

MODERN SPIRITUALISM,
ITS TRUTHS AND ITS ERRORS;
A SERMON, 3

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MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance ; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire : whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner : but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."—MATT. iii., 11, 12.



MODERN SPIRITUALISM may be defined as a series of actions on and in the human spirit and body, and on the objects of the natural world ; produced by the more abundant descent of the Divine Spirit into Christendom and the world, for the purpose of unfolding the more interior and spiritual, as well as natural, human faculties, into higher states of force, perception, and utility. It may be defined, in its counter movement, as the results produced, in man and on nature, by the opposite efforts of infernal spirits, to take advantage of new openings, to invert to evils, and to destroy the faith.

To those who are most thoroughly conversant with the results of modern Spiritual Manifestations there is no room left for a doubt, that the multitudinous inhabitants of the Demon World are engaged in a universal movement for the conquest of the human soul. In this discourse I purpose to set forth, first, some of the facts and reasonings which establish this view.

The Christian Gospel divides the inhabitants of the Demon World, or general sphere of spiritual evil, into two classes ; first, rebellious spirits of some other race than ours—sources of the world's wickedness, tempters of mankind to crime ; and second, members of our own human family, who here were given up to work unrighteousness, and who, subsequently to the decease of the body, exist as tempters, and, if possible, as ruiners of mortals in the flesh. It is to be regretted that, in our translation of the New Testament, the distinction which exists in the original, between the pre-extant and originally tempting fiend or destroyer, with his associates, and the demons or disembodied spirits of our own race, is not preserved. Our

Saviour taught that Satan existed as a personality, acting directly, by secret will-force, on the human race. He also taught that, however potent in wickedness the destroyer might be, he was but one of a multitude of mighty fallen spirits, his myrmidons and accomplices. He also affirmed that a large share of the spiritual and physical maladies of mankind were the results of demoniacal possession; that the spirits of the corrupt departed of our own world, fixed in their impieties, sought perpetually to make men physically, intellectually, and morally, their slaves.

The Saviour was right, or wrong. If wrong, revelation, redemption, salvation, as He taught them, fall to the ground. If right, all members of the human family are hated with implacable malignity by infernals, versed in all arts, laboriously active in all sorceries, by means of which they endeavor to drag men spiritually into perdition.

The illustrious Florentine poet, who sung so grandly, so terribly, so gloriously, of Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell, but reaffirmed the universal tradition of the primitive Christian age. Our Protestant ancestors, in their revulsion from the carnal interpretation and gross malpractice of the Latin church, departed from the exegesis of the Gospel, as affirmed by its first expounders, in regard to the doctrine of an intermediate spiritual condition, between the state of perfect holiness—Heaven, and that of unrelieved impurity—Hell.

ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM.

Heaven, Hell, and the Invisible World constituted the three terms by which the wisest Christian thinkers expressed their knowledge of the future. I need not quote here from authorities accessible to scholars, and only add, that three classes of spiritual individuals were supposed to exercise an influence on men in the flesh: the angels of heaven, the fiends of hell, the wandering or inquiring spirits of an invisible state. The influence of the angel was purely good; that of the fiend as absolutely bad; while the inhabitants of the invisible state were capable of infusing a mixed and varied essence. Through the angel, streamed a line of truth from Deity; the fiend, even when he spoke truth, did it for the purpose of obtaining

access to the soul, and future credence for some atrocious falsehood ; the wandering and seeking spirit might convey a mixture of truth and error, one or the other preponderating as he was more or less divested of, or established in, the principles of righteousness.

When we thoroughly search the records of Christian antiquity, we ascertain, moreover, that mediumship, or the openness of men, whether good or bad, to angels, fiends, and the various grades of human spirits in the intermediate condition, was the admitted, accepted orthodoxy. Again : as we analyze the facts which they present, the tenets which they adduce, we discover their belief in spirit-sight, in spirit-hearing, in spirit-seeing—in fine, that every sense, pertaining to the corporeal body, through which the mind takes hold on nature, when exalted to a spiritual degree, brought man into sensational relations with heaven, hell, and the invisible spiritual world.

Through the same channels of information we also discover, first, that fiends and depraved spirits were able to counterfeit angels, good spirits, and departed worthies, to appear alternately of either sex, and so deceive the eye ; second, to speak in simulated tones, in any variety of speech, to counterfeit the infantile, the womanly, the manly accent, and thus to cheat the ear ; in fine, that they were consummate actors of their infernal parts.

But more : the imagination, as a mirror, became often a glass of deceptive representation. There the entranced subject beheld, as in reality, Elysian fields and banquets of the gods and goddesses, visions of imaged beauty, art-creations of transcendent genius, penciled on the brain by invisible infernals.

Again : the production of a state of ecstasy, in which, as if freed from material limitations, the soul, with sublimated senses all alert, seemed to be floated through illimitable ether, wrapt in ravishing harmonies of tone and color and exquisite sensation ; and beheld interminable landscapes peopled as by immortals ; this was supposed to be an art, practiced by the sorcerers and destroyers of the soul, whereby to deceive and charm their victims to the irretrievable and fatal end.

It was by means of Spiritual Manifestations of this delusive character that the adepts in the old heathenism, when all other efforts proved ineffectual, did battle against

the faith of Christ. The augur, the oracle, the priest and priestess, and groups upon groups of the initiates into pagan mysteries, stood and warred against the incoming Gospel with Mediumistic utterances, arguments, visions, charms, talismans, and powers.

According to the faith of our first Christian forefathers, the whole hierarchy of Pandemonium, around its rebellious centre, working on and through every lost spirit, male or female, of our race, with a unity of purpose, though with a boundless variety of deception, first warred against the Son of man, then against all His followers. Earth was the theatre of a combat, around which met in hostile battalions, and struck home with spiritual weapons, the angels of heaven, the devils from hell. Life, from the cradle to the grave, was all one continued temptation. Good and evil spirits—God's messengers, the Destroyer's host—from the dawn of infant consciousness, invisibly ministered to, or sought to infatuate, the human creature; a faith which, if true, shows that life is no child's play. It was in this conviction that our Redeemer lived and acted, that His disciples believed, that His apostles taught. Around a nucleus of facts and principles of this character, sternly aggressive against the abominations of the heathen world, grew up, by degrees, the huge reality—Christendom.

Throughout the teachings of apostles, the homilies of the first Christians, runs the constant artillery-fire of adjuration—"Submit to Christ: own Him as the head—Lord of angels, King of men, conqueror of the demon-world, the only Saviour by means of whom the human spirit can be rescued from the clutch and gripe, the mesmerism and possession, of gigantic and infuriate spiritual foes. Evil, to their thought, was not a something impalpable, but existed, knit into most compact and subtle bodies of destroying fiends. It was their doctrine that evil spirits, unless resisted, had power to bewitch the reason, to infatuate the will, to befool the senses, to inflame the appetites, to pour the seething perdition of their polluting and destructive passions both into the moral nature and the material frame."

With this solemn attestation of Christian antiquity before us, as a preliminary monition, let us turn our attention to the current Spiritual Manifestations of our own age,

and consider them, first, as facts; second, as dangers; third, as evidences and confirmations of Holy Writ.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

What are the facts of Spiritualism? This opens the door to myriads of statements, from all the four continents, and from every class and variety of men. Table-turning shows that viewless intelligences, good or bad, have power to handle material substance. So do those well-attested facts of human media carried through the air, of communications written, through pen or pencil in broad daylight, with no corporeal hand in contact with the instrument. But they prove more. The invisible fingers that control an accordeon or smite the keys of a piano, that can deposit phosphorus in locked cabinets, ignite lucifers, burn smooth holes through glass, as with electric bullets, bolt and unbolt doors, produce, in fine, that vast series of actions in matter which contemporaneous testimony authenticates; unless restrained, may poison, if evil, all organizations—may destroy the complex body of the civilization of the world.

These attested facts demonstrate the presence of invisible yet embodied Powers, which, unless restrained by rectitude within or iron compulsion without, may commit any atrocity with corporeal impunity. Where is the safeguard in nature; in human prudence of a worldly sort? If we are able to prove, either by impure teachings, or wicked actions, on the part of any spirits, the existence in them of moral malignity, of moral disease, we have indeed more than a Trojan horse within the walled city that protects home and altar, wife and child. What if earth's old invader is gathering his gloomy and ferocious hosts for the last great conflict! What if the destructive side of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism is a putting forth of the power of that "wicked one, with signs and miracles and lying wonders, whom the Lord shall destroy with the breath of His mouth, and consume with the brightness of his coming."

Happily, here we are not left in uncertainty; all is clear, palpable, direct, conclusive. What are some of the avowed teachings of latter-day spirits, received, owned, and practiced by some of their associates.

First, that nature is God. Second, that God is an un

developed principle, in process of evolution. Third, that the Jehovah of the Bible was an unprogressed, ferocious human Spirit, who deceived ancient media. Fourth, that the Lord Christ was but a natural man, possessed of the ordinary mediumistic faculty of spiritual clairvoyance. Fifth, that our Lord's theological and psychical teachings were but the reproduction of false mythologies. Sixth, that he held His power, great or little, because under the influence of spirits of departed men.

Shall we go farther in this catalogue? We open, then, another series of spiritual teachings. First, that all things originate in nature. Second, that man is a development of the animal. Third, that the first parents of the human race, born of brutes, were themselves but savages of the most degraded type. Fourth, that all things and beings are governed by natural necessity; that man possesses no freedom in the moral will. Fifth, that there is no retrogression, through moral disorders, either of the individual or of the species. Sixth, that vice is virtue in its unprogressed or germinal condition; that sin is an impossible chimera. Seventh, that self-love is the very centre and fountain-head of all human affections, the chief inspirer of all human or spiritual actions. Eighth, that the Spiritual World is but a theatre for the continued evolution of human spirits, under the perpetual force of nature working through self-love.

Or again, turn to another series: First, that the Scriptures are not the Word of God, and that the Divine Spirit never vouchsafed utterance to man. Second, that the Messiah, our Redeemer, is not in any sense a Saviour of the soul from sin, death, and hell. Third, that He never met in combat our spiritual foe; that he never overcame or cast out destroying spirits from their human slaves; that He never made an atonement or expiation for sin; that He never rose in His reassumed humanity from the grave; that He never ascended, glorified, to Heaven; that He never communicated the Holy Ghost.

Or again, to another: that there is no judgment to come beyond the grave, wherein the Lord shall adjudge the departed according to their deeds, the good to eternal life, the evil to everlasting punishment and the second death. That all men, irrespective of formed character for evil here, become the delighted and immortal inhabitants

of a perpetual elysium. That broad is the way, and wide is the gate that leadeth unto life eternal, and that none can help to find it.

