to themselves and reflect.

Jacob and God wrestled. Jacob saw God face to face. God said, "Jacob, as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (Gen. 32.—B. c., 1739.)

We have a parallel to this in Modern Spiritualism, which is recorded in the Book of the Spiritual Telegraph, vol. II. p. 72, 73. A skeptic asked the Spirits if they could wrestle as did God with Jacob; they answered in the affirmative; he challenged and dared them to the contest; the Spirit asked him to retire into the open yard, and took up the table and sent it after him, which hit the side of the door with such force as to break it to pieces; and then commenced a vigorous struggle. The man began striking, jumping, and manifesting all the signs of wrestling with flesh and blood, until he was exhausted, worried out, and cried for quarters, declaring that he never wanted to wrestle or fight with the Spirits any more.

When Jacob was traveling to meet Esau, he beheld the Angels of God, and said, "This is God's host." (Gen. 32.)

Exodus 3: (1571 B. C.) The Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush: the bush burned, but was not consumed. He said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." And Moses hid his face. God said he came down to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt; and he employed Moses and Aaron as his mediums to demonstrate his claims and enforce obedience by the performance of greater manifestations of spiritual power than could be performed by Pharaoh through his mediums, the wise men, sorcerers and magicians. It seems to have been conceded by both parties, and by all the people, that whoever

could perform the mightiest, the most terrible and remarkable spiritual manifestation, should be considered the mighty God who should be obeyed.

God's first manifestation of spiritual power on this occasion, through his mediums, Moses and Aaron, was the turning of a rod into a serpent. But Pharaoh's wise men, sorcerers and magicians did the same thing. Aaron's rod, however, swallowed up the rod of the magicians. The Lord then directed his mediums to take the rod which had been turned into a serpent and smite the waters till they turned into blood; the fish died, etc. But Pharaoh, through his mediums, duplicated this also; and so they continued to try their skill and strength until Pharaoh's mediums became afflicted with boils and got sick which diminished their mediative powers, and they could no longer duplicate the wonderful manifestations through Moses and Aaron; and thus the claims of the "Almighty God" were established. This is not Modern Spiritualism. In that age of the world—as is too much the case in our own time—*might* made *right*, and power was their God.

For the credit of humanity we are happy to add, that no medium of modern times can or would duplicate the manifestations in this Bible narrative. We will now proceed with our account.

The Lord made a covenant with Moses to do terrible things—to drive out the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites (Exodus 34: 10—1491 B. C.) This is not Modern Spiritualism; and we are not aware that any Spirit of modern manifestation, has attempted to make any such covenants with mortals to injure the neighbor.

The Lord commanded Moses to build a gorgeous tabernacle, according to plans and specifications which he gave him, and "Moses did according to all that the Lord commanded him." (Exodus 11.—1491 B. C.) If the account of this tabernacle and its furniture be correct, Christendom, with all its gorgeous splendor, has not quite duplicated this extravagance, and must, with Pharaoh, acknowledge that the Lord is great. Modern Spiritualism, as yet, has no parallel to offer.

The Lord said to Moses, "Let the people stone to death those

who blaspheme" (Leviticus 24). "When the people complained, it displeased the Lord; and the Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the people cried unto Moses, and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched" (Numbers 11.—1490 B. C.)

"The congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord. And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them." Notwithstanding Moses and Aaron strove, with incense and atonements, to appease the Lord's wrath, he destroyed fourteen thousand, seven hundred of them (Numbers 16 : 34.—1471 B. C.)

Here again we must admit we have no duplicates in Modern Spiritualism, neither do we expect any, and we must here again yield the palm to Ancient Spiritualism. The angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against Balaam; the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with sword drawn, and turned aside. Balaam's anger was kindled; he smote the ass, and the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, "What have I done unto thee?" The Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw (as did the ass) the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand, etc. (Numbers 22.—1452 B. C.)

We will mention in passing, that Modern Spiritualists have many parallels to this manifestation, except that dumb animals have not yet had occasion to cry out for being smitten by Spiritualists. The large dog belonging to Rev. Dr. Phelps, in Stratford, Conn., while the spiritual manifestations were occurring in and about his house, manifested every sign of seeing the Spirits, and sometimes exhibited much fright. It is said that on one occasion, the dog was caught up by the Spirits, and locked up by them in a closet.

Joshua at Jericho saw an angel, whom he called a man, standing over against him with sword drawn. The angel told Joshua that he appeared to him as the captain of the host of the Lord; and Joshua fell on his face and asked, What saith my Lord ?

(Joshua 5 : 15). "Gideon perceived that he saw an angel of the Lord." But he did not quite understand why he appeared, and Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel, manifest it to me by causing all the dew to accumulate on a fleece, and he did so ; but Gideon was still skeptical, and asked God to reverse the sign, and allow no dew on the sheepskin, but on the ground around it, and it was done (Judges 6 : 37).

The manifestations in Modern Spiritualism are so abundant and satisfactory that there has probably been no person willing to investigate whose skepticism has risen to the degree of tempting God with such experiments. Such skepticism belongs exclusively to those who stand aloof, and it readily yields to a fair investigation of the ordinary modern phenomena.

We pass now to speak of the narrative of the communion between Saul and the Spirit of Samuel, through the mediumship of the Witch of Endor, which occurred about 1060 B. C., and is recorded in I Samuel, 28. This case is so familiar I will not repeat it, except so far as may be necessary in presenting my thoughts upon it, from the stand-point of a somewhat similar experience. We have no parallel as yet to Saul's conduct in "putting away those who have familiar Spirits, and the wizards, out of the land ;" notwithstanding the press, the pulpit and the people have called on those in authority to do so, and a law was a few years since attempted to be forced through the Legislature of Massachusetts to this end. We are happy to say, that the originator of that project has long since become a very tolerable Modern Spiritualist ; and that the able Felton, of Cambridge College, is investigating and progressing fairly.

Much has been said by the opponents of Modern Spiritualism respecting what are termed sometimes scriptural edicts, against consulting with familiar Spirits, wizards, necromancers, etc. These words and their significance have, it seems to us, been unnecessarily identified with evil, and magnified out of all proportions.

It has been shown by the foregoing quotations, that people of ancient times were authoritarians, and it may be added that this trait of human mentality generally prevails at the present

time. A dangerous idea almost as universally obtains, namely, that whatever is communicated from the heavens or from Spirits, should be accepted as Divine wisdom, and should be implicitly obeyed. Consequently people in the days referred to in the Scriptures, and, I am sorry to say, many in our own time, seek directions from Spirits rather than exercise their own judgment as to what is right. The resident God in man, the judge of righteousness, has never been relatively exercised with the other faculties of our being, and we are left miserable, submissive tools of authority. We believe it was wise in Bible times, and is wise now, to use all humane and rational means to dispense with authority; hence I say, not in the precise language of Scripture, but in its meaning, "To the law and to the testimony of *observation* and *reason*; if any speak not according to these, there is no light in them," consequently they should not be heeded. I say stand in the dignity of manhood, no matter from whence we are addressed, or from what presumptuous authority. Let us reason and reflect as to what is just, right and proper. *Man* is of the lineage of God, and in his normal condition has the angel of *truth* within him.

"And the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I will never break my covenant with you; but ye have not obeyed my voice. I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as *thorns* in your side" (Judges 2. —B. C. 1425). Again, 1 Kings 19: 13 (B. C. 906): "And behold there came a voice unto him and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?"

Elijah seems at this time to have been much more discreet than his predecessors who had recognized God only in power, pomp, promises and slaughter. Elijah recognized him, not specially in the wind, the earthquake and the fire, but in the still small voice which addressed his humanity, his understanding. The same peculiarity which had hitherto given a fearful, a terrific significance to Spiritualism, obtains, in a modified form, to this day.

Persons who are supposed to differ widely, often meet on the same plane of thought. For example: The so-called evangeli-

cal authoritarian recognizes the manifestations of his God with the materialist only in physical nature, terrific convulsions, storms and thunderbolts; but the more devout and rational Christian, like Elijah, waits until the wind, earthquake and fire have spent their fury, and hearkens to the still small voice of God which addresses the understanding.

Authoritarianism, in the earth-life, makes presumptuous Spirits; and so long as mere faith and authority constitute the basis of our religion, we may expect unscrupulous, pompous Spirits to set up any claim for themselves, calculated to overawe and frighten people into the service of their God in their way.

I am occasionally in receipt of communications which purport to come from God through mediums in different localities, commanding me to publish them in the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, under pains and penalties in time and eternity. But it is our custom to discard from our columns all bombast, and we are quite incapable of being moved out of our rational course by mere presumption, threat or authority; therefore, like Elijah, we heed not the wind, but wait for sensible communications.

(B. c. 580) Daniel 3 : 28 : "Then Nebuchadnezzar spake and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who hath sent his angel and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the King's word." 10th chap., v. 9, 10 : "Yet heard I the voice of his words, and behold a hand touched me." 18th verse : "Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.

These are common experiences in Modern Spiritualism. Spirit-utterances, in speech and song, are often heard, and Spirit-hands are temporarily organized, and also seen and felt, and often impart health, strength and understanding to mortals. Here I must leave the Old Testament Scripture.

The New Testament is full of Spirit-intercourse. *Moses* and *Elias* were with Christ in his *transfiguration*. (Mark 8.) There were the Spirits of two deceased men seen and heard by Peter,

James and John. Christ's intercourse with his disciples and friends during the forty days that elapsed between his resurrection and ascension. Thomas even touched him, and felt of his wounds.

Luke 24, we read, "*Two men stood by them in shining garments, and said to the pious women, 'He is not here, but is risen,'*" etc.

Let us observe that here, as in Daniel's vision mentioned before, the Spirits are called *men*, and not *angels*, from which it would appear as if the disciples and contemporaries of Christ, and the Jews before them, considered the *Spirits of good men* and *angels* synonymous. Spirits of relatives and friends, and those of ordinary intelligence and virtue, are called familiar Spirits.

Acts 9.—Jesus appears and speaks to Saul going to Damascus. Saul's companions heard the voice, but saw no *man*.

Acts 5 : 19.—The apostles are delivered by *angels*.

Acts 12 : 13.—And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came, etc. And they said unto her, '*Thou art mad.*' But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then they said, '*It is his angel.*'

This passage proves three things : *first*, that the people of that, as of our time, were in the habit of calling those that believed their own senses *mad*, insane or deluded ; *second*, that they believed in Spirit-rapping ; *thirdly*, that they either called the Spirit of a deceased man his angel, or that they believed in guardian angels, either of which agrees with our belief. But there are other passages which prove still more fully and clearly that not only the disciples and contemporaries of Christ, but even the Heavenly Host meant by angel the Spirit of a good and progressed man. (See Rev. 10 : 10.)

Rev. 22 : 6.—And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants, etc.

Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren the prophets, etc.

Here in these last chapters of the Bible is the climax of the en-

deavors of the invisible intelligences (we mean, of course, those who did not engage in personal enterprises) to make mortals comprehend that they were once men on the earth.

First, the messenger is called *angel* ; but when John is about to fall down and worship him, he tells him not to do it because he was once a man like other men, in truth one of the former prophets.

We thus realize that Christ's disciples and friends were Spiritualists, and that the last chapters of the Christian dispensation inculcate Spiritualism. *See thou do it not*, that is to say : Worship no man, not even the Spirit of a man ; be yourself, judge for yourself, and listen to no man either in or out of the flesh, concerning your worship and religion. Alas, dark and unspiritual ages have intervened and tried to crush out that beautiful belief, and to substitute in its place empty dogmas and creeds.

The Fathers of the Church are full of anecdotes that prove their faith in Spirit intercourse with mortals : A. D. 390, St. Augustine speaks of the *manes* as the souls of the deceased. Tertullian mentions (A. D. 240) a nun who had the gift of conversing with angels, and even with Christ while in a state of trance.