Or again : and now as touching a moral point, of social interest. Spirits declare that there is no marriage as a natural law, but that polygamy, or bigamy, are as orderly as the monogamic tie. But, if this be not frequently inculcated, what shall we say to the broadly put forth declaration of spirits, that the marital tie is the result of natural affinity, and that where two are legally conjoined, and the wandering inclinations of either rove to another object, the new attraction becomes the lawful husband or the lawful wife.

Now, as a man of honor, I pledge myself, and stand committed to the assertion, that, through mediumistic channels, all these things are taught as emanating from the spirits ; and worse is taught, if possible, to those who penetrate the inner circles of the gloomy mysteries, where the old magic is born again.

If I strip the veil from this horror, I have a right, as a Christian teacher, so to do. I but reiterate matters which the best informed of Spiritualists are as fully acquainted with as that media speak, or that tables move. I do it, not for the purpose of exciting prejudice against the spiritual movement of the age, but rather because I view these things as the confused shapes and images of darkness, rolled up from Infernus, to delude as many as possible into a corrupt and ruinous belief in spiritual sorceries and delusions ; and so to disgust all, whom they can not thus infatuate, as to induce them to remain *neutral* in the great coming fight between the Spiritualities of Heaven and the Spiritualities of Hell. Murder, adultery, suicide, and the most revolting blasphemies may be traced directly to the communications and puttings forth of impure spirits, both in ancient and in modern times. But those which the most external observer can thus trace, serve merely as the visible bubbles that show the current of the dark deep stream.

Thus far of the counter movement. Briefly, as to the other side. While within my own observation, by far the greater portion of physico-spiritual manifestations have been connected with a very palpable dishonesty on the part of spirits, I must conclude that others have ema-

nated from high sources and been attended with benignant consequences. When the field is cleared of disorders, in the putting down of evil, and the preparation of mankind, we have every reason to expect that matter, no less than mind, will be glorified by frequent displays of the celestial beauties and harmonies. When devout persons tell me of floods of delicious odor diffused upon the air—of angel-voices heard by the bedsides of the dying, or where two or three are gathered together in pure love and holy converse—of grand and solemn words, pronounced by invisible lips, and pulsing along the atmosphere—of visions of unearthly beauty, where landscapes beam, appareled in the express purity of the Divine Nature ; when the mother clasps the sweet form of her heaven-nurtured infant ; when wife and husband meet, whom death has no power to part, since the affections of the pure are mightier than mortality ; when the good, the nobly great of other days, evince their presence by a dispensation of heroic strength, to fill the bosom with an equal virtue, and inspire it for as true a battle with the evils of the time ; when, as I know, through angel-messengers, the seemingly dead are kept from being buried alive ; and mariners saved from shipwreck on the wide ocean ; and travelers preserved from equal perils—from fire, or from explosions, or from the fall of buildings, or the infection of pestilences, on land ; when invisible hands strike from the grasp of the physician unsuitable medicines that might affect the life ; when the sick are healed through the presence and influence of angels ; when charities are made more discriminating ; and lips made less censorious ; and bodies more sound ; and hearts more virtuous ; when greater strength is given for greater burdens borne for humanity in God ; when the hungry are fed ; and the naked clothed ; and those sick and in prison ministered unto, through the direct presence and felt influence of angels and good spirits with man ; every argument that concurs to fix my faith in the Christian Gospel forces me to admit a Divine element in the Spiritual Manifestations of our day. That God is preparing a people for Himself, in whom all apostolic gifts and golden-age blessings will demonstrate their presence, is no longer a doubt.

DANGERS OF INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS.

Since my arrival in Europe, the tenor of private communications to me has been, not, "How shall we get into communication with spirits?" but, "How shall we find salvation from the direful tortures with which they assail the body, invade the reason, wring with exquisite anguish the keen nerves of the spiritual organism, murder sleep, destroy happiness, and prevent the discharge of the wholesome duties of daily life?" The secret cry of anguish is, "Who shall cast out the demons who seek to make the body their playground, and the heart their habitation?" And, so far as I am able to judge, the majority of such instances are traceable to the habit of attending *séances*. I earnestly call attention to this point. The man of iron nerves may say that he feels no change of state. He may laugh down the idea of peril. With him it is but a question of time. The vitriol that eats in a day through iron wire, has but to continue the process to eat through the iron bar. It is slow, this poison, but it is sure. I lift the alarum cry of danger. It is not safe, unless there is a Divine use and value in the act, and so unless it is in the order of Providence, either to submit to a spirit's influence, or to participate in circles for spirit-manifestations; and this for reasons which I now proceed to specify.

First, because of the Mesmeric influences exercised by spirits. It is their perpetual effort to invade the human organism, whether natural or spiritual. It is rare, where ten or twenty are promiscuously assembled, that all are pure women and just men. The medium may, or may not be so. Spiritual depravities do not prevent the manifestations of spirits; far from it. Current facts on this point need not be adverted to. But granting that the medium is impure, the flooding waves of an unholy spiritual magnetism stream out through every pore, through every fibre. Like seeks like; if there is one in the circle whose internal desires are evil, the first rush of the out-coming wave is into that organism. Here the current mingles with the electrical and the magnetic fluids, tainted already with impure moral qualities. Spirits have now found their distributing reservoir. The influx of the spiritual essences is followed by their diffusion over all present.

Persons of pure mind may, through hereditary liabilities of the corporeal structure, be inundated with this most potent effluence, and all unconsciously ; but the virus is taken into the system." The surgeon who, in dissection, cuts his finger, and inoculates himself with the virus of the cadaver, may die ; but who shall say what consequences may follow the inoculation of the wounded spiritual organization of some incautious inquirer, when the virus is not from the dead body, but from the morally dead human soul. Well may those who have passed through the terrific ordeal, and taken unconsciously the infection, and realized the unspeakable horrors that sometimes ensue, and been saved from them through His mercy who alone casts out the demon—well may they tremble, even to remember the paroxysms, the crisis, of the disease.

As with a voice from the secret chambers, where the fair, the young, the virtuous, the unsuspecting, from the mere habit of attending the *séance*, have felt the foul contact of the larvæ from perdition, I cry to all—"Shun the *séance*, where the unregenerate, or giddy, or worldly, or volatile and careless medium officiates as the middle stander and opener of the door between the natural and unseen worlds. If you do not wish to become yourselves demoniacs, shun the place, and shun the occasion." To the pure, to those who would remain pure, I can hint such reasons as, if uttered, would make every ear tingle. From what Heathen Spiritualism before Christ was, we may infer what modern spiritual intercourse, pursued in an irreverent, or curious, or worldly spirit is liable to become.

. OVERRULED RESULTS OF SPIRITUAL DEMONSTRATIONS.

Circles for spiritual communications are dangerous for reasons thus specified. While, however, from my own experience, I am convinced that an habitual attendance upon them is extremely prejudicial, in the Divine Providence these perils have been overruled beneficially in classes of instances which I specify. First, where Materialism and gross Sadduceeism have been disproved by the demonstrations of the existence of departed spirits, and their ability to operate on matter and mind. This has been the chief end of positive utility thus far ac-

complished. Second, where the prevalent tendency to soul-worship and the deification of the internal principle in man, accompanied with the idea that any spirit, freed from bodily limitations, whatever the prior character of the individual, must *per se* be of a highly refined, ideal, æsthetic nature. It requires but a brief observation to satisfy the intelligent, that the life of the human spirit, after physical decease, can be as debauched and degraded as while it had the natural body for its medium. A few facts of this character utterly disprove the heresies of the Gnostics and Manichees, alarmingly prevalent in our own day. Third, in proving that spirits possess knowledge of secret facts of individual history and experience; thus establishing, beyond a doubt, that thoughts and actions radiate their impressions into the spiritual world. Fourth, as disproving the vulgar error that the intellect of man, free from the body, possesses unerring prescience or foreknowledge; while many spiritual predictions are verified, an equal number remain unfulfilled. Fifth, as demonstrating the fact that spirits, in one portion of the earth, are cognizant of events transpiring in other portions. Sixth, that wit, humor, the love to mystify and torture, fondness for dramatic display, huge self-esteem, and ever-changing states of chimerical speculation, often distinguish them; that gossip and small talk, with the perpetual desire to intermeddle in human relations, are also characteristics. Seventh, that those spirits whom results prove deceptive, are able to simulate virtue and give advice to a good life—which is often the case on earth. Eighth, that spirits profess every shade of religious doctrine, whether Pagan, or of the various denominations in Christendom, while no profession is a guarantee for the purity of their aims, or the sincerity of their declarations. Ninth, that spirits are able in a most remarkable manner, though as was seen before, without a demonstration of identity, to inspire within the human breast, for a time, boundless confidence. This feature is one of the most important, proving the existence of occult influences, which impress mesmerically the mental faculties. Tenth, the imprinting of signs and tokens of the human body, proving the power of spirits, in all times, to have brought results such as make up a large share of alleged Roman Catholic miracles, particularly that of the stigmata.

Eleventh, for the first time, in the light of these phenomena, the so-called miraculous evidence of the various religions, both of antiquity and of recent date, is brought within the purview of a rational investigation, of which the first result is to show that possibly even Mohammedanism was no fraud on the part of its author, but a genuine spiritualism; that the Romanist legends of the Middle Ages contained at least a large element of fact; that the visual experiences of Ignatius Loyola and François Xavier, and Catharine of Sienna, and the more astounding physical manifestations accompanying the ecstasies of St. Theresa, are all susceptible of verification; but at once removed from the catalogue of frauds, and from that of Divine evidences of the truth of any special creed. I am aware, of course, that, in the finale, we are gathering facts and adducing principles for a trial of the Divine claims of the Gospel itself. I rejoice in it. Every step which the clear-minded, sound-hearted man takes in this vast realm, verifies anew the absolute Divinity of the Christian Religion.

Another important field of discovery, which I would class under the head of overruled results, is that which refers to the operation of deceptive spirits in projecting ideas designed to bewilder the intellect on all great social, psychical, mechanical, or artistic points. Insanities and incoherencies, which the half-informed, excitable mind may seize as germs of infinite discoveries, are often suggested in the circle, or at the *séance*. There, for instance, the Comptist may enter into communication with spirits who affirm that to their infusions of thought, their leader is indebted for his theory of positivism. There, Communists of the school of Owen find assurances that their peculiar doctrine descends from superior sources in the immortal world. These hints are valuable, as showing why the cultured intellect is liable to such endless variations—why the evolution of truth on earth is not majestic and uniform, but impeded at every point, and liable to endless refractions. The source of all mortal aberrations is in the unseen state.

There are exceptional instances, where attendance at the *séance* confirms the wavering belief in Christianity, or calls out a more Divine spiritual life. The mind grasps at phenomena that demonstrate an unseen world. At

first, perhaps, it may too hastily place confidence in the friendly motives of communicating spirits, and bitterly find reason for regret ; nevertheless, with the Spirit of God in the heart, and a pure conscience, and a mind capable of the best exercise of reason, the inquirer soon finds himself acting with a calm caution. He allows the manifestations to go on ; he classifies them and obtains results which, as we have seen, can hardly be over-rated.

Or again : the results are overruled when, finally, full of the Spirit of God, and of prayer, and of a sound mind, and with a powerful and impenetrable odyllic sphere, the cautious inquirer, looking to God for light and aid, braves the possible danger, to wrest the weak and the impressible from the operations of the spiritual mesmerism by means of which demons seek to subjugate. One such person in a circle will often stop all communications, because the keen lightnings of the Divine Sphere flowing through him, destroy the magnetic conditions under which the medium is enabled to be used ; or even repel and cast down the familiars. Second, when a good man, thus qualified, takes his place, it is not impossible but that the Divine influences, flowing through, may change the character of the mediumistic phenomena. In this case (for Divine purposes) good spirits may communicate, with solemn warnings and earnest adjurations to holiness, without which, no man shall see God. Here the subject is beset with serious difficulties. I leave it with one remark. The Holy Spirit striving with man, leaves neglected no opportunity of reviving the dormant, or healing the diseased moral nature. Even through media, whose influence we are constrained to consider on the whole pernicious, the cry of spirits in torture for evil deeds is sometimes heard. Mediumship is seldom so consistently of one character but that, from time to time, it displays features wholly opposed to its prevailing traits.

The attendance at the *séance* is again overruled for good, when, owing to the presence of a guardian angel, the familiars are obliged to recede or make way for a true communication. Thus, in the presence of devout Christians of the first age, the very oracles of the temples were obliged to confess that their deities were impostors, and that Jesus was the Lord.

I do not deny the possibility of communications through media being of a high, pure, and truthful character. First, exceptionally, under the conditions before stated. Second, alternately with those of an opposite nature, where the medium is in states of great moral conflict, and exhibits the spectacle of a divided soul ; now discerning broken gleams, or rising into clear perceptions of Divine truth ; then partially magnetized, and even temporarily made subject to deceptive spirits. Third, I admit and insist on a mediumship in Christ, free from fanaticism, and compatible with the discharge of every humane duty, under which the character shall be rapidly unfolded to the beautiful symmetry of the angelic man.

CHARACTER OF MEDIA AND INQUIRERS : IMPORTANCE OF RESULTS.

Here I would carefully discriminate between the character of the spirits who communicate in an unwarrantable manner, and for deceptive ends ; and the characters, first, of media ; second, of inquirers ; and third, of too credulous and over hasty acceptors of the delusions which bad spirits promulgate.

It does not follow that the deceptive communication argues that the medium is willfully at fault. Many yield themselves to be the passive agents of spirits, with the firm belief that they are doing men good service. Many are used by spirits so unconsciously that they do not know the import of the communications, or the quality of the influences, imparted through them. And not an inconsiderable number are persons so indolent in mental habit, so unacquainted with the prime facts of ethics, so habitually swayed and biased by personal or social influences, that they are unable to discriminate between opposing principles, even when the distinction is most clear. Some of the most astonishing media for manifestations of a purely physical character are of the most corporeal mental type, and, in certain instances, exceedingly stupid and obtuse. Others, again, are persons whose organizations are the theatre of fierce conflict between opposing powers ; who, for a time, are partially overcome, as to their bodies, by the evil ones, but who pass through this crisis by the operations of the Divine grace, develop herculean powers of moral resistance, and stand

at last in the power of Christ, superior alike to the artifices and the forces of demons. The greater number of the media of the counter-movement, however, are individuals who have been physically subdued by the injudicious use of Mesmerism, of which more farther on. Bursting, as these manifestations have done, upon the world, at a period when even a belief in the possibility of such phenomena was rapidly becoming obsolete ; passing with rapidity from land to land, to classes unprepared either by physical or moral training for such enforced associations, it is manifestly unjust to identify the honest, well-meaning, ignorant, and often unwilling agent, with the malignant and deceptive workers of the wrong.

For the generality of the inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism, I claim high merit, for honest dealing with phenomena which, from any stand-point, are most worthy of investigation. They are important, especially, to all professional men. To the physician, as connected with, and throwing light upon, the most subtle problems of health and disease. To the jurist, as indicating alike new causes and new preventives of crime ; but especially as affecting the value of testimony, and showing the partial insecurity of the present laws of evidence, as incorporated into the civil and criminal code. It indicates a shrinking from the duties of his position for the Divine to stand aloof. I hesitate not to say, that one year of thorough investigation of accredited spiritual phenomena now occurring, will throw more light on the real meaning of the New Testament than any amount of mere critical reading of the expounders of the text ; for here we see human nature wrought upon visibly, alike by the Spirit of the Living God and by the myrmidons of darkness, and exhibiting all the sublime or terrible movements and counter-movements of the tremendous fight. Till the theologian has seen media in their varied states, he has never seen human nature stripped of its disguises. The shallow clergyman may, it is true, become an infidel—to the Lord, to the Word, and to regeneration—as the sophistries which he encounters find a congenial soil within his own inner man. But the Christian at heart will come out of the study in the highest sense orthodox and evangelical, and, will superadd a knowledge beyond that extant in any creed.

To all who ever exercise or are open to mesmeric influences, these manifestations are of transcendent value, as showing the varied natures, operations, and results of occult forces in and on the human spirit and its frame. They totally end, to the metaphysician, the dubious incertitude of all our present mental philosophies, because they lay bare the facts of man. To the artist, in any department, whether poet, orator, painter, sculptor, dramatist, novelist, or musician, they present a field which, when cautiously, and with a Divine judgment investigated, discloses the lost secrets of universal artistic inspiration, whether of a celestial or infernal character. Yet, as we shall see, the dangers at every point are enormous, and to be conquered at last by the good alone.

It is deeply to be regretted that so many, on all other points candid and judicious, have scoffed at the inquirers. The mistake, into which the majority of those who investigate are liable at first to fall grows out of the incapacity of the human mind, without practice in this very field, under a prayerful sense of duty, to grasp the problem in its unity ; to unravel it in its vast complexity. Where men fall—and many do fall—it is in attempting its solution without admitting and taking into account the Biblical doctrines of the Fall, and of the redemption through the incarnation of a Redeemer. The moment we lose sight of these principles, it is as if a man, walking over the surges of a boiling ocean, should let go the hand of the guiding and uplifting God. With too rash and indiscriminate judgment, Spiritualists are massed together ; and acceptors of facts, which they know, are often made responsible for practices which they utterly condemn. The disciples of our Lord, and the Pharisees who adjudged Him to death, were alike Spiritualists. The first Christians, and the priests and votaries of paganism, were alike Spiritualists. The persecuting Romanists, and the martyred Waldenses and Albigenses, were alike Spiritualists. But one sees at a glance the injustice of confounding them. So, at the present time, when men of the most opposite religious faiths agree simply in admitting that spirits do communicate, it is a grave error in popular judgment to hold one class responsible for the totally opposite interpretations of the other.

Nor is it Christian (I say this with the more earnestness because I have no sympathy with the Anti-Christian phases of the spiritual movement)—because we know that wrongs have been in all ages committed from the spiritual world, and false doctrines taught and false morals inculcated—to charge upon the temporary adherent of a base philosophy (though that philosophy embody the doctrines of demons) a willful complicity with the plans of its invisible promulgators. Let those who think they stand in a faith of the Gospel, take heed lest, under similar besetments, they too may fall. Many have journeyed, through inquiry into spiritualism, from utter materialism to a belief in immortality. Many of these, as I believe, through detection of the arts and sophistries of wicked spirits, will yet be found the faithful and courageous disciples of the Lord. But this requires experience and time. If multitudes have fallen into mistakes and delusions, this was, in perhaps a majority of instances, the result of inexperience, not of false intentions. While, therefore, I admit that a very great proportion of spiritual communications are painfully deceptive, a large class of Spiritualists, whether at present on the right ground or on the wrong ground as to doctrine, are entitled to respect. Whatever may be the destructive results to character which the reception of a Spiritualism that wars against the Word may bring—and we can not entertain other than the most gloomy forebodings—our utmost charity should be exercised to those liable to its disastrous results.

It remains to be added on this point, in conclusion, that as in the primitive Christian church the spirituality of Satan, and all lost spirits, was met and conquered by the spirituality of Christ, descending through all heavens, and all angels, and all good spirits, so, in these last days, the issue must be joined again. This opens up the subject of Christian mediumship—a vast and fruitful field.

CHRISTIAN MEDIUMSHIP: GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT.

Christianity is the Mediatorial Religion. Every Christian man, that is, every truly consecrated and purified man, is a direct vessel and medium for the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of Christ, which descends to be immanent in the heart, enlightens the intellect, while it inspires the

will. Messiah is present with His true disciples unto the end of the world. Christ lives in the bosoms of all His united, loving children. It is the first condition of Christian mediumship that a man shall give up all to Christ, that He may dwell in us, and that we may be complete in Him. Out of the depths of absolute self-renunciation we climb to heights of spiritual victory. We become in Christ positive men. We are illumined by the Holy Ghost. The soul is inspired with a burning love for Jesus that makes the metaphors of Oriental poetry seem weak and poor. He is in us and we in Him.