Jamblichus (A. D. 400) established a school to which his learning and erudition attracted numerous disciples. He claimed to have intercourse with invisible Spirits, and urged upon his hearers the possibility of such intercourse.

The Scandinavians and other northern tribes considered the Heligoland Isles in the North Sea as the abode of the souls of Plebians, and Walhalla, as that of military heroes. The Laplanders rendered honors to the souls of the departed ; but they only did it for a time, because they imagined that they could harm mortals as long as their Spirits had not passed into other bodies. The ancient Mexicans believed that the souls of the deceased could hover through the universe, either as birds or ethereal beings, and in their wanderings return to the earth and revisit their friends and favorite haunts.

Tasso (1577) claimed to have intercourse with a Spirit, to

whom he attributed his sublimest ideas ; he was confined to a madhouse for several years, but persisted in this belief ; after his release he wrote as good poetry as he did before his confinement. The visions of the Swedish seer are too well known to be spoken of in detail ; for who has not read Swedenborg's "*Heaven and Hell*" ?

The anzals and poems of the European nations are full of legends, visions, Spirit-intercourse, and ghost stories. The intercourse between *Connal* and *Crugal*, in Ossian, book second, Fingal, with notes by Macpherson ; the ghost of Hamlet, Klopstock's "Letters to the Dead," etc., are so many proofs of the belief in Spirit-intercourse. It is from the poets that we must ascertain the religious sentiments of a people.

The innumerable wonders, visions and apparitions ascribed to the martyrs and Roman Catholic saints, and attested by thousands, and the specters and ghosts perceived, seen and felt, among modern nations, conclusively prove that the souls of the deceased always were, and still are, considered as something more or less visible and tangible to mortals.

One of these shadowy and ethereal visitors tried to make a visit to Luther ; he had probably something useful or sublime to suggest to the contemplating reformer ; but instead of welcoming him like Socrates, Numa, Swedenborg and Christ, he called him the devil, and threw his inkstand at him.

We may now safely assert that, from and before Abraham to this very day, there never was a time or people when and where the belief in Spirit-intercourse did not exist ; that it is not limited to any particular zone, since both the Laplander and the Caffre entertain it ; that it is not confined to any climate or longitude, because the Himalayas and Cordilleras witnessed it ; neither is it confined to any degree of civilization or refinement, because the Hindoos, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the European nations of every shade and degree of civilization did entertain it, and entertain it now in common with the Bushman. Protestant nations alone tried to eradicate it, and that from a feeling of hatred to the Romish Church, who had made a wholesale abuse of it ; but the attempt was

vain, for the reaction is perfect. The belief in Spirit-intercourse is, and will be, stronger and deeper among Protestants than it ever was before, because they get at it by observation and reason ; each man searches for himself, and does not take it second hand from an interested priesthood.

We come down now to what is usually called *Modern Spiritualism*. We call it "*Modern Spiritualism*," because the Mosaic and Christian revelations, being matters only of remote history, had ceased to appeal with living convictions to the mind, and left men to grope in the darkness of hypothetical speculation, and to worship a golden image for a God ; and to reinstate this declining spirituality of the world we have here an entirely new and distinct unfolding. Spirituality, except in name and fashionable pretence, had long since died out, and the very mention of it, in any tangible, demonstrable form, is still scouted by the Church and people generally, as ridiculous—as a "humbug." There has never been a period when Spirits did not speak to mortals ; but mankind hitherto have been incapable of comprehending or of giving heed to any spiritual utterance that did not contemplate power, conquests, lands or gold. Spiritual utterances which have addressed the Divine nature, the moral good of humanity, have always been misunderstood or disregarded. Christ endeavored to supersede the Mosaic dispensation, and establish a *humanitary* Spiritualism ; but as yet it has ultimated practically in brute force, hollow professions and vain show. Its moral efficacy has never distinguished itself in the life of its nominal devotees generally ; nevertheless, the moral excellence of the "new covenant" still commends itself to the highest aspirations of humanity.

A striking prediction, which of itself was among the *introductive* phenomena of what is termed "*Modern Spiritualism*," was made by or through an entranced magnetic subject, Andrew Jackson Davis, in the autumn of 1846. Said he, while dictating his "*Nature's Divine Revelations*" :

"It is a truth that Spirits commune with one another while one is in the body and the other in the higher spheres—and this, too, when the person in the body is unconscious of the higher influx, and hence can not be convinced of the fact ; and this truth will ere long present itself in the form of a living demonstration. And the world will hail

with delight the ushering in of that era when the interiors of men will be opened, and the spiritual communion will be established"—(See Nat. Div. Rev., p. 675.)

In accordance with this prophecy, and in proof of its truth and spiritual source, the first *externally sensible* manifestations from Spirits, such as have subsequently pressed themselves upon universal attention, were recognized by the Fox family at Hydesville, Wayne county, N. Y., about the last of March and first of April, 1848. These manifestations occurred in the form of sounds such as are made by rapping, and which, after months of perplexing and annoying mystery, were then discovered to be connected with an invisible intelligence that could count—that could rap the number of years of the children's respective ages, and which could designate, as the alphabet was called, letters that would spell words, and form intelligible sentences.

In consonance with Christ's commands to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel," "Feed my sheep," etc., the first request of the Spirits in modern manifestations, after replying to the various questions tending to elicit the proof of the spiritual origin of the communications, was, "You all have a duty to perform; we want you to make this matter more public."

In pursuance of this request, and the conscious duty felt by the noble band of early investigators to be imposed upon them by the glorious demonstrations to their natural senses that Spirits exist and communicate with mortals, they held a public meeting in Corinthian Hall, Rochester, N. Y., in the evening of the 14th of November, 1848, and through one of their number, E. W. Capron, they made public proclamation of the phenomena they had witnessed, and of their claims to a spiritual origin. The mediums, the Fox family, being present, some of the phenomena occurred in the hall, and a committee was constituted to investigate and report at future meetings, etc. (See the early history of "Modern Spiritualism," pages 90 and 91.)

The facts which illustrate the characteristics of this new dispensation are so numerous and generally known, that I shall take time to mention and refer to but very few of them, which I

shall not import from a far-off country, where you can not interrogate the witnesses, but shall confine myself chiefly to spiritual phenomena and utterances, testified to by reliable witnesses, still living, many of which have occurred in this city under the observation of myself and others of your own citizens.

The following is from a communication from the Spirit of John Quincy Adams, given to a circle of distinguished citizens in Cincinnati, and forwarded to the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH by Daniel Gano, Esq., and published under date of August 7, 1852 :

“Our first duty is to know ourselves ; the next, to examine and see how far we fall short of what we should be.” . . . “Go forth boldly, clad in the armor of Truth, making warfare on all that is evil, all that is wrong, all that tends to debase and degrade mankind. Cultivate the spiritual perceptions ; seek counsel of the inward teacher, and as you learn the truth, speak it fearlessly. The day is now dawning when men will stand up in the halls of Congress spiritually magnetized, and proclaim the truth, and each and every one within the sound of their voices will feel the correctness of every statement, the force of every remark ; and they will not stop to ask, ‘What is the color of the Spirit’s hair and eyes that influences you?’ but they will say, ‘Verily, verily a prophet stands before us.’ Then there will be no talk of ‘expediency ;’ then will the hand of the oppressor be paralyzed, and the manacles fall from the limbs of the bleeding slave.”

Under date of Springfield, Mass., August 2, 1852, Rufus Elmer, Esq., writes as follows :

“A keeper of a public house in this vicinity, becoming convinced of spiritual intercourse by the development of a medium in his own family, was directed by the sounds to stop selling liquor, and send his children to the Sabbath school ; and he obeyed.”

John O. Wattle, in a letter published in the TELEGRAPH, under date September 11, 1852, says in substance that his brother-in-law was in the woods chopping wood, when a stranger rode up to him and asked him if his name was Milton Whinery. He answered, “Yes.” “Well,” said the young man, “you are the man ; my sister has been at the point of death more than six hours, and the Spirits spelled out through a little boy who did not know a letter, that you could cure her.” He answered that he knew nothing about it, and could not do any thing of the kind. But the young man insisted, and he went to the house some nine miles distant, and when he arrived at the house, it was full of people expecting the young woman would die. She was lying in great agony, blood frothing from her mouth, in a

fit. He became entranced, and said, "In twenty minutes I will lay my hands on her head, and she will recover." He commenced jerking, and immediately the young woman was relieved; and in twenty minutes he laid his hand on her head, and she said she was well, and sat up in bed. She had been partially deranged more than a week, but now she was restored to her right mind.

While at High Rock, in 1852, "Katy," the medium, said she saw the Spirit of the wife of Jesse Hutchinson, whom she had never seen in the flesh. Subsequently being shown several daguerreotype likenesses, she exclaimed, "O, there's Mrs. Hutchinson!" The company, apparently denying it, made her the more earnestly declare that it was the countenance she had seen in the Spirit-world. See TELEGRAPH, Nov. 9, 1852.

Mr. Amos Whitney writes from Pittsfield, N. H., under date of 29th September, 1852, substantially as follows: For the last six and a half years I have followed the occupation of a pedler. To be a good pedler a person must lie. I also learned to play cards for money. I doubted the existence of God; believed Spiritualism a humbug; had made the rap to deceive people, etc. On the evening of the 23d of September, I went to bed as usual, fell asleep, but awoke, when the first thing impressed vividly on my mind was that there is a God; the next, that there is a Spirit-world, and that man must exist hereafter. Then they (the Spirits) told me in a loud whisper what to do, namely: Quit playing cards for money, and sell out the goods, and commence studying, which I did. I firmly believe it was Spirits of departed friends that produced this great change in me. I have turned a complete somersault, and am a new man. (See SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, Nov. 13, 1852.)

Rev. H. H. Hunt writes under date of September 13, 1852:

"In September, 1851, while in Indiana, I became convinced that there must be spiritual agency involved in the matter. But by my position as a preacher of the Gospel, I was restrained from giving my sentiments to the public. I remained silent until January, 1852, when two of my daughters became media. I imputed it to the Devil, who appeared as an angel of light; I was angry at the sounds. As they would not stop, I made this request—that the unseen powers would not make my children victims of hell, but spare them, and try me. After retiring, the Spirits paralyzed both my arms, keeping them in continual motion until six o'clock in the morning, when the circular

alphabet was handed to me, and then I learned my duty from good authority. As soon as this was made clear, I commenced holding meetings in public. While speaking, I am spiritualized. There is an under-current at work ; and it will break through the ice of misdirection, and superstition, and the iron creeds that have so long-enlaved us.

"At a circle at Adrian, the Spirits wrote, 'Seek the lame, the halt and infirm, and they shall be healed.' Mr. Lyons presented himself, stating that his leg had been drawn up by rheumatism four years, and was under acute pain at the time. I was thrown into the spiritual state, and placed before him. I was also made to speak by the power of the Spirit. I put my hand on him, and he was made whole. He dropped his cane, and went away rejoicing.

"After this a child of D. C. Smith was very sick—the physicians having given the most powerful medicine for stopping the fits without effect. I seated myself by the boy, and was put in communion with him by an unseen agency. Soon the patient showed too clearly that another fit was coming on ; but instead of *his* suffering from the attack, the whole power fell on me. The agonizing distress, the clenched fists and contracted muscles, gave me alarm, but the second thought, that I was in the hands of Spirits, quieted me, and I threw off the attack. The boy had no more fits, but got well." (See SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, Jan. 8, 1853.)