Forgetfulness of self, and an entire devotedness to truth and virtue and suffering man—a profound sense of personal unworthiness—absolute worship of Christ as the One resplendent Presence, in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily—heart-broken contrition for sin—a genuine love for the Holy Scriptures as the Divine Word—an habitually humble and prayerful frame, and desire to be conformed in all things to the Divine—are among the characteristics of this mediatorial condition. Such as in any degree attain to it are conscious of being led by a Divine dictate, which, at times, becomes an absolute voice within the breast. We are led by it in perfect freedom, and, under its influence, the will continually becomes more energetic, the understanding more harmonious and perfect, the personality more reverent and august. It is to servants like these that Christ gives power, in every age, to exorcise from human spirits the invading armies of the demon world. Of this class were Tauler, George Fox, the Wesleys, and among English non-conformists, Bunyan, Baxter, Berridge, and a martyr host, whose remembrances are enshrined in souls rescued through their labors from the terrible perdition of a heart given up to evil and unreconciled to God. We have all known such, perhaps, among our acquaintances; known them by the unruffled calm, the sweet repose of thought and feeling—land-locked in the Divine harmonies; know them by words that reveal unfathomable things within our own most hidden breasts; known them by an invincible persuasion to purity and holiness of life which seemed to pervade the very air in which they moved and spoke. Witnesses and mediums of the Holy Spirit of indwelling God; human shrines of Jesus,

with, for external revelation, the Bible interpreted through their own interior experience—these are the true interpreters of things unseen ; for they possess the mind of Christ, and the Spirit that searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

I shall utter words distasteful to many of my hearers. It is nevertheless true, that such alone are safe in venturing on the perilous border-land between the world of nature and the world of spirit, as have crucified the in-born serpent in their own hearts ; and learned, experimentally, what our Saviour meant when he declared “ye must be born again.” In substituting the mesmerized subject, the flippant volatile youth, the frivolous or pleasure-seeking young woman, the professional trafficking wonder-worker, for the experienced self-crucified disciple of Christ, when seeking to penetrate into spiritual mysteries, multitudes have committed a grave, if not a fatal error. It is a resort, in fact, to the machinery, by means of which old Heathenism maintained a commerce with the invisible. As the work of regeneration deepens in the human heart, the Christian becomes aware that lost spirits are about him, and that, if he yields to their allurements, he is lost. He grows by resistance. “He that overcometh,” saith the Lord, “shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

To communicate with spirits is always perilous. The early Christians fought, with all their might, a life-long battle, to prevent themselves from being taken possession of by the swarming multitudes who infest the threshold of the invisible world. They knew, by experience, the dangers of spirit-intercourse ; and subsisted in a hardy power because they resisted unto blood, striving against sin. The provinces of the dying Roman empire abounded with mediatorial demoniacs. We must not confound the spiritual gifts, which Paul enumerates as in the Church, and which were developments of human nature in the process of regeneration, under the operation of the Holy Spirit of our God, with the opposite manifestations of the spirits of departed men, as exhibited through the swarms of media, who then pursued their art in the African, Asiatic, and European cities ; but especially under the patronage of the pagan religious authorities.

Under the broad and indiscriminate name of Spiritualism, the public mind, at the present time, confounds the spiritual states of perception and communication which our Lord came to establish among believers, with the opposite states of spiritual hallucination and possession, which He came to overthrow. I proceed to offer a few hints, which at least may precede the future disentanglement of the subject.

I.—The Holy Spirit and its operations. It is to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the soul that we are indebted for clear perceptions of the nature of moral good and evil. This is of the first importance: it affects our being in the vital centre; it deals with the hidden man of the heart; according to our state, it steepens us in ecstasy, or afflicts us with wholesome pain. It pleads with us against sin; it urges us to become reconciled to God; to resist Satan with all his hosts. Alas! that the office and work of the Holy Spirit should so have been forgotten in our day. It descends, as a breath, into the spiritual lungs; it leads us, penitent, to the dear feet of God; it operates in us as a resurrection and a life; it breathes life into the dead or dormant affections; it kills in their very inmosts each self-generated and impure desire; it drives before its cleansing effluence the mephitic vapors of evil; it leads back the prodigal soul from its long wanderings, to dwell with Jesus in conformity of love. Alas, alas! the very words we utter, to the mass of men convey no meaning, though, to holy hearts in all ages, the Comforter has been spiritually heard, felt, and communed with, just as sensibly as ever friend was manifested to friend.

But, opposite to this, comes the alarming danger. The most deceptive of all infernals breathe an effluence upon such organizations as are opened to their reception, and seek to counterfeit the Comforter. I have myself known media who were persuaded that the Holy Ghost dwelt in them, when, in reality, they were possessed by sorcerers from the lower world, who, with blasphemous mockery, made use of the phrases of the Bible, the more completely to beguile and destroy their victims. By their fruits they are known. There is much of this at the present day, and it increases.

II.—The Holy Spirit, which purifies the heart, also illu-

minates the mind, developing perception of interior truth in different degrees, according to the character or state of the individual believer. The Spirit of God dwells within us to enlarge, to unfold, to balance, and to perfect the intellect, making the reason a throne for the Word of God. Under its operations the illumination of the faculties is like the coming on of morning. It produces what may be termed a transfiguration of the body of the receptive faculties, as of a man-angel, filling with plenary fullness the structures of the natural form, inhaling the thought-airs of Deity ; and mirroring on the transparent disk of every pure affection its correspondential truth. The human spirit exists within the body, not a chaos, but in form—in the human form. The eyes of the soul exist within the natural eyes. A full complement of spiritual senses reside within their natural vessels and media. The Holy Spirit possesses power to open at will any one of these senses ; so that seeing, hearing, and the like may be dual, that is, spiritual as well as natural. If there is any Divine end in spirit-sight, the Holy Spirit of God can make any good man an accurate seer, whether of angels in heaven, spirits in the intermediate world, or infernals in their dark abyss. Woe to that man who attempts to interpose his will between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God, to force open those organs which the Holy Spirit keeps closed, and to arrest the evolution of those He ordains to open. It is as terrible a thing as it would have been, when the Lord was incarnate, to step between Him and the objects of his grace. Were it needful, at any moment, the spiritual ears of all Christendom, and all the world, might open in an instant of time, and all hear as do the angels ; or the confirmed bad might instantaneously hear as do the fiends. At one touch of the finger of the Spirit upon the universal eyelids of the race, the great white throne might be apparent ; the Life-luminary of the heavens might interpenetrate the thrilling sense with the eternal ray ; the visible form of the Lord might be discovered in the glory of the Father, with all His holy angels. Well for many that this is delayed.

TRUE SPIRIT-SIGHT : DISCRIMINATED FROM OTHER VARIETIES OF
VISION AND PSEUDO-VISION.

That clear internal vision, which is the result of the operation of the Holy Spirit in the human breast, is not to be confounded, first, with the faculty of calling forth subjective images from memory, and casting them upon the disk of the imagination ; nor, second, with the faculty of perceiving the odylie emanations from the magnet or the human body ; nor, third, with the ordinary ghost-sight ; nor, fourth, with the lucidity manifested in the common mesmeric trance.

First, not with the faculty of calling forth subjective images from memory, and projecting them upon the disk of the imagination. In this case we but revive the photographs, impressed from nature upon the surfaces of the interior memory. Man, without doubt, possesses the faculty of developing mental pictures within himself, which become forms to the imagination-sight. All, with more or less of artistic skill, indulge in the creation of airy tapestries, and sculptures of the mind. Thoughts, too, are often embodied in the mind, and become visible to the imagination-sight, conveyed from the minds of spirits in the body, or out of the body—spirits good or evil. But the real lucidity of the inner eye, produced by the operation of the Holy Spirit of God, while it may enable the man to look within himself, and see all his own thoughts, and all his own affections, and all the memories of his deeds, whether good or evil, preserved in lasting symbols of glory or of shame ; and, while it may make apparent the whole organum of the structure of his essence, both without and within ; and, while it may make the bodies and the memories, the thoughts and the affections, of angels, spirits, and infernals, with an equal minuteness apparent, is both a perception of the absolute, spiritual forms of men and things, and of the qualities by which they are pervaded and possessed. It is such a sight as a man might have in nature, who could at once see *bodies* and *emotions*—the trunk of the tree, and its hidden sap—the flowers, and their diffused aromas. It is a perception of realities within all semblances—of qualities within all objects ; yet including form and semblance, quality and object.

Second, Divinely given vision is not to be confounded with the faculty of perceiving odylic emanations of the magnet or of the human body. The latter is merely natural sight, carried to a finer degree. The magnetic and electric emanations, which play, with corruscating flash and sparkle, around all natural objects, are themselves a finer quality of diffused matter. But this refined and diffused matter, however brilliant, is not of the quality of spiritual substance ; therefore, when the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of the spirit-man, these fire-rainbows and opalescent gleams of inner nature, are still below the visual plane ; he sees over them, past them, and through them—nor is he bewildered by the intervening substances.

Third, it is not to be confounded with the ordinary ghost-sight. The faculty of ghost-seeing depends upon a higher degree of natural vision than that which enables lucid persons to perceive the more apparent odylic emanations. The haunting spirits, who abound in tradition, and who from time to time make their presence manifest in any old, settled neighborhood, are departed men and women, who still remain, as to their spiritual bodies, encompassed by odylic forms ; who move surrounded by congregated magnetic elements ; who, in fact, by this condition, are borderers between the natural and spiritual realms. As to themselves, as spirits, they are not seen by the ghost-seer, who beholds but their magnetic surfaces, wrought into fantastic outlines, but commonly presenting a shadowy resemblance to the flesh and blood organizations which they once possessed, and to the styles of costume to which they were habituated. But Divinely given spirit-sight is not impeded by these magnetic robes and structures : it sees the real spirit within, both historically, and consciously, and morally, as he is, and knows him thus, both as to quality and form.

Fourth, nor, finally, is it to be confounded with the lucidity manifest in the ordinary mesmeric trance. Mesmerized subjects ordinarily perceive, first, in their most perfect states, the intricacies of the internal organs of the natural body ; second, the flaming odylic emanations of the magnet ; third, the material, though externally invisible, magnetic vapors, which envelop spirits of the quality beheld by ghost-seers ; fourth, pictorial visions, projected into the natural sensorium from the mind of the

mesmeric operator, or from persons with whom they are, for the time, in *rapport* ; fifth, the odylic emanations from Nature, which they mistake for the spiritual world ; sixth, spiritual images, when mesmerized in a two-fold degree by spiritual and natural agencies, in cases in which some attendant spirit magnetizes them through the mesmerist. Then they behold, first, whatever successions of spiritual images the attendant spirit is able to produce, upon the highest ground of the odylic sight. For this reason, the "clairvoyance," so called, of a mesmerized subject often runs into the most minute descriptions of matters in the world of spirits. Sphere upon sphere of landscape, blazing with creations of the most transcendent architectural character, and enriched with the flora and fauna of a more luxuriant and tropic life, may be successively described, yet still be found a series of delusions, having some ulterior end, foul with perdition. The demon clothes his spiritual picturings with the odylic substance of the mesmerist's cerebral system, to exhibit an ideal panorama, baseless as a dream. It was in this manner that the initiates into the corrupt idolatries of latter Greece were led, as if with open eyes, to the Elysium, above whose topmost mounts the gods and goddesses of their mythology existed, in the endless conjunction of outward beauty and inward depravity ; surrounded by the scenery of Heaven, but cherishing the vileness of Hell.