R. M. Doolittle, writes from Hudson, N. Y., and says, that on the 22d November, 1852, at ten o'clock at night, Francis Merkley saw a Spirit, as a man, standing by his bed. This Spirit continued his visits several nights in succession. The Spirit spoke to him, and said he had wronged him while in Germany out of jewelry and money, and wished to be forgiven, which forgiveness Mr. Merkley freely accorded. After getting the matter settled, the Spirit ceased his visits. See "Telegraph Papers," vol. 1, p. 326.

H. Ormsby writes from Madison, O., June 6th, 1853, that a girl by the name of Stockwell, twelve years of age, a medium, cured a person of deafness of four years' standing. The child's father went to California ; the Spirits kept his family advised of his whereabouts, health, etc. ; and when his family were not expecting him home, they (the Spirits) told them he was coming home, and was then on the Isthmus ; and they told the day he would arrive—all of which proved correct. See "Telegraph Papers," vol. 1, p. 339.

Rev. N. Upton, a clergyman of the Methodist faith, residing in Columbus, O., became developed as a healing medium, and

performed many cures. The following is part of a communication to him from the Spirits :

“Whatever thy hands find to do, do thou with all spiritual might, faltering not, but in full faith of our ever attending presence, knowing that thy labor is of heaven. Then come onward and upward through the beautiful path of spiritual progression, relieving thy brothers of their burdens as you journey home, knowing that it is the highest, purest, holiest offering thou canst bring to our Infinite Father.” See “Telegraph Papers,” vol. 2, pp. 325-6.

Mrs. Dotia Spoor writes from Bristol, Ct., January 18, 1854: “I became entirely blind in both eyes; I have been attended by physicians of known skill and ability. Surgical operations have been made, and everything done that could be thought of, but without relief.” She applied to Mrs. Mettler, medium, for treatment, and says: “Some six months since I began to see a little, and I am now able to see to read and do the finest sewing. See “Telegraph Papers,” vol. 4, pp. 90-95.

We take the following extracts from a communication from a Spirit, which was read in the Spiritual Conference, 2d March, 1854, by Mr. Calthorp. See “Telegraph Papers,” vol. 4, p. 237.

“Speak the truth you know ; yet to live the truth is better : that is what the world needs—true life. . . . We strive to move many minds toward a better order, and to a united effort for humanity. . . . Christ seeks to move men’s minds to a life of love and holiness, and to perfect a chain of brotherhood ; for not less dear to the Father is the vilest created in his image than the loftiest angel. . . . Would that we could so move your minds, that you should henceforth act in earnest for truth and for humanity.”

I will briefly add some of the phenomena which occurred in your own midst, and which came under my own and others’ observation, in connection with the medium (E. P. Fowler) and circle of friends in this city, with whom I have been investigating regularly, one evening in each week, since the early part of the year 1851. In the commencement of our examination of the subject, the phenomena was chiefly confined to spelling out proper replies to our questions, by means of raps or vibrations occurring when letters in the alphabet, which were necessary to form words and sentences, were pointed out or spoken. Our early questions and replies related chiefly to the earth-history of the communicating intelligence and the experience of the

Spirit in its then present existence. By these and other methods, we tested the identity of our relations and friends.

In connection with these inquiries, phenomena of a physical character often occurred, such as moving furniture without contact with mortals, and sometimes raising one end of a table correspondingly to its being raised at the other end by a person—sometimes raising it with persons (who chose to try the experiment) sitting upon it, and without any other contact with mortals, and sometimes suspending furniture in the air without any physical contact whatever. On one occasion a *man* was raised and transported in the air (not thirty miles, as is said of Philip, but) thirty paces. These things were done to demonstrate the presence and power of Spirits, and they form a part of the evidence of their existence and condition.

Spirits re-clothed themselves, sometimes partially and sometimes perfectly, and appeared before us. Spirits' hands thus reorganized were felt, seen, and grasped in our own hands as those of our living friends, some of these were recognized as the portraits of relatives who had passed on to the other state of existence. Finally, the Spirits became accustomed to appear to our medium in his room, perfectly formed bodily, and talked with him as man with man, face to face. They took books and other physical objects in their hands, and moved them about the room. Spirits sat before him at his table and wrote communications to the circle of investigators. Some of these communications were in the English language; others were in French, Spanish, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Old Turkish, Malay, Bengalese, Sanscrit, and other Oriental languages, unknown to the medium and circle. Most of the manuscripts in these Oriental languages, were translated for us by Prof. Bush and other linguists. One methodically written language (apparently) remains as yet uninterpreted, as no persons to whom they have been submitted, have been able to translate it.

Sometimes the Spirits requested Mr. Fowler to write what they dictated, and as they spoke audibly, he wrote it down. These communications were always profound, and related to metaphysical or scientific subjects, (see *Shekinah*, Vol. I., pp. 301, 307.)

Some of these writings covered several pages. In these communications, new words necessary to Spirit literature, were compounded. These papers were brought to our circle, and read and explained by the Spirits, who sometimes amended and elucidated their subject farther in our circle, through their usual method, the raps. On the morning of the 23d December, 1852, fifty-six Spirits produced and left with our medium their autographs. Most of them were the signers to the Declaration of American Independence, but some of them were those of our friends whose signatures the medium had never seen. The note to which these signatures were attached is, "*Peace, but not without Freedom,*" (See SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, Vol. I, dated July 3, 1852.)

These are submitted as only a few *specimens* of phenomena and teachings of modern Spiritualism, of which thousands have occurred ; and referring you for all necessary farther information concerning these things, to the current spiritual literature, I leave the facts, and proceed briefly to give the significance of the whole matter from my present *modern* spiritual stand-point. •

SIGNIFICANCE.

1. Modern Spiritualism signifies not an overthrow, but a just and scientific criticism of the Spiritualism of all ages, and a confirmation of all the truths therein contained.

2. It signifies that *man* is a living, conscious, thinking, active entity and energy, which attracts and energizes certain of the elements in each stratum (so to speak) through which it moves in its onward and upward progress.

3. It signifies that the earthly condition of man is but one form and state of his life and progress.

4. It signifies that the human body and its earthly relations, constitute the elements and conditions necessary to the individualization and conscious life of human entities or Spirits.

5. It signifies that the phenomenon *death*, as we term it, is really and essentially a *birth* into a purer and more elevated sphere or plane of existence.

6. It signifies that *death* in itself in no way changes the char-

acter of the *real* man, the Spirit ; on the contrary, that the *man* lives on in the full and conscious possession and exercise of his essential attributes.

7. It signifies that growth or progress is the *law* of life and pertains alike to the natural and spiritual spheres, to time and eternity, and is essential to happiness here and hereafter.

8. It signifies that the last apology for infidelity as to the belief in a Spirit-world—a future life for mortals—is removed ; for the existence of kindred and friends in Spirit-spheres, is demonstrable to the physical perceptions and the natural senses of men.

9. It signifies that the Spirit-world is *in* and *around* mortals, instead of being a distant locality, as has been generally supposed.

10. It signifies that *death* consists in a mere change of conditions of life—a separation of the Spirit from gross physical nature ; that Spirits are relieved, in a degree at least, from the embarrassing and tempting needs and necessities of the body, and from the Spirit disharmonies and antagonisms in the earthly existence.

11. It signifies that the man, that is the *Spirit*, exists beyond the dissolution of the body, in states and conditions of abundant supply of its needs, and in the degree of its progress, free from those necessities which bring it in conflict with its brother man as in its earthly relations, and consequently exists in states and conditions more favorable to peace, harmony, purity, and progress.

12. It signifies that eternal principles, truths—God—are studied and heeded by Spirits rather than factitious policies and appearances.

13. It signifies that humanity in God is a unit, and that its best interests are promoted through contributions of its parts, or members, one to the other.

14. It signifies that all malice ends with earth and earthly influences.

15. It signifies the individuality of Spirits in thought and action—that these are seen and understood without any intention to express them.

16. It signifies that the Spirit-world is pervaded by a generous sphere of love to the neighbor which becomes active and potentialized in the degree of man's remove from physical necessities.

17. It signifies that there are mediums of communion between Spirits and mortals other than what are termed natural earth-bodies.

18. It signifies that Spirits, in or under same conditions of their existences, temporarily reclothe themselves with physical bodies, and like men, stand before us, write before us, speak to us, handle us, walk in our midst, and dissolve these organizations at pleasure.

19. It signifies that the love of orderly uses gives potency to the will—that there is a potential good—a God—but no Devil except a phantom progeny of disorderly mind which is readily dissolved by the return of man to his normal state of love and harmonious relations.

20. It signifies that conscious human individualities begin in the earth-life, and that there is no distinct order of intelligent beings called angels, who were not once human beings.

21. It signifies that *knowledge* comes by observation, and that the significance of the thing observed depends on the state and condition of the observer.

22. It signifies that human Spirits are in more favorable conditions than mortals to comprehend causes and the principles which govern the universe, and are thereby enabled to prophesy as to events yet future to man on the earth.

23. It signifies that Spirits are naturally attracted to societies in the future life who are in corresponding spiritual states or degrees of progressive existence with themselves ; that such consociation and consequent inspiration constitutes, for the time being, their joy, their heaven, and that forced consociation with societies more or less orderly developed, would equally constitute their sorrows, their hell.

24. It signifies that the spiritual world and spiritual existences blend with the natural ; that the disharmonies, errors and crimes of mortals are to be corrected by the eternal law of the Divine Providence ; that "peace on earth and good will to

man" proclaimed at Christ's first coming, is now being generally inaugurated in the earth through spiritual instrumentalities.

25. It signifies that Spirits perceive the physical, moral and mental derangements in mortals ; that they have power, under suitable conditions, to prescribe antidotes, to change depraved passions and appetites of mortals to their normal use and condition, and in various ways to heal diseases, and especially through the laying on of mediative hands.

26. It signifies that while popular science has no past and no future in its estimate of humanity, and popular theology recognizes no present, and repudiates the experience of all but dead men, Modern Spiritualism confirms the truth of the past, demonstrates the future, and blends with them present living scientific experiences which form the triune elements of a true philosophy of man.

27. It signifies that the unpardonable sins consist in neglected opportunities and positive errors in our teachings and practical lives, which mar our own or our neighbor's image, mislead or divert the mind from its natural current of truth, or in any way obstruct or retard our own or our neighbor's physical, mental and spiritual growth or development—that these "never can be forgiven"—or, in other words, regained by the individual, and made up at any point of time—"neither in this world nor in the world to come."

28. It signifies that Christ was and is a medium ; that he was and is peculiarly constituted for the reception and impartation of the Divine influx ; that his peculiar mission was and is mediative ; that he inaugurated a higher humanitarian ideal among men ; that he established orderly, sensible intercourse between the world of Spirits and mortals.

29. It signifies that the essential life, love and efficacy of Christ is now again potentialized in the natural world, and forms the Divine mediatorial and humanitarian currents which flow out from neighbor to neighbor, nation to nation, world to world, pervading the universe, and centering in the cause and origin of all things.

THE DISCUSSION.

The essay being concluded, and the society having passed a vote of thanks and a request for a copy of the essay, the Chairman announced that the subject was open for discussion by the members of the Association, and by the clergy, of whatever denomination, whether members of the Union or not. The speakers were limited to ten minutes each. The tone and temper of the meeting, together with the comprehension and appreciation of Spiritualism by those who mingled in the discussion, may be inferred from the report which follows, premising that the report of the first evening's discussion is written wholly from memory, and therefore, at best, must needs be imperfect; but it is believed it is not unjust to the sentiments of the speakers in any essential particulars.

Mr. PLATT expressed his accord with the vote of thanks which had just been passed for the essay read by Mr. Partridge. Nevertheless he felt it his duty to state that he had listened very attentively, with a view to discover the practical value of Spiritualism, but had failed to find it. He liked that portion of the essay which was made up of extracts from the Bible; but the rest, whether true or false, seemed to him of no practical consequence. We must look to Christ. If Christianity is anything, it is *everything*; and therefore, assuming the reality all the facts the essay sets forth, they are, to say the least, superfluous, on the ground of the all-sufficiency of the Bible.