The readers of the Holy Scriptures will observe what might be termed the reticence of Deity. Our Lord delineates Heaven and Hell in a few great Michael Angelo touches of moral outline. The angel and the infernal are burned in, like Divine sun-pictures, on the face of the Word, and there fixed everlastingly. Choral multitudes of inspired affections within the regenerate breast, rising in airy tableaux, sport above the inner landscapes of the imagination, made visible in the light of the Divine Sun, and there they endlessly repeat the choric song and movement of angelic hosts. And the inner eye of the good man opens, sometimes in life, oftener at the solemn pause of death, to the archetypal reality, of which the fair mirror of faith reflects at best a distant gleam. Oh ! the wonders of that unspeakable vision ! The heart is caught up bodily to the extasies of God. This is reality. There is a clairvoyance and a *clair-audiance* proper to the regen-

erate human soul. It is Christ's Heaven that is made apparent. It is God's Holy Spirit that opens eye and ear for the wafted beauty, for the coming harmony.

The mesmerized subject may delineate a supernal landscape, all made up from the sunny memories of the fairest objects in this world, sublimated and glorified under an invisible artist's cunning hand. What trances were indulged in under the touch of mesmerizing priests and presiding demons of the temples! Zeus shone on his throne of ivory and marble, wielding the golden thunderbolt. Aphrodite reveled, fairer than fairest dream of earthly beauty, on her sunlit wave. These were the visions that reconciled enfeathered millions to the abominations and discrepancies of Paganism. The path of idolatry was strewn with loveliest blossoms; it led through arcades of sublime clairvoyant visions; but the mirage faded, with the going down of life's sun, on the red fire-sands of the spiritual desert. The vision faded in that age, but it begins to be revived in this.

MEDIUMSHIP, AS CONNECTED WITH MESMERISM.

We approach now the topic of Mediumship, as connected with Mesmerism and the healing gift. The gifts of healing were communicated by the Lord to His apostles, and were transmitted by them in a diffused but gradually impoverished stream to the earlier bodies of believers. Mesmerism is a rediscovery of the truth, that all the subtle essences and auras of the human frame are transmissible. A great reassertion and fundamental facts; it must become in time everywhere current; and while some bless, others will curse the day.

The mesmerist communicates to the person whom he operates upon the things of his own spirit, his bodily health or disease, his vital fluids and forces, streaming with the fire of his passions, potent with hunger or the satisfactions of his appetites. The odylic currents, darting through the ruling eye, the operative hand, convey the heaven or the hell within the human breast. The conscientious man will impart the wine and milk and fire of his own life, made healthful by the Spirit of God presiding at their sources (unless, indeed, through inattention to the laws which govern the exercise of the gift, he communicates poisons, which may be done). The evil

man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, will saturate his magnetism with lust, with covetousness, with hate, with hostility to the life-giving doctrines of the Word. The unsuspecting subject will then receive, unless guarded, a potion drugged with the madness of the lower world.

Moral qualities and mental states transmit and propagate themselves through the mesmeric fluids. All are, consciously or unconsciously, practicing mesmerism. Man radiates himself upon the atmosphere; he communicates an effluence in the glance of the eye, the breathings and modulations of the voice, the touch and pressure of the hand. The good are like human roses in God's garden; the bad, deadly nightshades that overhang the pools of hell. The human body is made to be the channel for Divine influences. Our Lord was incarnated in the natural form, that through it, He might communicate a vivifying virtue to the human race. He came "that we might have life, and have it more abundantly." When the afflicted gathered, a "virtue went out of Him" to "heal them all." It is the presence of Christ now within the human breast, operative there by the Holy Spirit of God, that enables the truly conscientious to communicate healing to their fellows. His command to His children is—"Heal the sick!" Against the practice of imparting healing virtue in the Lord, I have not a word to utter. Nay, we are commanded to "communicate in all good things." If I go on to point out what utter destruction may result to body and soul through the mesmeric practice, let it be borne in mind that I aim not to check its use, but to guard against its abuse. To be a successful mesmerist upon a natural plane requires intensity of will. The will-effort, practiced by the operator, draws up the subtlest essences of the life into the brain, and pours them forth—an invisible current—swarming with the spiritual forms of the thoughts and of the affections—not primarily into the cerebral system of the individual operated on, but first into the heart. It is the very citadel of the responsible nature, that sees the salient forces of a superior organization brought to bear upon herself. If the heart receives these influences, she distributes them throughout the form.

Mesmerists, whether male or female, gradually obtain

that immense power with their patients which results from the inter-diffusion of the one life—the forces of the one animal soul—throughout the other. If it is a medical fact that healthy blood, taken from the veins, and as a last expedient for saving life, injected into the system of a patient, while it assisted nature to rally her almost defeated forces, and enabled her to conquer the disease ; yet, from that time, made the person thus assisted feel herself hopelessly in love with the youth whose organism furnished the aliment ; how intense, how overpowering may be the relations established, when, not the blood merely, but the spiritual essence of the blood is imparted from frame to frame. Sharpers beguile their dupes, *roués* of both sexes, their victims, by means of the unsuspected exercise of the mesmeric arts. The fortune, the person, the faith of impressible subjects, often are all at the mercy of unscrupulous practicers of these most potent spells. Nor is proximity always necessary ; for upon the subject mind the will of the operator may act with resistless power, from county to county, from continent to continent.

The mesmerist habitually imparts the finest essences of his own frame. He depletes himself of the blood of the nerves. He literally gives himself to others. It may be the highest of all acts, as when a good man, moved by an inspired sentiment of duty and of love, pours in the life-giving efflux from the choicest spirit-breakers in his own heart and brain. It may be merely a professional act, exercised in profound ignorance, thoughtlessly, and as a ready means of livelihood. And it may be a most infernal act, as when the man makes use of the electric streams as telegraphic lines, for the purpose of flashing in enslaving or destroying purposes, upon the moral will, which he seeks to make a slave. It can not long remain, morally, a neutral act.

The mesmerizer soon penetrates to occult secrets, which I dare not here name. In the majority of instances he discovers himself not alone to give out odylic force, but, in turn, to receive it—to receive it from unseen fountains of supply. He is led to the threshold of a conscious mediumship, and the slightest falling off upon his part from conscience, and the sense of moral obligation, cuts him off from the upper sources, which are Divine. He then

receives from the lower sources, which may at first be mainly from attendant spirits of a dubious morality, but which at last are from those fixed in the wickedness of hell. Unless, therefore, the mesmerist continually becomes more self-abnegating, more humanely just and noble, more angelic, the very practice of his art, whatever be the respectability of the assumed appearance, causes him to become internally a huge receiving reservoir of the magnetism of the lost. Spirits, invisible to sight, are his mesmerists from the lower world, who, in the proportion with which he fills patients and subjects with himself, surcharge him with themselves. A fearful consideration.

Now, the odylic emanations which surround every human being, include the organism in a powerful preservative and resistant sphere. This is perpetually replenished from the Divine life, which flows into the human heart, and is distributed through the lungs, through the air vessels, through the pores of the whole frame. When a wicked person approaches with the intent to deceive, to possess, or to inflict any species, either of physical or moral wrong or ruin, this dense odylic sphere is a protection, which, especially concentrating itself around the brain and heart, acts as a resisting shield.

The mesmerist who exercises his vocation in the Lord, seeking only to impart a pure influence for ends of purity, a good influence for ends of good, is superintended, during the mesmeric process, by his or her guardian angel. The stream becomes two-fold—natural from the human operator, heavenly from the angelic superintendent. The odylic sphere, encompassing the patient, is opened, and the instreaming essences rapidly appropriated to the building up of the impaired organs of the frame, after which, the odylic sphere is closed, as before.

MESMERISM AND DEMONIAL POSSESSION.

Otherwise it is with the mercenary ; otherwise with the operator intent on self-seeking or enslaving ends. He is presided over, not by the angel, but by the demon. Through their combined will-force the odylic sphere is torn apart, or riven by electric bolts, or burst by concussion : after which, vast bodies of deleterious magnetism are lodged within the system ; physical health may seem

for a time to be restored, but the odylic sphere once conquered, most frightful consequences may ensue.

Consequence first : subjugation by the familiar spirit, We are all followed by familiar spirits. Their perpetual effort is to control thought and feeling, to make us their passive agents. Multitudes of spiritual media in Europe or America, though I admit a considerable exceptional class, are ruled by spirits. There are prowling bodies of marauders upon the unseen border-land between the natural and spiritual worlds. When the odylic sphere is once broken, the Divinely fashioned barrier which surrounds the body is no longer closed against their access. In the multitude of cases, the unguarded person is exposed to mesmeric influences from these robbers who infest the desert of the inner death. They may be divided into two classes : first, the vampire ; and, second, the possessor ; one seeking to rob the body of its most essential life ; the other endeavoring to pollute the inner tabernacle of the soul itself.

I use the term "vampire" to denote a class of wandering spirits, exceedingly corporeal and brutal, who maintain a hold on Nature by means of odylic bodies, encompassing the true spirit-form. As these odylic bodies continually waste away, they endeavor to reconstruct them by appropriating to themselves all the more impalpable ethereal essences of the living human body. They literally, when once fastened upon a system opened to them, through the rupture of the odylic sphere, eat out the animal spirits, causing mania, hysteria, insanity, decline, or suicide.

Simultaneously with this process, the "possessor," whose warfare is against the spirit, rather than its tabernacle, makes, if possible, a lodgment in the body of the mind and will. When this lodgment has been obtained, the unfortunate subject rapidly becomes a medium in the full sense, using the word, however, as denoting, not the mediatorial state of order, but of disorder. The manifestation of that mediumship will be now such as shall be decided : first, by the qualities of the enslaved organization ; second, by the *directions* which the possessing fiend shall receive from his or her infernal rulers. For instance, if their plans can best be carried out by making the man or woman disbelieve that there are such

beings as spirits, or any life beyond nature, the mind becomes an epitome of organized Sadduceeism. If it is their cue to heap contempt upon religion in the house of its friends, they make their subject reveal a malignant, mock piety. If great personal charms exist, they develop the serpent-tongued, unscrupulous deceiver.