Mr. RUSSELL said: One strong objection, in his mind, to Spiritualism, was, that it led to an under-valuation, if not to a denial, of the Holy Scriptures. This transfer of faith from its only safe anchorage in the bosom of apostolic revelation to the bewildering and doubtful phenomena of so-called modern Spiritualism, could not but be prejudicial to the best interests of humanity. Its tendency was to insanity, as evinced by numerous painful examples, rather than to that calm confidence and repose which the teachings of Christ and his followers infuse into the hearts of believers. This evil result is not predicable of Christianity. The miracles of the Old and New Testaments were for the establishment of great truths, but the alleged modern spiritual phenomena have done nothing of the kind. The only effects that he had observed as resulting from this delusion, was the production of insanity in many instances, and the weakening of the faith of its adherents in the authority of the Bible.

Mr. FARRENE said : Spiritualism, in his opinion, lacked three elementary ingredients, essential to its acceptance as a truth, to wit : *universality, rationality and use*. It is wanting in each and every of these essentials. Miracles belong to the semi-civilized periods in the history of all nations, and subside as intelligence and civilization advance.

Mr. DUNN said : He was disposed to defend the essay. He had been an infidel, but it was his present happiness to accept the Bible as a volume of inspiration. He had a higher regard for it (or rather, he believed more fully in its divine authenticity) than many eminent divines who have commented upon it. We all know the old adage—"The Lord sends meat, but the Devil sends cooks." It is even so with the Bible. It is a thoroughly supplied larder, doubtless, rich in all that is needful for those who hunger and thirst after heavenly food ; but the world still labors under the old difficulty—the Devil controls the cooks.

Dr. HALLOCK said : He would like to say a few words on the objections to Spiritualism from the supposition that it antagonizes the Bible. So far from this is the truth, that Spiritualism, by enlarging the area of personal knowledge in spiritual facts and principles, becomes the essential element of harmony between the present and all preceding manifestations of spiritual facts and truths. The problems of all past experience are solvable only in the light of a present similar experience. Spiritualism is that personal experience which constitutes the "*substance*," which enters into the Apostle's definition of faith. Paul is not that substance, nor is Peter and John. That substance is a *spiritual experience*, and they are the *witnesses* to it. We accept their testimony from the plenitude of a kindred experience—the only ground upon which it can be accepted understandingly. The past, the present and the future are explicable only in the light of Spiritualism *itself*, not in the history of it. That the apostolic experience in spiritual things is an imperfect substitute for our own, is seen in this, that notwithstanding the professedly triumphant faith in immortality which is founded upon it, the immortals themselves are the very last persons the professor desires to commune with ! Here is a strange inconsistency between faith and practice, and it is the mission of Spiritualism to remove it. Had the apostolic experience been continuous, this strange repugnance to the society of our dearest and best friends, merely because they have become *better, holier and happier*, by reason of their taking on a spiritual existence, and becoming inhabitants of that heavenly Jerusalem which is the central idea of all religious faith and hope, could not have occurred. There is a spiritual manifestation recorded in the last chapter of St. John, which, to those who have become conversant with similar facts, is of vital significance, while, to popular Christianity, it has lost its meaning, and for the very obvious reason, that the Church has lost its experience. Were that narrative but eighteen months old, instead of eighteen centuries, and were it published in our newspapers instead of our Bibles, it would share the fate of a thousand similar narratives of the present day ; that is to say, it would be pronounced utterly inconsistent with the dignity of heaven and the good of man !

Mr. PLATT said : He thought the subject of Spiritualism unripe for profitable consideration by that body. It comported with the dignity and usefulness of the Young Men's Christian Union to confine itself to the elucidation of well-established facts and principles in Bible history, rather than to become involved with the ephemeral questions of the

day. When Spiritualism can establish itself as a scientific fact, and can enforce its acceptance upon the religious world, by virtue of its inherent value, it will be time enough for this Union to consider it. At present this is not the case. He looked upon it as nothing but a delusion fraught with evil consequences, and thought it was subversive of the true objects of their Association to lend it importance by discussion.

Mr. WOODMAN was of a contrary opinion. He considered Spiritualism, by reason of its religious bearing, fairly within the field of investigation legitimately belonging to this Association. Spiritualism claims to treat of man's immortality and moral responsibility. It is therefore, both the right and the duty of this body, to examine thoroughly the grounds upon which it rests. They were not confined to the easy enjoyment of the truth which other men had discovered; it was their duty to search for it themselves. He hoped the subject would be thoroughly examined. If it be a delusion, let it be shown; if it be a truth, let it be demonstrated. The only religious or moral proposition sacred from discussion by this body, is the right of private judgment. That is taken for granted; and so long as we respect that right, no harm can come from a free investigation of whatever claims the dignity of a religious truth.

The Rev. Dr. SAWYER being invited by the President to speak, excused himself from any lengthy remarks on account of the lateness of the hour. He said he had been interested in the discussion of the evening, and had listened attentively, and, he trusted, not without some profit to the essay by Mr. Partridge. The prominent attraction which had drawn him here, was the concluding word in the title of the essay—the “significance” of modern Spiritualism. Mr. Partridge had not met his expectations in that particular. He had not set forth that important consideration to his satisfaction. The essay covered a vast field, and it could not be expected that Mr. Partridge would be able to till it thoroughly in an hour. He had observed a discrepancy between the position assumed in the essay, and that of Dr. Hallock, which is worthy of note, because they can not both be true. The doctrine of the essay is, that Spiritualism is as old as human tradition, manifesting itself in every age and in every nation of which we have historic mention; whereas Dr. Hallock represents it as a *new* thing which has burst upon us. It is not in his judgment, incompatible, to be sure, with Christianity; but he represents it rather as an addendum, supplying a great and increasing human need in a vital particular, wherein Christianity has failed. For himself, he considers that faith in immortality is common to man; and being so, he is at a loss to discover the practical value of modern Spiritualism, assuming the reality of its alleged phenomena. The miracles of the Bible stand behind great practical truths: but what new truth is illustrated by these modern facts? This is the practical question, and he would be glad of its farther elucidation. Leaving a very wide margin for deception and imagination, he must concede, from the evidence of his own senses, that very singular facts do occur; but what he desires to see is their fruits. He is not aware that a belief in these facts and their spiritual origin, has made any one better, though that may be owing to his limited acquaintance with Spiritualists. But this he has observed, that it induces a less regular attendance upon public worship, in many instances; and he thinks, also, with Mr. Platt, that its tendency is to weaken the regard for the Holy Scriptures, which the condition of the

world at the present time can ill afford. However, he is not afraid of the truth, neither is he afraid of a lie. Let the Spirits rap and move the furniture about our houses, if they choose; his inquiry is, *cui bono*—For whose benefit, and to what end?

Mr. PARTRIDGE rose and said he had been pleased with the general tone of remark, and admitted the justness of Mr. Sawyer's criticism respecting the significance of Spiritualism having been omitted. But said, they had given him a subject too vast for the time allotted him, and although he had set his thoughts in order on the whole subject, he had not dared to trespass on their time so far as would be required to present them on the significance, the last branch of the subject, but he would furnish the essay entire to the association, in pursuance of their request.

After some farther friendly interchange of remarks, it was resolved to hold a special meeting of the association, at the same hour and place, on Tuesday evening, the 29th inst., to consider the significance of modern Spiritualism, assuming the reality of its facts, and then the meeting adjourned.

In pursuance of the adjournment, the discussion was resumed on Tuesday evening, Dec. 29, by

Dr. HALLOCK, who said: I had no idea, when I came here, of opening this discussion. I came to listen, and to claim the ordinary courtesies of this body, to make such remarks as might suggest themselves to me on the occasion. However, I do not feel at all reluctant to embrace the present opportunity to make a few remarks upon the significance of Modern Spiritualism. Without farther preliminary observations, permit me to say that I look upon Spiritualism as simply another chapter in the history of the descent of the kingdom of Heaven upon earth; and its reception, therefore, being a portion of its continuous history was ably set forth in an earlier period of human experience, in the parable of the sower; that is to say, its significance will depend entirely upon the soil into which it is received. The sower in that ancient parable went forth with this same thing, to scatter it broadcast over the world, and we all know the manner in which it was received then. It is received in like manner to-day, and the same result: have characterized the advent or discovery of all truths which man has ever realized. Truth is of no age. Man's relation to it alone changes; and when I speak of a new truth, I simply mean to say that man's *relation* to it is recent. Spiritualism itself is as old as human experience; and when I referred, on a former occasion, to Spiritualism as a new fact, I simply meant to be understood as affirming that our relation to that fact was recent. Let us consider for a moment how the truths of science have been received—how it is that the significance of the thing will depend entirely upon the degree of receptivity of the soil into which it is sown; as, for instance, water evaporated under the influence of heat through all the ages before its present significance was understood. Generation after generation passed away with all their varying individualities, before that phenomenon found an ear which could hear it say the magic word *power*. There was the fact, as old as the law

which created it, and yet, up to that hour, it had been dead and meaningless; but from the moment when that seed of divine truth took root in the receptive soul, we date the commencement of a thorough revolution in the social, commercial and religious aspects of the world. So of lightning. It flashed its eternal truth in the face of all the ages, only to bewilder and confound, exciting no idea in the minds of the frightened multitude, save that of fear and dread, as at the vengeance of an angry God, whose wrath was to be placated, until the key of Franklin unlocked the mystery, and restored man to his senses, and God to his attribute of undying love.

Now let us turn to the twelfth chapter of John, and we shall find there an apt illustration of the reception of spiritual truth. It will be recollected that on this occasion, which was directly subsequent to the raising of Lazarus, when Jews and Greeks were alike excited by the strange occurrence, and were gathered about him in multitudes, Jesus said: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from Heaven, saying: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to him." Here we see the state of receptivity was the measure of the significance of the fact. The fact was one; its significance was as varied as the degrees of receptivity, or the nature of the soil into which it was received. Now it would be almost incredible that any respectable number of individuals could mistake the voice of an angel for a clap of thunder, were it not that the same blunder is being constantly repeated to-day. The voices of the immortals, the manifestations of their power, the evidences of their undying affection, are scattered broad-cast throughout the land, and the many say it thunders, while the few detect the voice of an angel.

Again, as to the significance of Spiritualism: There must be accord in the family of truth; that is, when we have verified, in any department of human research, a fact or truth, there is no other fact or truth in the universe of God that can conflict with it. Thus, there can be no discord between political and theological truth. Therefore, if this nation has found a political truth, viz., democracy in its pure and highest sense, if the democratic idea be an eternal truth, then our theological idea to be worth anything, must correspond with it. This, I think, can not be successfully denied. Assuming it, therefore, as established, I proceed to say: consider, for one moment, the profound significance of the democratic idea, and then we shall see that for a nation who has adopted it as an axiom, to import its faith in God and immortality from Asia, stultifies its own progress. The two are incompatible. This country, to be consistent, must fraternize with Asia, and not be governed by it. The nineteenth century should be able to fraternize with the first, but should not be ruled by it. When we concede the soundness of the democratic idea which dethrones the few, and makes every man a sovereign in his own right, to the thorough destruction of all political authority save that in which he himself has a potential voice, then do we proclaim, by virtue of the law of brotherhood, the abrogation of all ecclesiastical domination—the bowing down to all authoritative mandates which we are not able to verify by our own experience and observation. The significance of Spiritualism consists in this—that it enables us to find the means of reconciliation between the true democracy and the true theology—between the present and the

past—between the former Asiatic and the present American expediences by which we are enabled to discover the true significance of both. True democracy, which is but another name for true Christianity, demands, not that one age or people should control another, but that they should *love* each other. It enables us to “call no man master”—no age master—no book master. It enables us to walk by the light of truth, reflected upon our own souls. It rejoices in the light which quickens the seed-germs in the minds of other men and other ages, but its fruits are the product of the light which shines upon our own. This, then, is the significance of modern Spiritualism in its comprehensive sense. Its individual significance will depend entirely upon the receptivity and intelligence of the individual. To the ox what is a rap? To a man whose mind is on a plane with the ox, what is a rap? Nothing. To the South-Sea Islander what are the inky tracks upon the paper whereon Science illustrates its mysteries?

To constitute significance, two things are necessary: a fact, and an eye to see it—phenomena, and the sense to comprehend them. To the individual in whom the seed of Spiritualism has taken root, and become an active growth, the first fruit and prominent significance is the fulfillment of that prophetic utterance of the Apostle, that Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed. Without the facts of modern Spiritualism how is the fulfillment of this prophecy possible? The Apostle did not mean to indicate the abolition of the law. Man's triumph over the law does not consist in the destruction, but in the comprehension of the law. The moment a man understands the effect of law, it ceases to be his enemy and becomes his friend; and in the ratio of his comprehension of the normal action of a law, in the philosophical sense is his conquest over that law. The lightning kills as it did of yore, but men have long ceased to look upon it as the evidence of God's wrath. It has become his friend and servant, and ministers to the common comforts and necessities of life. In like manner by becoming familiar with the effect which death produces upon an individual, by observing that it breaks no link in the chain of existence, that it destroys no ties which bind the hearts of humanity, he ceases to fear it, and comes to look upon it not as an enemy, but as a friend—as an onward step in our eternal progress. That this conquest has never been achieved, except, perhaps, in individual cases, prior to the advent of modern Spiritualism, the universal repugnance to the action of this law furnishes ample evidence. The Christian and the Infidel, the saint and the sinner, are alike confounded and baptized in sorrow at the effect which it produces on the persons of their loved ones. I stand here to affirm, on the authority of daily observation, that the Christian Church, notwithstanding its professed faith in immortality, has not yet been able to realize the fulfillment of that glorious prophecy, nor to save its votaries from the doubts and fears which cluster around the graves of its departed; but many cases which have fallen under my own notice do demonstrate that this is not so with the true Spiritualist. In him the prophecy is fulfilled, and his victory over the grave is perfected.

Again: the significance of Spiritualism is apparent in that, conceding that “life and immortality were brought to light,” in the first century, its conditions were never understood by those to whom the revelation was originally made, nor by the world who adopted that revelation, as the ground of its faith. One of the apostles in addressing his brethren said, “It doth not appear yet what we shall be.” They accepted the fact of immortality, but knew nothing of its character,

and no Christian sect has since been able to affirm what is the nature of that existence, or what it is which becomes the subject of immortality. Spirit is confounded with thought. Its form is unknown, its attributes unverified, and the fact as to whether the existence of man is continuous, or recommences at some indefinite period in the future, denominated the resurrection of the dead, unascertained; whereas, modern spiritualism not only reasserts the original fact, and demonstrates it through our own senses, but reveals, also, somewhat of the character and condition of the subjects of that immortality.

Further. Assuming that faith in the ancient revelation is an indispensable requisite to the Christian character, where is the light to come from which shall enable us to comprehend its significance? A man to be understood must address himself to the quickened germs of an experience similar to his own. Where that is wanting, he speaks in vain. This is obvious from a single illustration. When we speak of red, and blue, and green, to a man born blind, we say nothing; but when I speak to you of these colors, I address an experience similar to my own, and am intelligible from that fact. So when the apostle tells us of the facts which occurred on the Mount of Transfiguration, for example, what experience in the Christian world does that memorable narrative address? None whatever. What substantial faith, then, can the Christian world have in that statement? What saving grace is there in the profession of faith in it? But to a Spiritualist, this language is that of a familiar truth. Or take that remarkable manifestation which occurred on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius; how is that to become incorporated into the living faith of the Christian Church? That its true import has been wholly misconceived, is obvious from the most cursory inspection. There stood what is claimed to be the Founder of this Church, bound by his antecedents while yet in the body, and by the gravity of a manifestation of Himself from the life beyond the grave, one would naturally infer, to state the very truth—if it be a truth—of what by the Church is esteemed so essential for its government and practice; that is to say, if the thirty-nine articles of one sect, or the five points of another, were the things to be made perpetual, that was the time to state them. But he did not. He invited his friends to “come and dine,” but made no allusion to the Eucharist. He told Peter to feed his sheep, but laid no injunction upon him to write a creed. He told his friends where they might catch some fish, but said never a word concerning infant baptism. In short, when we compare what the modern Church says with what its alleged Founder did *not* say on that memorable occasion, we see at a glance how utterly void of significance are the notable facts which then and there transpired.—Leaving here the significance of what he did *not* say, let us consider, for a moment, what was both said and done, and compare it with the experience of the modern Spiritualist, and we become for the first time greatly enlightened as to the true significance of both. When we consider the one hundred and fifty and three fishes of that narrative in juxtaposition with the manifestation of their risen Lord, descended from the “house of many mansions” to comfort his friends upon the earth, and compare these things with what is charged as being frivolous and puerile in the experience of modern Spiritualists, we bring the facts of two thousand years directly to bear upon the crudities, absurdities and monstrosities with which the human mind has been perplexed and tormented in reference to the great theme of immortality. What is the conception of the life of the human soul

entertained by the Christian sects? Are not Psalm-singing and other supposed religious exercises on the one hand, or endless wallings in a state of perpetual misery on the other, the staple of Christian conception in reference to the condition of the human soul? I so gather it from the professed faith of the Church. Now, these manifestations are directed explicitly against that gloom and gravity with which ignorance has invested the future of man. They show that the angels do not always weep; that there is joy in heaven, and human sympathy in heaven, which can exert itself upon man in the earth as well as upon the angels; to illustrate which, let me state one fact among the many in modern experience:

J. J. G. Wilkinson, an English scholar of acknowledged eminence, relates that on a certain occasion he attended one of Mr. Hume's circles, when a human hand, belonging to no person in the body, was projected before his external vision, and recognized by him as resembling that of an intimate friend who had previously departed this life. After due examination and conversation with its owner, he inquired if he had any message to send to his wife still in the body, to which it was answered, "Yes;" and on his professing his readiness to take to her any message he might see fit to send, it was spelled out, "Tell her the immortal still loves." "This," says Mr. Wilkinson, "I thought rather a thin message to come from a departed Spirit to his wife in the body." But as it was not his province to judge of its significance, but to carry it, as he had promised, he did so; and on delivering it, was surprised to hear her say that it was the most significant and thoroughly satisfactory message that he could have sent. "For," said she, "you must know that my husband, though a devout Christian while in the body, was greatly perplexed during a considerable portion of his life with the question as to whether we carried with us into the life beyond, the affections which characterize and adorn the life in the body. I derive, therefore, from this message a double satisfaction: First, from its evidence of identity, and secondly from the fact that his life-problem has been solved at last—"the immortal still loves." With this illustration of the significance of Spiritualism, I close my remarks. I have endeavored to show that while it is conceded that the Asiatic experience of the first century brought life and immortality to light, it required the American experience of the nineteenth century to reveal somewhat of the character and conditions of that life—that whereas, from the substitution of tradition for experience, the Christian world has lost the significance of its basic facts, modern Spiritualism restores them to their pristine splendor; that while to the mere traditional Christian, those sea-side occurrences were miraculous and meaningless, to the Spiritualist they are natural and full of import; that whereas, the so-called Christian Church is incompetent to say what the spirit of man is, as to his form, faculties, and attributes, whether human existence is one unbroken continuity or otherwise, the Spiritualist can answer the question absolutely, and can write in all the dictionaries of the future, the glorious definition that a *Spirit is a man*.

Mr. HATCH. I have listened with deep interest to the remarks of Dr. Hallock. His subject is somewhat new to me, but not altogether, as I have occasionally been where there were those who were interested in Spiritualism, and had some power as mediums. I suppose I am naturally skeptical, and that it is difficult for me to believe a thing, except upon the strongest evidence. At any rate, I do not think I am natu-

rally credulous, or that I should be as likely as many persons to receive a new truth. I confess I have seen no so-called spiritual communications that seemed to me to come with such warrant, with such proof, as might be expected to accompany a revelation from heaven. But it is claimed that these communications are higher than the revelations contained in the Bible. The proof of their divine origin should therefore be clearer and more conclusive. To me, however, they seem to fall far behind the Scriptures in this respect. I last Sunday heard, for the first time, Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch. Her speech, or sermon, or whatever it may be called, was remarkable. I suppose she is not a woman of education, and yet her language was grammatical and rhetorical. I never listened to a more fluent prayer than she then offered, even from Henry Ward Beecher himself. The discourse was a very interesting and appropriate one for a Christmas occasion. But some of her ideas shocked me. One of them was in harmony with the views just expressed by my friend (Dr. Hallock). It was this: that Jesus Christ was no more of a benefactor to our race than many other men who have lived;—that he was not *the* Christ, (I think this was her very expression,) but merely *a* Christ. Now, I must say this creates a very unfavorable impression on my mind respecting Spiritualism; for the more I have investigated the subject of the divinity of Christ, the more firmly have I become convinced that he was the Messiah—that he was not *a* good man, but *the* good man—that he was God manifest in the flesh. It seems to me prejudicial to any system, to attempt to make him out to be one of many. It has been claimed here to-night, that Spiritualism is superior to anything which has gone before, not excepting the scheme of redemption, and all connected with it. Now, it appears to me that claim robs Jesus Christ of credit for what he did. I think he brought immortality to light. I think Christianity, which takes its name from Him, is the true term by which to designate the means through which immortality was brought to light. That is my faith and firm conviction. I have seen nothing to lead me to believe He did not shed light upon the gloom which enveloped the future. It seems to me that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which Paul preached, is true, that it is worth preserving, and that it is not to be laid aside until the strongest evidence is adduced of its untruth. That evidence has not been shown to me. I disclaim any desire to shun the truth. I will go any reasonable distance, or incur any reasonable amount of expense, to be convinced of the faith of our spiritual friends, if it is true. If they have something that is ahead of any former dispensation, it is worth our while to give it our time and attention, and I do not mean to shrink from it. We were told by the speaker who preceded me that there was a hand seen, and that it was the hand of a Spirit. My ideas of a Spirit—they may be all wrong—are that it is something not material. That which is material has body, has distinct boundaries. I do not suppose we have it in our power to define exactly what a Spirit is. When we enter the world of Spirits, I suppose we shall learn all about it by our own experience and observation. At all events, I do not suppose that Spirits have hands, and feet, and limbs, which we can see with our material eyes. There are things connected with Spiritualism, which seem to be contradictory, and which are contrary to my former experience. I must, therefore, have some farther evidence of its truth, before I shall be ready to embrace it.

Mr. DUNN, who was the next speaker, was not distinctly heard by the reporter, but was understood to say that the Church—meaning thereby

no particular sect, but all the sects—have made the Word of God of none effect by their traditions; and he had come to the conclusion that what any Church says is true may safely be set down as false. It seemed to him that the Father of lies had paid more attention to the Christian Church of late than he did in the time of the Saviour. The great significance of modern Spiritualism he considered to be, that it is a true light, and for his part he felt greatly indebted to it for giving him a correct knowledge of Revelation. It taught that the laws of God are the same in all the departments of His empire. It taught that every man's character depends upon his moral conduct, irrespective of his belief. It taught that men should cease to do evil, and learn to do well. It taught that God is an immutable being. It disarmed the tyrant, Death, of all his terrors. It taught that we are scarcely conscious of our passage into another state of being. It taught that our friends are not lost to us when their bodies are consigned to the tomb, and that we are not lost to them. The speaker here gave an affecting account of the joy, comfort and benefits he had derived from the assurance which Spiritualism had afforded him that his departed friends watch over him; in which connection, he stated that a consciousness of this fact had sustained him in the midst of severe trials under which he might otherwise have sunk. He then alluded to the pleasantness of the thought that when we leave this world we shall still love those who are dear to us here, and be able to visit them and hold intercourse with them; after which he closed by remarking upon the inconsistency of supposing that an immutable Being would make certain laws for His creatures in this sphere of existence, and different ones for their Spirits in the world to come.