If, however (though here there is a restraint), they succeed in getting full possession, body and soul, they have found an instrument through which to carry out sorcery on the broadest scale upon the earth's inhabitants. If the imagination is at their control, they can mirror, upon its lentic organs, such mock pictures of paradise as might deceive the very elect; personating upon that magic surface any human form, any human face. If the sensations are subject, then, as by a more insidious process of serpent charming, delights are produced, for deceptive ends, enrapturing as those said to follow the use of *hasheesh*, or pastiles of opium. If they obtain mastery of the organs of speech, they can talk, sing, preach, argue, pray—do all in fine with the voice, and more, than its rightful owner can. If the whole line of the nervous system is opened to their electrical projections, they are then in a condition to produce the vibratory concussions, known as “spirit rappings.” If, from internals to externals, the whole body is thoroughly at their command, they can eliminate from it the various chemical constituents in their higher potencies, and through the absorption of its particles, reproduce objective “spirit-hands” as they are styled, that is, condensed odyllic and magnetic substances, that, like bubbles in the shape of organs, may be seen by the natural eye, and made entities to touch. Having thus the various paraphernalia, they can swing mediums through the air, and induce motion upon material substance; all of which would be disbelieved were there not now many thousands of unimpeachable witnesses to the phenomena. Archimedes only asked for a point on which to rest the lever, declaring that then he could move the world. Mesmerism, in the hands of ignorance, or presumption, or self-love, or greed of gain, or any illicit desire, becomes the black art; and affords the point of lodgment for the Archimedial engine, pressed into action by the brawny shoulder of the organic Titan of the pit. It is to Mesmerism, conducted chiefly as a means of gain,

or an idle pastime in the first instance, that almost all the disorderly Spiritual Mediumship, almost all of the Lower World Spiritualism of the nineteenth century, may be distinctly traced. We have to deal, in Christendom now, not with Satan bound within the confines of the invisible world, but with Satan, through the rupturing of the odylic spheres of the human race, "let loose for a season."

The rupturing of the odylic spheres, encompassing the human person, is attended, in the second place, with a corruption of the nervous fluids, which breed infinitesimal larvæ, to become parasites, not merely upon, but in and through the entire congeries of organs, making up the form. These taint the atmosphere which surrounds the corporeal body, until the man carries with him, in first principles, the Apocalyptic plagues. The person thus made, in soul and body, a demoniacal agent, becomes poison organized. The breath imparts it; the touch communicates it; it darts through the eyes; it impregnates garments. Whether avowedly media or not they communicate a slow, saturating, eating fire, which, imperceptible to natural vision, impregnates and silently destroys the odylic spheres of old and young. To sit at a *séance* with persons in this condition, is to inhale the very virus with which they are infected. It may produce no immediate results; nevertheless, if there is any peculiar taint in soul or body through which it can wind its way into life's citadel, unless arrested by a counteracting Divine power, it prepares the new subject, if not for demoniacal possession, at least for demoniacal persecutions. The *séance* becomes, whenever out of place, out of order, out of utility, the devil's battue, and the unconscious medium the decoy, to bring human creatures within the reach of the deadly marksmen of Antichrist.

IDENTITY OF SPIRITS NOT CAPABLE OF NATURAL PROOF.

Without criticising the circle or the *séance*; without entering into the question of how far they may be used for good, as abused for evil; a word may not be inappropriate here concerning the modes by which the merely natural mind endeavors to settle the question of the identity of the spirits. The cool observer soon becomes convinced that invisible beings of some sort do communicate; and

when, at first, the point is settled, that we are talking with spirits, the inference is drawn that they are the individuals whose names they give. But, to the merely natural man, the question of identity never can be settled.

We ask the question, What constitutes proof? Not the name, written, spelled, or spoken. What is so easy in this world as for one actor to play in many parts? Not fac-similes of handwriting. The skillful expert, even here, can imitate any signature. Not the statement of facts, or even secret facts, of individual history. Man acts his part in life with confidants and accomplices around him, with invisible spirits watching him; the things that a man does in secret here, are proclaimed upon the housetops in the world of spirits. Myriads may be aware of facts that, on the natural side, were secret. Not the expression of friendly personal interest; not the affectation of remorse for deeds done in the body; not holy prayers; not moral precepts. Experience, in many instances, has shown that the spirits whose intents are the most foul, endeavor to win our confidence through the assumption of contrition, or through the utterance of truth. On that vast invisible stage, what is there to prevent the actor from mouthing any lesson? The spirits who communicate *may or may not* be the individuals they claim to be. But be they who they may, no merely natural intellect can solve the point. If we carry the argument into the plane of sensations the same difficulty baffles us. The medium says, "I feel very happy under their influence." But the skillful Mesmerist, even when thoroughly debased, can will the subject into a sensational rapture. Nowhere, then, in the province of the natural reason is there a clue. If I tear away in this relentless, inevitable conclusion, the faith which any man has based on no higher evidence, that through the medium, or at the *séance*, he has held communication with departed friends, let him overthrow the logic. But if that logic cannot be overthrown, I but discharge my duty in calling his attention to the fatal flaw in evidence which destroys the *rationale* of his belief. It behooves us, in matters of this vital moment, especially when we are yielding credence to invisible individuals who claim to be our friends, that the *identity* is made out.

MESMERIC POSSESSION—DESTRUCTIVE RESULTS.

I approach now the subject of the possible effect of the rupturing of odyllic spheres on character. Character is built up around a centre of Divine influences from the Holy Spirit of God operant within the will. It is not a mere mask of conduct, a filmy gauze of sentiment ; it is a reality, not a sham. However much kindly circumstances may aid, no unfriendly contingency can overthrow it when built up in the Divine similitude. But whether or no a man grows up into symmetry and excellence of character depends on his being free and keeping free. If ever he voluntarily gives up his will to another, he may represent whatever character his despot wills him to personate. A slave, and worse, not to a natural, but to a spiritual tyrant, he has interposed a task-master in the place of God. Men do not now, except in isolated cases, make conscious compacts with a fiend, and bind themselves by instruments to perdition. They do not, in so many words, voluntarily relinquish all interest in the great Atonement. But, as the odyllic sphere is torn open and destroyed, the fiend has double access ; he can revive, for instance, in decrepit age the passions that have been seemingly extinct for years ; he can intrude upon the body with any succession of burnings or of chills, can whisper in the natural ear, project visions before the natural eye, re-enact, in fine, such terrible mysteries as heathen poets hint at in connection with the caprices of the gods and goddesses of their dark mythology. There is but one refuge for those thus tempted, thus oppressed : He who is able to save to the uttermost—the Lord Jesus Christ.

But mark the mystery of iniquity ! While, as a rule, spirits, who communicate through media, inculcate a flimsy natural religion, or the counterfeit of one, while they are often profuse in epithets of lip-homage to the “inspired youth of Galilee,” nevertheless, they literally dispossess the body of Christianity of its animating soul. They leave but a shell of surface moralism and of communications from individual spirits. Where minds are, in their phrase, “progressed” enough, their teachings become at once most seductive to the carnal mind and heart, most deadening to the conscience, most gratifying to the

lust and pride of the self-exalted intellect, and utterly hostile to the saving Word. In myriads of instances, men and women, whose names were identified in the body with every shameful impiety and crime, assume from the spiritual realm the attitude of teachers and philosophers. To their philosophy we have before adverted. Even in the most veiled and gentlemanly of its forms, when stripped of evasive phrases, it amounts to this—that Jesus Christ was a very excellent and amiable, but mistaken, Jewish gentleman, full of fine sentiment, but repeating the superstitions of His ancestral faith ; at most a medium for human spirits like ourselves ; His goodness the result of natural progression ; differing only from all other men in development. How congenial to pride the tenet that, no matter how corrupt, how depraved, we are just as good as Christ, and only require fostering circumstances to have it developed ; that if our inmost principle is self-love, His was also ; that born, living, dying, He differed not, *qualitatively*, from any other man ; while we, through the light shed abroad by these kind spirits, are delivered from the degrading superstitions that oppressed His mind ; that no matter what we do, we but retard our progress for a while ; that our vice is virtue, undeveloped or misdirected ; that from this centre of self-love we round out, through an inevitable natural progression, to rapturous and bliss-imparting immortals of the spheres ! It makes it easy to live, and trust to natural progression for the glories of the life to come. It makes it easy to die, soothed and magnetized to the very last, as the delirious rapture of the little bird is most intense when it flutters down into the serpent's open jaw. No wonder that Spiritualists who have absorbed this pleasant madness, abhor the warning voices that would undeceive them, before “the Books are opened” and the judgment set. When did the smooth philosophies of any age ever give up their victims to the probing, searching, redemptive influences of the Word of God, without making the specious, ever-refuted denial of man's danger, and the Saviour's dying reconciling love !

While the protective odylic spheres, which surround the person, may be punctured, or torn, or corrupted from without ; they may also, by our own errors or misconduct, be literally consumed, or eaten away, or rent to shreds

and fragments from within ; just as a house may be burned over a man's head, with equal ease, by his own destructive act, or by the torch of an outside incendiary. Passion may do it, crime may do it ; but will-action, when the man determines that he will develop himself into conjunction with spirits, may produce the same effect. One of the most promising young men connected with the earlier developments of clairvoyant spiritualism in America, was Mr. James Victor Wilson. Devotedly attached to a well-known American clairvoyant, who was at that time, in a mesmeric trance, dictating graphic and brilliant descriptions of unreal spiritual spheres, and firmly believing that, through self-developed mesmeric conditions, access was to be obtained to every occult secret of the natural and spiritual universe, he, at last, made a determined and continued will-effort to open himself to those whom he believed superior intelligences. I saw him almost at the close of his experiment, when sanguine of success. He was found dead in his room shortly after ; guilty, in this manner, though ignorantly, of his own physical destruction. I drop this tear upon his untimely grave. May his mistake warn others ! It is, indeed, a grave act—the bursting of the barriers which prevent lost spirits from access to the mortal tabernacle.

Sorcerers, or persons who willfully seek communication with spirits whom they know to be impure, become, at last, by their own act, divested of the Divine qualities of the odyllic sphere ; but, in their place, they incorporate into their magnetic emanations the dense and foully saturated nerve-bodies of wandering spirits. Of this, more, perhaps, at a subsequent time.

THE PURE MESMERISM—MEDIUMSHIP IN CHRIST.