Mr. Howe, after defining the two meanings which are generally applied to the word Spiritualism—the one having reference to the idea of the possibility of the manifestation and communication of the Spirits of the departed to persons in the form, and the other involving the doctrine of the inherent divinity of the human soul—he considered the subject under discussion with reference to the former of these definitions, that being the one given by the essayist (Mr. Partridge). Said he: "Is it true that Spirits communicate with mortals? If it is true, I welcome the new doctrine of the Spiritualists, for I believe every truth in the universe, to be God's truth and therefore to be good. But what I want is evidence. I call for facts. I believe in future life; and if Spirits do exist I should naturally suppose they would communicate to the people of earth. It is more difficult for me to believe that they do exist, and do not communicate with mortals, than to believe that they exist and do so communicate. It would seem singular that they should hover about us, year after year, and give us no intimation as to whether they live or not. Beside, I find accounts of spiritual communications in the Bible. It does not anywhere teach us that intercourse between this and the unseen world has ceased, or that Spirits can not communicate with mortals in the year 1857. Not only do the Scriptures teach the intercourse of Spirits with mortals, but Christ told His disciples that they should do greater works than these, and we are nowhere informed where these things are to stop. I have friends who I feel sure would not deceive me, that testify that they *know*—not believe—that they have had communications from their departed friends. I myself have witnessed very singular occurrences, such as tippings, rappings, etc., but have not seen sufficient to convince me of the truth of Spiritualism. It may be true. I hope it is. I am open to convic-

tion. If it is true, I want to know it. I am ready to receive any message my Spirit-friends may see fit to send me. I think they must realize the importance of speaking to me more than I do the importance of hearing from them, and I think they must have easier access to me than I have to them. Therefore, I call upon them to reveal themselves to me. I want not the testimony of others, but I want something revealed directly to me. Until my departed friends come to me and manifest themselves to me in a direct manner, I do not think I can spend my time groping after them. I have duties in this world that I know are important, which I feel unwilling to neglect for things that are of doubtful importance. I call upon them. I repeat, to manifest themselves to me. I challenge them all to do it now, in this room. We heard something about a man wrestling with a Spirit. I hope he didn't get hurt. I don't want to be hurt; and I wouldn't hurt a friend. If my Spirit-friends should hurt me, it would be unfair, for it would be like a person concealing himself in ambush, and then attacking a friend by surprise. But if any Spirit, whether he be my friend or the friend of any anybody else, will present himself to me in such a way that I can see him, I will try him, although I don't profess to be a great gymnast.

Mr. PLATT did not think the conception of a thing was the thing itself. He was inclined to think that A was A before we learned it. He believed truth existed before we saw it, and that our mere conception of it did not make it. "If Spiritualism is true," said he, "let us have some tangible evidence of its truth."

Mr. PARTRIDGE said: A very general mistake obtains in the popular mind, and especially among Christians, that modern Spiritualism is opposed to ancient Spiritualism, and especially to the Bible. On the contrary, he said, it has not come to destroy, but to fulfill—to confirm the Bible history by corresponding manifestations in the living experience of the people—to demonstrate to the natural senses of men those glorious truths of a future existence, which latterly, in the church and out of it, have generally rested on mere history. It comes to feed men with the real bread of life, instead of leaving them to famish on its *history*. Spiritualism, in all ages of the world, has borne the same significance to mankind, who are on similar planes of observation, or in similar strata of Spirit-unfoldings. In John 12 : 28, we read, "There came then a voice from heaven, saying, *I have both glorified it and will glorify it again*. The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said *it thundered*. Others said, *an angel spake to him*." So, likewise, in our day, the people who stand by and hear Spirit voices, or observe their utterances in other forms say, "It thunders," "it is electricity," or "Od force," etc., etc.; while others recognize the voices and utterances of loved ones, speaking words of consolation, of hope and moral heroism from the invisible heavens, and say it is a Spirit speaking with mortals. These same differences have characterized Spiritualism in all ages of the world; and strange as it may seem, the recognition of Spirit manifestations and their open intercourse with mortals, constituted in mankind the seal of Christianity and the test of church fellow-ship down to within some two hundred years, since which period, and at the present time, such recognition has constituted the test—the seal of church heresy. Truly the things which were first have come last, and the last first. While the churches are verging toward infidelity to the Spirit-world, its inhabitants are manifesting themselves to the natural senses of men—to the materialist, the so-called infidels,

who are rapidly recognizing these angel voices, and thereby becoming Christians, not in mere faith and historical authority, but in a living experience—in knowledge like that of Thomas, who saw, heard and handled Christ. While the Church of mere *Faith* and authority is flagging all around us, the Church of Christ—the Church of knowledge—the Church of a living experience, is, like Aaron's rod, swallowing up the Church of *Faith*, authority and sectarianism, and establishing Christianity in the living experience of mankind and the Church of beneficence among men.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth was not the first medium, but he is the great mediator or medium of the Church on earth. He is greatest because he subjugated personal ambition and human sacrifices, blind *faith* and *authority*, to the *value and dignity of human souls*. He was peculiarly constituted to receive and impart the higher, the divine influx to mortals, and to make with them a new covenant—that is, to render them susceptible to higher and holier inspirations and aspirations, and thereby resurrect humanity from the plane of brute force to that of reason, to humanitarian and divine endeavor.

Throughout all the history of Spiritualism, it seems to have been the effort of a class of Spirits at least, to indoctrinate the human understanding with the truth of Spirit-presence and intercourse. The Scripture history is full of such indications, even down to the closing chapter, in which we find that John was forbid an exhibition of the common folly of magnifying the simple utterances of Spirits into Divine speech and wisdom, and prostrating humanity before it. He was commanded to stand in the dignity and manhood of his nature, and speak face to face with Spirits as with mortals—to be instructed rather than subjugated—to reflect rather than obey—in a word, to be a *man*, and not a tool.

But since facts are called for, and as my time is limited to a few brief moments, I will proceed at once to describe to you my state and condition while I rested in religious faith, and one of the early facts which brought the light and knowledge of immortality—a future state of existence—into a living experience, and filled my soul with a more practical and Christian endeavor. I was relatively a Christian; that is, I loved to do good to my fellow-men, not from a fear of the Devil, but from a love of God and humanity. I believed as strongly, perhaps, as men can believe, in the Bible-history of phenomena and utterances importing that another life awaited me beyond the grave. I accepted the general, indistinct and gaseous ideas as to what a Spirit is; consequently I did not believe it possible for a Spirit to manifest itself in the earth-plane, or demonstrate its existence to the natural senses of men. In all these things I fellowshipped the church idea. But a dear brother had gone to the gold mines, and died there. His Spirit claimed to be present, and communicated with me the second time I visited a medium. It was in Rochester, in September, 1850. The mediums, the Misses Fox, did not know me, neither did they know that I ever had a brother, or know his age, time of death, etc., neither did they know that he died in California, neither that I had sent goods there, etc.; but through the raps and the use of the alphabet, his whole history was minutely given me. The day of the month, the day of the week, the hour of the day of his death, were given me; his business and property were disclosed, and every test I was capable of putting was correctly answered. My ability to test him became exhausted, and yet I told him I did not believe he was communicating,

but that, by some means, my own knowledge of these facts was reproduced through the raps. He then said, I will communicate to you a matter of business, of which you can have no knowledge, but which will be confirmed to you by next mail. He then said, "Messrs. Finley, Johnson & Co., of San Francisco, who had your goods for sale, have failed, and will probably not pay one cent on the dollar they owe!" I answered, "It can not be true; the house is reputed to be very wealthy; and instead of this last communication confirming the claim that the Spirit of my brother is present, it makes me, if possible, still more skeptical, because I feel sure this last communication is not true." The Spirit added farther, that he did not think that I should even get an account of the sale of the goods.

The next mail brought letters confirming the failure. I subsequently wrote to the parties several times, requesting account sales, which they did not send. I then sent my account to a house there, to intercede for me to get account sales. They tried to obtain such account, and finally wrote me they could not, and advised me to trouble myself no farther about the matter; for if I succeeded in getting account sales the house would not pay one cent on a dollar. And these things I never had the means of knowing, were disclosed to me, and things I did not believe at the time, have been confirmed. This signifies that a mind independent of any person present, communicated the facts, and that that mind was what it claimed to be, my brother.

It may be considered undignified for a Spirit to communicate with mortals relative to business affairs. But those who can recognize nothing but business in this communication, are those who are incapable of distinguishing between angel voices and thunder. But to me it signifies that my brother lives; that he spoke to me from the Spirit-world; that one of my own lineage has survived the dissolution of the body, which is a prophecy of my own future existence; that he loves me, and believed it worthy of his effort to convince me, even by the disclosure of business matters, of the great fact that intercourse between the natural and Spirit-worlds is open; that Spirits have a care for mortals; that mortal life, in a degree, determines the spiritual state. The "thunder" of this communication, to me, was, like that which shook Mount Sinai, pregnant with stupendous significance to human souls. It was the resurrection trump which summoned humanity from doubt and materialism to a life in the Spirit. I had flattered myself that I believed and was a Christian, but like hundreds of those who make open profession of Christianity, I can say that I believe now as never before. History sinks into insignificance before the living demonstration of Spirit-existences; and whereas it was difficult for me to believe a Spirit-hand wrote on the wall; that Spirits opened the prison and lighted Peter out into the street; that Spirits rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre; that Moses, Elias, Christ and others, appeared, spoke, walked, and eat with mortals—I can now believe them all very probable realities, because I have experience in the same line of phenomena. I hear raps, and find intelligence not my own controlling them. Things are communicated which were never in my mind. I see a medium's hand controlled to write communications, conveying to mortals the secret acts of the Spirit, performed while in mortal flesh. My own secret acts and thoughts are told me from these invisible intelligences, and also the secret acts and thoughts of others are disclosed. A Spirit-hand has written on the walls of my own house; a visible Spirit-hand, without a visible body,

has written with a pencil on paper to me, directly under my own eyes. I have such manuscripts; I saw and felt the Spirit-hand. It was a portrait of a human Spirit, significant of the existence of human Spirits and their intercourse with mortals beyond the grave.

Mr. LEACH.—In conversation, a few years since, with a friend, who ranks high as a public lecturer in this country, and whom I had known in England, I asked him if his faith in Christianity was as strong as I knew it once was. Said he, "Yes, for I believe there is a manifestation of Christianity to dawn on the world, which is beyond the conception of any now living." Such has been my faith, and is now; for I believe the great heart-religion of Christ has yet to manifest itself in a way which shall subdue all men unto it. Those great principles which were uttered through Christ, and which I believe came down from God, were never meant to be penonetics. If we trace the history of the Christian Church from its inauguration to the present time, we shall not fail to perceive that there has been one continuous struggle between the heart, or the love of humanity, and the head, or the love of power. The one would say, "Feed my sheep;" the other, "Believe my creeds." The one would bind up the wounds of the afflicted; the other would burn its victims at the stake. The one would unite all in love; the other would divide the world into sects. Now it seems to me that we are entering on a new era of the world's history. Old Church forms are dying out, and men all the over the world are looking for a new Church—a Church which shall bind together mankind in one brotherhood. One of the means by which the advent of such a Church is to be hastened, I believe to be Spiritualism, which, if true, wars against one of the main errors—indeed the central error—in the so-called orthodox Church: the error, namely, that Christ died to give satisfaction for our sins, and to reconcile us to God. This great error has tended to destroy man's feeling of responsibility. I am aware that it is claimed that this orthodox faith must have with it works, but that does not remove the difficulty, so long as there is an eleventh hour in which a confession of belief is said to cleanse a man, and fit him for heaven, no matter how foul he may be. Spiritualism is about to cast out this old dogma. Old Orthodoxy tells you that by believing so much, you may get to heaven. Spiritualism, on the contrary, demonstrates that men carry all their sins and affections with them to the Spirit-world, and that no man can enjoy heaven till he has it in his own bosom. One great influence of Spiritualism is, therefore, to sever men from old creeds, and make them receptacles of higher truths. An old building must be destroyed before a new one can be erected on its basis. One of the good results Spiritualism has already produced is, that it has led thousands, not only in this country, but all over the world, to look into the writings of that great and good man, Emanuel Swedenborg. He lived a century ago, and yet, up to the present time, he has been looked upon almost as a madman. Those who know something of him can testify to his greatness and goodness. But it is said Spiritualism destroys men's faith in the Bible. I doubt it. It found the house empty, a dogmatic theology having driven out the true faith in the Gospel; so that it would be wrong to lay the blame to Spiritualism, which has given to thousands what Christianity had failed to give them—faith in a future. It is too true that many Spiritualists do reject the Bible and Christ; but I believe of a large proportion of them that the Christ-principle is still in the heart, though the head may reject it. To me Spiritualism makes the Bible more beautiful

and profitable than it was formerly. for now I read it understandingly. A great many things recorded in it concerning the early history of Christ, which I once doubted or rejected, I can now comprehend and believe. I know there are many Spiritualists who have had a similar experience to mine in this respect ; and I think any one who will read the Christian Scriptures as a Spiritualist, believing that communication between this world and the world of Spirits is possible, will read them with more pleasure and profit than if he had no belief in spiritual intercourse. There are many Spiritualists who do not reject the Bible. I think a large proportion of them do not. Those who do, reject it because they rejected it before they became Spiritualists. In my opinion, Spiritualism has tended to bring those back to the Bible who have rejected it. I will read you the following hymn, which came through a spiritual medium,* and which I think will prove to you that all Spirits who communicate are not rejectors of the Word of God :

“ The Word is my pillar by day and by night ;
It moves o’er the desert in glory and might ;
It flames in the morning to bid me arise,
And points through the darkness my path to the skies.

The Word is my angel, who with me hath trod
The pathway of love that leads home to my God ;
And though we may pass the dark vale of the tomb,
The roses of Eden shed fragrance and bloom.

The Word is my fortress ; I stand on its hight,
And conquer the foes of my soul in the fight ;
Its love is my weapon, its truth is my shield ;
The Lord hath within it his presence revealed.

The Word is my palace, with Christ at the door ;
I enter the courts where the angels adore :
They rise to receive me with lovely accord,
And welcome me in to the feast of the Lord.’”

This is one of a number of hymns which are coming through the medium referred to. I think he told me they came quite independent of his own mind. But at the same time that Spiritualism is productive of all the good results I have enumerated, and many more, I think it should be received with great care and caution, believing as I do that men enter the Spirit-world as they leave this—that is, that a man who is bad when he leaves this sphere, is just as bad when he enters the spiritual sphere ; and that a man who is good when he passes away from earth, will still be good on entering the eternal world. If the writings of Swedenborg and others on this subject are true, we are surrounded, immediately after entering upon the future state, by the worst of those who have passed away from earth—by liars, sensualists, skeptics, etc. And if we are receptive to their influence now, they will come back and manifest themselves to us, and endeavor to make us believe what is not true. They are sometimes very artful and subtle. I know several persons who are wofully deluded by Spirits. I would, therefore, although I believe in spiritual manifestations, advise persons not to give themselves up to them without a firm reliance on God, and to be careful how they receive communications from any Spirit. I

* T. L. Harris.

think there is a great responsibility resting on the Christian Church, and especially the clergy, in reference to these things, because they have rejected Spiritualism, and driven it, as it were, into the arms of the unbelievers of Christianity. The Christian Church should investigate it. Those who will investigate it, with a spirit of reliance on the truth of God, and for pure uses to humanity, I believe will not be deceived by lying Spirits.

Mr. WILSON : I have listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks of those who have participated in the discussion this evening, but I must say that I have been somewhat surprised that Spiritualists should claim to have such a perfect knowledge of what pertains to Spirits and the Spirit-world. It seems they regard the future state as a matter of knowledge, and not of faith. I have always been taught that religion, and all things connected with it, are mere matters of faith, and not of knowledge. The resurrection is a subject of faith: Christians have faith to believe that, as Christ rose from the dead, they shall also be raised from the dead ; but it is not a matter with reference to which they have, or claim to have, any positive knowledge. The reason why Christianity is so transcendently beautiful is, because we have to embrace it by faith. Our spiritual brethren are not satisfied with this. They must have personal communication with the Spirit-land before they will believe. That is, I think, asking rather too much. God has revealed himself to mankind in his own way. He has given his Son Jesus Christ to make known to us his true character, and to show us what is best for us. Those who accept his teachings, think it best for them to receive Christianity by faith, and not by absolute knowledge. Now in regard to modern Spiritualism, I think it is no more than the Salem Witchcraft. I have been somewhat conversant with the history of that sad delusion. I have heard my grandmother, and others who lived at the time, and who had a personal knowledge of many of the strange occurrences which took place in connection with it, relate some of them, none of which could be in any way accounted for. How will Spiritualists dispose of these facts? The things that were said to occur actually took place. The parties who claimed to witness the remarkable phenomena referred to, did not lie. They really saw what they said they did. Those in whose presence such manifestations occurred, were hung as witches, and everybody believed they were witches. These unfortunate creatures did possess wonderful power. The whole thing was a great mystery, and created a vast deal of excitement. But where is it now? It has all passed away, and nobody believes anything of it. I believe Spiritualism will die out in the same way, and that in fifty years it will be numbered among the things that were. The gentleman who last spoke, although a Spiritualist, acknowledged that Spiritualism, in some of its phases, is very bad. That is enough to show that it has no mission direct from the Father. If the Spirits who communicate are evil, as he says many of them are, the communications they give can not proceed from God ; for I do not believe he sends his messages through any except the purest channels. Christ was not obliged to have any one stand between him and the Father, when he desired to commune with him. But if I want to receive a communication from the unseen world, I must apply to a third party. Now if my departed friends wish to communicate to me, and I am anxious to have them, why can they not do it directly, and in a private way? Those Spirits who are said to communicate, seem to be obstinate in this matter. They must give their messages through a

third party, instead of communicating directly to the one for whom their messages are intended. All these things go to show, I repeat, that what they communicate cannot proceed from God. It has been confessed here to-night—and it is a matter of fact, whether it is confessed or not—that some of these Spirits will lie. That, certainly, is admitting a great deal. But I can not understand why it is that they should lie. Men do not lie unless there is some motive for their doing so, and I can see no motive for Spirits indulging in so wicked a propensity as lying, when they are disencumbered from the mortal body. I believe that when we enter upon our future state of existence, we shall rise—instead of sink—in the scale of being. It is claimed that Spiritualism teaches the existence of no devil. Now I have a particular friend who received an orthodox communication from his departed mother. She told him there was a place of future punishment, and that if he died in his sins, he would not be happy after death. So he went to work to become a Christian, changed his manner of life, “got religion,” as the world terms it, and joined the Church. This fact goes to prove that the Spirits in the other world differ on questions connected with the future state of existence, and that they often hold the same theological views there that they did while here. To sum the matter up, in a few words, *I can not believe in Spiritualism.*

The Rev. T. L. SAWYER: I have listened with great interest, and perhaps I should say pleasure, to the remarks that have been made here this evening, though I must confess I am not satisfied with the explanations that have been tendered us. It seems to me there should be, in a revelation of this kind—if it is indeed a revelation—the importance that we should suppose must attach to a communication, or a class of communications, from God. It seems to me its significance should be so striking, so prominent, that there would be no difficulty in fixing it in our mind, and carrying it along with us. I suppose there was no such doubt hanging over the doings of Christ, as now envelops Spiritualism, so-called. For instance, there was a significance in his miracles, in the revelation he made, in his views of God, in his teachings with respect to him and the future life, and in the manner in which he urged duty, that made them stand apart from the other teachings with which men at that time were most familiar. There is a singular diversity of significancies of this new revelation, as explained here to-night. There is not that unity which we should naturally look for, or which existed in the case of Christianity, to which I just referred. The Apostles happened to seize pretty nearly the same view of that revelation, and when they went out preaching there was not a diversity of doctrines among them, but a great degree of harmony. I am happy to see the Christian tone—and tendency, perhaps I might say—by which the remarks of the gentlemen who have spoken have been characterized. I am happy to observe this, because I supposed there was a great tendency among Spiritualists to oppose Christianity, and that this new revelation was to take its place, in a manner independently in the world—to stand out by itself—and whether it is destined to do so or not, is a question which certainly asks for a solution. At the same time, I am not satisfied with the view these gentlemen express of the Bible and of Christ, because it does not seem to me to come up to the view which the Bible itself expresses, and which Christ took. If I understand him, he was not merely *a* Christ—a medium of communication between God and men—but *the* Christ. He stood forth pre-eminent. “I am the vine,” said he; “ye are the branches;” and God

was the great Husbandman over all. If they abided in him they would share in his love. And he spoke of himself as "the light of the world," and the great good that God was pleased to confer upon the world. If I caught the full meaning of those gentlemen's remarks this evening, they do not believe that Christianity is complete, or that Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith, but that we are to have it modified by revelations, made to us from day to day. I do not know but this may be true. I am not disposed to be dogmatic in these matters. I am only expressing my views on the subject under consideration. Dr. Hallock spoke of our democratic idea, and of importing our religious notions from Asia. I do not know what he means by that. We have imported a great many notions from Asia. The manner in which he spoke of that matter seemed to say, "We will look very kindly upon these religious notions which we have had from the old world. We are not to rely on them, however, but we are going to seek new notions for ourselves, and are not to receive our religion from anybody—least of all are we to receive it on authority." Well, suppose we discard the Bible and Christianity, and lay them aside for the time, and let them only take their place as theory—let them be considered as a historical development of the human race—and then let us go out in search of a religion. I will put myself under the charge of Mr. Partridge and Dr. Hallock. Let them guide me. Will they bring me to higher truth than I have received from Christianity? Will they give me clearer views of things than I have received through Christianity? I do not think they can. Spiritualists I know differ exceedingly in their views. Many of them are thorough-going pantheists. We had our attention called, the other evening, to a prophecy of Andrew Jackson Davis, who, I understand, is as great a pantheist as ever existed. It seems there was a time when there hardly could have been a God at all; but gradually he worked himself out into some form, and now occupies a place in the universe. There is every kind of diversity in the theories and views of our Spiritualist friends that you can find. I believe, in the whole civilized world. They range through the whole field of thought and religious belief. Some are very orthodox, and some very heterodox. How is this, if we have just entered upon a new era—if we are just receiving a new revelation? It seems to me this is a singular way to begin our work. There should be more unity and concentration—more oneness and directness. I confess one of the most difficult things I have to grapple with in this spiritual theory is the character of the communications we have from the spiritual beings who come back to reveal themselves to us. Take the whole of the communications that have been made, from first to last, in this spiritual development, and I might almost venture to say that you could not find, in the wide range of human experience, a greater mass of frivolity, trifling and jokes—and very stale jokes, oftentimes—than they constitute. They want dignity, and are destitute of everything that would naturally be looked for in a revelation from God. This has let the subject down immeasurably with me. It really seems that if my father or mother should come back to speak to me, that father or mother would have something to communicate that had the dignity of common sense with it—something that would be wholesome and profitable to me. But how is it with these communications? Those that are quoted in the spiritual papers are enough to show me that the tone of them is rather low. They are puerile and unimportant. They sink into absolute insignificance. I do not think there is to be much success attending the effort