Gladly do I return to the more congenial, the heaven-looking side of the mesmeric faculty. That out-going from the man, which builds up, by the impartation of the finest constituents of life, the suffering organization, is also, when exercised strictly in the channel of duty, a giving forth of the Holy Ghost. Let no good man tremble at this phrase. The good man is a temple of indwelling God. As self dies in all its deceitful lusts and appetites, as nature is retrieved—organ by organ—from the fall and its consequences, the Redeeming Life goes

forth to make the fluids of the natural life its medium ; and, through them, to operate withersoever the Spirit wills. How near is man in the regeneration to his God ? " If the Spirit of Jesus dwells in us, He shall also quicken our mortal bodies." All possible glories of mediumship, which result, according to the exploded hypothesis of the mere naturalist, from giving up one's self to finite spirits, do follow, with an ever-unfolding superiority and permanence, in the crucifixion of self-love, that the Lord may reign within us, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. As when a skillful player, preluding on his instrument, tunes it up, string by string, that he may execute at last a perfect harmony ; so the Chief Musician prepares man, body, soul, and spirit, to respond in the exquisite and ravishing concord of every Divine affection, to the full movement of His will. We have simply to resolve to be mediums for Jesus ; to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness—at any hazard—at any sacrifice. If then it is our Lord's will to open the spiritual eyes, we can see angels and spirits and fiends. We can see, not merely the veils in which spirits may disguise themselves, but the very quality of their hidden affections, and so "discern the spirits." The subject medium does not discern the spirits. He but beholds the veils of appearances with which spirits wrap themselves, and in which they appear. He sees the mask, not the face—the glove, not the hand. The discerning of spirits implies a perception of their quality, by means of which alone their authenticity can be tested.

This discernment of spirits in the earliest era of the church made spiritual communications safe, affording a basis for the proof of identity ; until it returns again, or till its allied gifts reappear, evidences of identity may amount to possibilities, or even probabilities, but can not be final proofs. One thing is certain, that when they do appear in men, it will not be among media subject to spirits, but among those who, fixed in Christ, are organs through whom He overcomes the seductive serpents from the demon-world, communicating their ancient message to transgressors—"Ye shall not surely die." One thing is certain, that they will not make sport for the secret merriment of princes, or sit among shameless parasites in the midnight circles of tyrants. If they

stand before the crowned voluptuaries of the race, it will be with Nathan's message, "Thou art the man!" The woe and the awfulness of the vision will be such that it will form no agreeable prelude to wit and feasting and wine. They will see that which, did men but listen to it, God's Word with fiery tongues proclaims forever; the homes of the saved, redeemed, and purified, and crowned, and welcomed, by Christ—those who "have gone up through great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." But they will see, as well, the gloomy land, where "they who sow the wind reap the whirlwind"—where dwell those who have no part in the Holy City, and whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life.

It is not to be supposed that Satan will endure this turning of the tables against himself—this putting of Divine fire against infernal fire—this undoing of the ruin which he has wrought—this rescuing of the province of mediumship from his myrmidons—this casting out of demons from the bodies and the souls of men—without a struggle. What that struggle is, those alone can testify who know how hell-fire burns when dashed upon the body—how the liquid hate of the volcano in a fiend's breast tells on the sensations of the human organization, in the face-to-face encounter, when the Lord descends to meet His enemies through the opened sensories of the mediatorial man. The reparation of the odylic sphere, once forced open, is not within the means of men, spirits, or angels. It can be accomplished by the Holy Spirit of God alone. The humble disciples who, open to the Spirit, would refuse to be enslaved by spirits; who have clung to Christ, the Divine Saviour, and to His Holy Word, and to the regeneration which He alone can institute and accomplish—they, for the gloomy years since men have sought Heaven without Christ, revelation without the Bible, and a broad gate instead of self-renunciation's narrow way—they have been a scattered few. The tide is turned. Christ has vindicated Himself in the faithful, proving Himself omnipotent over all magnetic, all odylic, all demoniacal forces and incantations. The line of discrimination begins to be plainly apparent between a Spiritualism from above and a Spiritualism from below.

All difficulties vanish from the subject when, in the Providence of God, a luminous spirit-sight, distinguished from its imitations, is re-established ; when that internal degree of the mind whose office it is to cognize infinite and eternal things is opened ; when the odyllic sphere, reinstated in power, and, itself a vehicle for the Divine emanations, repels the servants of the Prince of darkness. With such media, thoroughly imbued with the Divine Spirit, dawns a new era on the world. That such are in course of training I fully believe. In the decline and decay of religious formalism they will serve the purposes of a ministry for the New Age, fervent, dauntless, and wholly bent, at any hazard, on doing the Lord's will. The poet, the man of letters, the teacher, the artist, the artisan, each in the field of duty which the Lord assigns him, may realize a mediumship whose manifestations shall be the joy and wonder of mankind. Christendom is waiting this fire-birth into a higher state.

I foresee two classes of friendly objections. One, to my statements concerning the sublime and beautiful, the true and holy developments of the spiritual field. I solemnly affirm, that, from the best of my knowledge, results have been produced, through a heavenly spiritualism, within the last seven years, equal in quality, though not in quantity, to the best results from the labors of Whitfield or the Wesleys, of Oberlin or of the early Friends. Since the great tide-wave of revivalism, harmonizing with the best of the two contending influences in spiritualism, has begun to flow (and the revival movement is all a spiritual phenomenon, though not the work of individual spirits, in its inception, but of Almighty God), we may doubtless expect an extension of its startling but elevating results. I design this remark for my religious reader, who has only seen that view of the subject commonly presented by the public press, which while it has, with a few exceptions, earnestly enforced the extravagances, deceits, or diabolisms attending spiritual phenomena, has suppressed a series of facts not less important, pregnant with evidences that the Lord, with His holy angels, moves wonderfully upon mankind. No earthly consideration could induce me to forego my own spiritual experience, or recede mentally into the dim twilight of my perception before these manifestations began.

The other class of objections will rise from those who, while they accept every favorable view, will be disposed to think that I grossly exaggerate the dangers of mediumship, or the possible perils of the *séance*. There is in Modern Spiritualism, as it seems to me, an absolute equilibrium, between the light as set off against the darkness, the good and true against the evil and false, the heaven against the hell. My experience, as a Christian teacher in a community where Modern Spiritualism has fulfilled its first cycle of results, forces me to state, as I have done, what I know to be true, in very many instances, of the deceptive side of the phenomena, and of the disasters which follow in their train. I entreat my hearers, for their own souls' sake, to reflect upon these cautions. As falls to the lot of those disposed to view the whole round of great questions in every age, my perceptions of the matter will be distasteful to partisans on either side.

APPENDIX.

MEDIUMSHIP IN ITS CONNECTION WITH THE TWO-FOLD LIFE OF MAN.

It is impossible to form a just estimate of the capacities of the human mind for mediumship, both of a supernal and infernal character, without taking into account the two-fold life of man ; first, as a spirit, invisibly secluded amid the realities of a separate existence ; and, second, as a living natural creature whose body is the microcosm of the terrestrial world. Now, the Scriptures teach, and a sound philosophy declares, that just and righteous men are, as to their spirits, the tabernacles of the Holy Ghost ; and more astonishing still, that immanent within the mind of the spirit is the mind of Christ. From the moment when, in lowly self-renunciation, we first receive the Divine life, we are said to put on Christ, and to be clothed with His righteousness. We are led by the Spirit of God ; and we are called the sons of God.

Otherwise with the man confirmed in evil. His fiery lusts, whether for self-aggrandizement, or display, or carnal pleasure, or intellectual or natural dominion, or the indulgence of cruelty, or scheming, or hypocrisy, are fed and fostered by the Prince of the power of the air, and by his satellites ; in fine, by whatever wicked spirit can by congeniality inflow or magnetize him. Hence such are said to be captives of Satan at his will. Iscariot finally betrayed his Lord, according to the Gospel, because Satan had *entered into him*. The earnest effectual prayer of the good man, when, gathering up his heart's desires, he lays them at the feet of Jesus, avails much, in many ways. Through sincere and really spiritual prayer, which, as Coleridge has well said, is man's highest act, we open ourselves to the inflowing life of the Holy Ghost. It was by means of prayer that our Lord, while incarnate, kept

open His natural organization, in which He was very man, for the continued operation of His pre-existent Being, in which He was very God. We are told that He spent whole nights in prayer alone. As we advance in the regenerate life, all prayers finally merge in this—"Thy will be done!" We simply desire that our whole being may become God's instrument, for the accomplishment of His benignant purposes. Self-love is trampled under foot.

As, on the other hand, step by step, the human spirit pursues a degenerate or self-seeking career, every impure desire, cherished within the breast, becomes a prayer to Satan, an importunate seeking cry for the satisfaction of the prevailing greed. And these desires are telegraphed upon the electric chords of spiritual affinities, to the ruling spirits, chief in wickedness, in the recesses of the dark abode. In both cases we ask and we receive; we seek and find; we knock, and it is opened to us. We are free to choose between moral good and moral evil.

The good man is spiritually conjoined to Christ; and now another law. Like seeks like in every realm of being. Relations and associations are determined by established sympathies. In this world the pure seek the pure, the corrupt seek the corrupt, as the murmuring ringdoves in the wood coo in responsive voices, or as wolves and jackals hunt in packs together. Superior good delights to communicate itself; it is its life law. But so also does fixed, aggressive evil. Good and evil, in fine, are committed to a war, which knows no truce, which never can know any, until the long struggle is decided. All angels, or human spirits, wholly purified, and so made heavenly, are simply media for the absorption and diffusion of the Divine influences. It is their supreme joy, as they have received freely, so freely to give. They are ministering spirits appointed to watch over the heirs of salvation. They, too, like their human brethren, are characterized by a diversity of gifts, corresponding to all the varieties of human genius, and worth, and calling, in the natural world. The little child upon its mother's breast, that mother in her sweet office, the well-pleased father who tenderly contemplates the youthful lovers outside the door under some trellised arbor, the aged grand-parents sitting at tranquil ease, with placid

countenances that life's storms have ceased to ruffle, all are presided over by ministering spirits, whose functions are as various. It is thus that earth, wherever human virtue has a hold, is over-canopied and inter-penetrated with the gracious Heaven.

But all angels and angelic spirits are so pure, that they transmit without impediment the Divine solar ray. They inhale the Divine truth for air, and they impulse the Divine love for blood ; they literally move, pervaded and encircled by the emanations of Deity. They never speak, or think, or act from self-will ; but, fixed in established rectitude, they receive and transmit the Infinite volitions. There is no shadow of self to interpose its dark disk between the angel and his God. They possess all of the human affections, of which the love of God is the centre and the king. There is no word adequate to convey the exquisiteness, either of their moral or their social bliss. Theirs is the unbroken harmony of pure love, evident toward the Lord in pure obedience. There are specially three varieties of angels and angelic spirits with every good man. First, angels whose office it is to watch the emotions of the will. Second, others who discharge the same office for all the processes of the understanding. Third, still others to whom the more objective system of the spiritual body, with all its immortal faculties and senses is entrusted. Every man from the beginning moves thus attended.

It is obvious that, were the angel to throw the vast weight of his will on that of man, to force upon the intellect the huge measure of his reason, or to exert his immense physical resources upon the organs of man's spiritual form, individual freedom would be at an end, and every exhibition of life a mere puppet play. For force increases geometrically in the ratio of the full openness of the angelic spirit to his God. So, according to the word, the angel of the Lord in one night smote eighty thousand Assyrians ; and at another time passed as a destroyer to cut off the first-born of Egypt. The touch of an angel's finger upon the human sinew, as an evidence or symbol, caused it to shrink, as when Jacob wrestled in his tent. An angel troubled the water at the pool of Bethesda, and whoever first went in was healed of disease. An angel touched with his finger the shackles of imprisoned Peter,

and they fell, while the doors of the dungeon opened at his pressure. An angel rolled away the stone at the sepulchre that held the body of the Lord. An angel touched Herod, in his pride, and the monarch was smitten with a fearful disease and gave up the ghost. Angels are with us always.

But, while angels are with us all, their communications are entirely governed by the Divine fiat. As for instance, they are permitted to suggest in a silent voice, felt as a thought by the understanding, the truths that shall conduce to our preservation from the insidious workings of self-love and the flattering wiles of deceiving spirits. In reality it is the Lord who speaks through the angel, making him the instrument. This is a mode of spiritual manifestation which all may profit by ; for all are accessible to it.

The angels recede, or draw near, according to our own recessions from, our turnings to, the Lord. They are governed by a uniform law. As we leave Jesus they must leave us ; and Jesus is left when mentally we reject His claims to be the sovereign ruler of the soul, when morally we disobey His precepts. No angel is permitted to bias the judgment, or to subject the will even to a right impression. Their great work is to stand over against evil spirits, who are perpetually endeavoring to subjugate the will, the reason, and the senses of the spiritual body, and so to make the whole man their slave. No man, by any mesmeric process, can bring himself into communications with angels or angelic spirits. They can not be forced, biased, or influenced, but stand fast in their great office to do the Lord's will. Were the Lord to say to an angel "Speak so that your charge shall hear your voice louder than any thunder," the man would instantly hear. Were the Lord to say "Touch his body that it may perish," instantaneously death would ensue. Were the Lord to say "Bear him more rapidly than the wind journeys," instantly the man would find himself carried whithersoever it was directed by the Divine Will. The angels now stand, to use the figure, in hollow squares over Christendom, as stood the English guards at the battle of Waterloo. The infernal hosts, with all the strength and enginery of Pandemonium, attack the invincible and silent lines. The angels await the direction of the Divine Leader for the final

onset, and not a feather in their plumes can so much as rustle till then.

In opposition to all this beautiful celestial array, by means of which the Lord defends the whole earth, and which is one embattled form in which the Holy Spirit moves, and with an equal presence, we discern the gloomy cohorts of the lost—

“From land to land Abaddon blows his blast,
Fierce Pandemonium storms the world at last;”

In 1760, the odyllic spheres of men were not in process of destruction. An illumined Christian, writing about that time, stated, therefore, that while infernals had access to the soul, they could not enslave the body. Another, the devout Stilling, writing after the first Mesmeric developments began, stated that infernals had formed a stupendous plot against the peace and order of the world, which was to be accomplished by means of sorceries that would follow in the Mesmeric pathway.

The first Mesmeric clairvoyance in America, through which unmistakable communications upon a huge scale took place, dates from 1845. The diffusion of clairvoyant revelations, most subtly planned, most speciously written, for the overthrow of the Christian religion, from this period prepared the way for the vanguard of the infernal host. (See “SPIRIT OF GOD IN REVIVALISM,” *Herald of Light*, January, 1860, pages 186–189.)

Man lives alternately a two-fold existence. He is consciously on earth with mortals during hours of physical wakefulness and activity; during this time the spirit is immersed in the body, and watched over, as was said before. When, however, sleep becomes perfect, the spirit is so far disengaged from matter as to pursue a round of activities in a state of inner waking. It is then consciously with spirits. We carry through sleep into inner waking the ruling passions that we have chosen to dominate over us. Now the whole subject of mediumship stands in a new light. On entering, through sleep, into the world of spirits, we rush into the arms of those to whom we are attracted by mortal affinity. We are with them as associates. Of the intense activity of the faculties of the spirit, during these conditions, words con-

vey no picture. Translated into an unimpeded realm, where impulse flashes instantaneously into a long series of corresponding actions, and where the mind is photographed incessantly with mental pictures from the intelligence of its associates, we prepare ourselves for another day of earthly waking, in which to embody in the material moments these potent anterior inspirations. For the invisible world, whether good or evil, is the world of causes, and man transmits, through waking actions, its rapid histories into the realm of natural results.

The good man goes through sleep to a world better than the natural, because through prayer there is ascension for the soul; the evil man to a worse world, because, free from terrestrial encumbrances, he pants more eagerly after forbidden lusts. The spirit, immersing itself into the body during outer waking, communicates powers and desires to all the faculties, and envelops the whole frame in an aura or atmosphere densely surcharged with the exhalations of itself. The application of this law to spiritual mediumship, let us briefly consider.

While man is left free in will, he is in a measure circumscribed in action. The good man, returning into the body, finds the physical organization clouded as to its organs, and its efficiency impaired by the results of evils and imprudences, by the effects of climate, by the imperfect training, torpor, or resistance of the faculties. The glowing spirit feels the chill and darkness of the clay. Few men have more than a partial sovereignty of their bodies. Wherever, among the good, the odylic sphere is ever so slightly broken, demons are enabled to inject into the nerves a various poison, producing lassitude, nervous irritability, and functional derangement. The demon invariably directs himself to obtain the control of the especial organs which the spirit of the man most needs for daily duties, as an enemy might seek to spike our cannon, or destroy the strength of gunpowder. This makes the fiend's employment for the day. If we are to sing, he attacks the vocal organs, but especially the cerebral organs of time and tune. If we are to convey some series of moral truths, his effort is so to jar and shock the understanding in its natural degree, or so to weave through it a cunning falsity, that errors shall be communicated instead, or at least the truth be obscured or made imperfect.

The effort of the fiend is to spoil every true word or work ; or to change it into an evil word or work ; or to stop it altogether.

This work of the fiend begins before natural waking. Often the spirit returns into the body to find it so pictured and written over with fiend's ink, with fiend's images, that the imagination-sight holds but unpleasant or impure objects upon its disk. We struggle back into the body instead of gliding into it. These confused incoherent fantasms cloud the mind during the day with more or less efficiency. If we kneel to pray, the fiend endeavors to revive within the memory impure, ludicrous, or perplexing incidents. Whole fields of unfriendly images float thus between the daily Scripture and the mental eye. This disturbing action continues without cessation, unless the fiend is overcome.

When, however, the man during sleep has consociated with evil ones, and pledged himself to their purposes, it is not so. The angel, by Divine direction, may interpose to prevent the consummation of the plan, but he throws no obstacle in the way of freedom. The fiend and the man go on together. The effort of the fiend is to sharpen the natural judgment, by quickening the natural mind, by withdrawing obstacles from brain and heart, so that his ally may have full advantage of every power and perception. The hand becomes full of spirit for the death-dealing blow, the voice attuned with melody for the corrupting whisper ; and often a glimmer of false beauty lights, as by enchantment, on the face. The most destructive persons one meets with in society are magnetic men and women, streaming with the subtle flame, the honeyed poison of the fiend.

The direct application of this truth to mediumship is as follows : from the moment that the moral will deliberately chooses self-love for its law, the spirit seeks, in nightly sleep-states, those lost spirits in whom self-love is fixed and supreme. It gives itself up to their embrace. It sucks at the dugs of their lusts, and pampers itself at the breasts of their abominations. It absorbs the fierce elements that, though at first they flash and sparkle on life's cup, and exhilarate the taste, yet, finally, bite like a serpent, and sting as does the adder. The human spirit entering on a course of easy living, with self-love

as the motive, passes by gradual states, during periods of an inner waking, into the embraces of the obviously lost. It will find itself at first with those in the frenzy and delirium of the next life, who soothe and flatter it, because they find the chief joy of which they are capable, the joy of hate, in robbing it of the last lingerings of virtue. The vicious meet on terms of courtesy, and pander to each other's vices. When mediumistic states have been secured, the spirit of the medium, whose inspiration is self-love, is carefully instructed in the part which it is to play in the life-drama on earth. Fiends perceive what mortals on whom they operate will probably seek communications, and propound inquiries. Whoever, in the gloomy synod is able to furnish facts or incidents, impresses them within the organs of the medium's inner mind, giving at the same time such shrewd suggestions as shall enable the actor to personate a departed friend, in look, manner, language, and voice. At the *séance* the stored-up communication is rolled forth; the inquirer dazzled, astonished, persuaded, and, if possible, poisoned and penetrated as to his or her odylic sphere, to add another victim to the silent multitude.

The rupturing of the odylic spheres makes it possible for spirits to mesmerize their subjects, until the natural brain and the imagination-sight shall teem with images projected through the inner mind. The perfect spiritual clairvoyant, whom they have enslaved, is in this condition. Old Heathenism is then re-established. The demon takes full possession of the oracle. To spell the name of a departed friend, to write it, to give fictitious communications from fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, or children, for the purpose of working a final ruin, is now an easy thing. The demon knows how to soothe the medium, producing, at will, joys upon the sense, or pleasing emotions within the voluntary enslaved, enslaving heart. It is smooth sailing on a summer sea, until either : 1st, other spirits contend for the medium, in which case, there are painful perturbations, sharp darts of agony, and a consciousness of baffling and thwarting influences. Or, 2nd, the demon falls into some insanity, and having admirably guided his subject for months or years to great successes, breaking into some raging madness, transmits it in diseases or delusions. Or, 3d, until the Lord sends

an angel, not to interfere with the freedom of either, but to smite them for their sin. In this case the demon is cast into a deeper hell, where he can no more communicate, and the human accomplice left a wreck and a wanderer on the face of the earth; or, worse than Lot's wife, petrifying into the last obduracy of the hardened heart. Or, 4th, the Holy Spirit strives with the wretched fallen soul, so that even in the extremity of his sin he resolves to seek the Lord while He may be found. Then the fiend, who has hoped to have an easy prey, turns, as he is cast out, to rend his victim, and makes a long fight to wound and poison the body, after he has lost all influence over the rescued and pardoned soul.

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