to make this system of spiritual manifestations a part and parcel of the Bible. I do not think these communications can be tacked on to the Bible and make it all one piece. The Spiritualism of the Bible seems to be distinct from that of the present day. The communications recorded in Scripture seem to be of more importance than those that are now received. I wish I could get a little light on the subject. I feel somewhat like the gentleman who said he wanted direct communications from the Spirits himself. I once sat down with a friend in the presence of a celebrated medium, to converse with the Spirits. I asked the Spirit-friend with whom I was confessedly conversing, why it was that I was under the necessity of going there and sitting down with that young woman, in order to get communications with him. "Are mediums," said I, "wiser than other people?" "No." "Are mediums," said I, "any better than other people?" "No." "Are mediums," said I, "any more spiritual than other people?" "No." "Then why, in the name of truth, can you not speak with me directly as well as through this medium?" My friend, with whom I was talking, said he would explain that another time. I have not had the opportunity of asking him again, and there the matter lies. But I am told that Spirits do the best they can—that there are certain persons through whom they can manifest themselves, and others through whom they can not manifest themselves. If they can find a suitable medium they rap at our doors, as it were; if not, they do not. I do not understand this; I do not believe there is any satisfactory explanation to be given of it. I do not think these mediums are in any respect better than any of us, and yet a few of them have monopolized all intercourse with the future world. They can open or shut the gates of heaven at their option. It is, to some extent at least, a business. I confess that while there are points about Spiritualism that have attractiveness, there are other points that seem repellant. There is beauty about some of the writings of Swedenborg; but after all, they are singularly shadowy, singularly unsubstantial, singularly unsatisfactory, except here and there a passage, like angels' visits, few and far between. Christianity, on the other hand, seems to me fitted for all minds, qualified to meet all our necessities. And while I would not close my eyes or ears to spiritual developments, if there be such things, I would still keep my hands pretty firmly fixed on that ark, and wait and see what will come of these spiritual developments, if they have any substantiality in them. If there is any truth in them, it will ultimately be brought out; but I would caution all others as well as myself, against giving themselves up to their influence. We all know what attractions things from the Spirit-world have for us, and how ready men are to be led away with that which claims to be of spiritual origin. We know how strong is the influence of that which professes to enter into the future life and give intelligence concerning our mode of being, there. It is one of the wonders of Christianity that divines have taken notice of, that Christ and his apostles never entered that field at all. They speak of the certainty of a future life, but never attempt any exposition of it—never labor to give us any distinct and obvious views of our surroundings there.

Mr. WOODMAN: At the last meeting it was suggested that the scientific view of Spiritualism be discussed. I believe that view has not been touched upon at all, thus far, in this discussion. As the subject may come up again, I would state that if it does, it will probably be considered with reference to its scientific aspects. Dr. Comb, in the sub-

sequent edition of his "Constitution of Man," gives an article on "Phrenology and Religion," answering the charge that Phrenology is infidel. He contends that any man has a right to exercise his faculties, whatever they are, and that no one has a right to call him infidel. He goes farther and says, that in the exercise of his own faculties, he has come to the conclusion that Spiritualism is just what each man is capable of receiving, and it may be that he is so nervous, so visionary, so excitable, that he hears Spirits all around him, when they do not exist. This is an aspect of the case which deserves to come up here.

At the close of Mr. Woodman's remarks, a motion was made that an evening be appointed on which to continue this discussion, but it was afterward withdrawn, and consequently no vote was taken upon it. The meeting then adjourned.

Thus closed a brief interchange of views between the devotees of the history of ancient spiritual manifestations, and those who have thereunto added a living experience. The respectful earnestness, frankness and kindly toleration which characterized these meetings, has very much strengthened our hope for truth and human progress; and notwithstanding the time allotted to the Essay and Discussion was quite insufficient to do anything like justice to this great unfolding of the nineteenth century, we are grateful for the opportunity of presenting to a Christian Association some of the instances wherein men, women and children have, throughout all the ages, down to the present day, seen and conversed with the Spirits of persons who have passed from earthly forms; and thus to vindicate, both by the parallel demonstrations of former times, and the living inspirations of the present day, the impartiality and universality of God's providences to his children.

Notwithstanding we might have much to say respecting the positions taken by some of the friends who differed with us in the discussion, yet we will not subject ourselves to the possible thought of unfairness by occupying the few remaining pages of the "form" by any criticism, but will occupy the space with remarks upon several of the popular objections urged against the spiritual claims of the current phenomena.

First. It is said that the spiritual manifestations, so called, are but the deceptive tricks of persons called mediums.

We submit that the mediums are of all ages and classes of the community; that many of them are children in respectable families, many of whom would not have their Spiritualism known out of the family, for the world; that some of the mediums who are used to write are *young children* who can not read or write in their natural state; that large bribes have been offered to mediums to disclose the manner in which the

phenomena are produced, which have been universally rejected with the reply, "We don't know;" that the communications often transcend the knowledge and capabilities of the mediums and persons present; that secret acts performed by persons while on the earth are disclosed by those processes which claim to originate with Spirits; that events transpiring beyond the natural perceptions of man are communicated; that thorough examination by competent persons have been repeatedly made without tracing the phenomena to any material causes; that all persons who have thoroughly and fairly examined the subject have come to the same conclusion, viz.: that Spirits produce the phenomena. These are, we think, a sufficient answer to the objection.

Secondly. It is said, again, that the facts as stated do not occur, but that the mediums and circles of friends are psychologized or hallucinated to believe that they do occur.

Psychology in this sense is the act of one or more minds operating on, controlling and hallucinating the minds of other persons. If this be a fact, we submit that those who *deny* are as liable to be hallucinated as those who *affirm*. But *who* and *where* is this hallucinating mind? Is it conscious of exercising this power? Is it in earth, or in heaven? If in earth, it should be pointed out, and those who object to its influence should concentrate their mental powers to exorcise or overcome that influence. We submit, farther, whether mortal mind is capable of producing so great a variety of manifestations, and especially to disclose the secrets of other minds, both on the earth and in heaven, and to move ponderable objects without visible contact, and in opposition to the power of men to hold them. And we submit, again, that the facts destroy the theory; that the phenomena, under all circumstances, claims to have a spiritual origin. This claim was first made by or through the phenomenon itself—the raps during the first examination, when nobody had learned or believed that Spirits had anything to do with it. The same claim has been uniformly persisted in by the phenomena under all circumstances, whether in the presence of skeptics—those who believed it to be psychology or otherwise, and we submit that all persons who believe in the spiritual origin of the manifestations have been convinced contrary to, and in spite of their opposition and predilections. This claim is fatal to the earthly hypothesis; it is inconsistent with itself, and must be abandoned by every rational mind.

Thirdly. The spiritual origin of these modern manifestations is denied on the affirmation that the Bible record declares that intercourse between the natural and spiritual world—between

Spirits and mortals—was closed with the Scripture record. We confess we should be sorry to find such a declaration in our Bible, since its truth would be impeached by the experience of many thousands of living and competent witnesses.

The Bible itself is a record of spiritual manifestations made to and through men in past ages. Those men observed the facts, endeavored to comprehend them, made a record of them, with their commentaries, and handed them down to us. Glorious truths are contained in those Scriptures, as there always must be in all intercourse with the advanced planes of human existences. But we protest that men who have preceded the present generation were no more capable of comprehending and rightly interpreting spiritual phenomena than men are to-day, and we submit that the examination and efforts of our ancestors is no apology for our delinquencies and neglect of the continuously-unfolding spiritual truths. The prophets and apostles may well be our exemplars in the examination, but not authorities for conclusions of the whole matter, including subsequent unfoldings and present living inspirations.

Fourthly. Another objection is that the origin of these phenomena is Devilish ; that is to say, they proceed from the Devil and his imps. We submit that this objection is defective in many essential particulars, some of which are that, a personal Devil with imps is not proven to exist outside of man ; that if it be proved that there are such existences, and that these phenomena are produced by them, then they are *spiritual*. But we submit that whoever takes this position looses his Devil, the facts being entirely inconsistent with the characteristics ascribed to that supposed personage.

Fifthly. The spiritual claims of these phenomena are objected to because the *communications* differ in sentiments, and the *physical* manifestations differ in character.

We submit that Death, so called, does not annihilate or change the man, but only transports him, so to speak, into new conditions and relations of life ; that from this *new* condition of existence the man utters himself, and his expression is characteristic of his earthly manifestations so far as the new instrumentalities of his manifestation, whether physical or mental, will admit ; that the idiosyncracies of a person, mentally and physically, constitute his individuality ; that these are not abruptly destroyed by change of condition either in the natural or in the spiritual world, but by growth, which is so gradual as to preserve the identity ; that the differences objected to show that man is not annihilated, nor lost in humanity or God, but exist in individu-

ality, and in the exercise of their essential faculties, functions and attributes of his being. We submit, farther, that the natural and physical manifestations of Spirits from the invisible sphere, differ no more widely than do those of men in the earth-sphere, and that these differences prove the existence of our friends individually, and are essential to the preservation of individuality on the earth, from being absorbed and lost in the authority of the heavens.

Sixth. It is objected that Modern Spiritualism tends to infidelity in respect to the Bible and the Christian Church.

We submit that the modern manifestations of Spirits can not be infidel in respect to any former manifestation, but a conformation, by analogy and of living experience, of the historical facts; they necessarily confirm the facts and truths of ancient Spiritualism—that they can only be infidel to the false forms, interpretations and creeds—that whoever thinks they are so, and will examine himself in the light of facts and reason, will undoubtedly find an infidel to *truth*, however loyal he may be to the Church. If the charge of infidelity is intended to apply, as it often is, to those persons whom the Church could do no better with than turn away and anathematize as infidels, who become Spiritualists. We submit that the reason these people accept Modern Spiritualism is, because their reasons have been vitalized by a living inspiration, because their natural senses have been addressed by spiritual manifestations, and because they have been fed by the bread of life instead of the *history* of it. For this reason they live to praise God—the Spirits of the new dispensation, and join with us in disseminating the real bread of spiritual life to the millions famishing on the mere husks of history and authority.

Seventh. If it be said we have no need of Spirits manifesting themselves, that the Bible is sufficient, we submit that if the Bible was sufficient, there would be no diversity of opinion as to its significance, or infidelity (so called) to its precepts.

Again. That man is not to live by precept alone, but by fact; not by faith, but by knowledge; not by outside authority, but by a living experience, not of earth alone, but of heaven also; not of time only, but of eternity; that no man can live in proper relations to another state of existence of which he *knows* nothing, or has only faith; that intercommunication between the natural and spiritual worlds is essential to the proper life of mortals.

Again. We submit that the objection against modern Spiritualism is the same one the Jews made against Christianity,

they had Moses and the prophets, and objected to Christ and Christianity.

We submit that resting in *faith*, and *relying* on the discoveries, experiences and histories of the Christian fathers (so called) for *our* Christian graces is destructive to a true and living Christianity, and to moral and humanitarian progress. We submit for parallel the spendthrift resting in faith, that the patrimony of his father is all-sufficient for his needs. Piracy and appropriation of the virtues or industry of others never cancels the demands of God and nature on the individual soul.

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