

720
Spiritualism fairly Tried,

AND

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ITS PHENOMENA TRACED

TO

THEIR TRUE CAUSE.

BY

K
EDWARD NANGLE, A.B.,

Rector of Skreen.

Horatio.—O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Hamlet.—There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

HAMLET, ACT. I., SCENE V.

Persons wishing to have this pamphlet will please to enclose fourpence, with their names and addresses, to the Rev. Edward Nangle, Skreen, Ballisodare, Ireland.

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Many of the facts and arguments contained in the following pages appeared in successive numbers of the "ACHILL MISSIONARY HERALD;" and the interest which they excited among the subscribers to that periodical induces the Editor to republish them. The arrangement of the papers has been altered and systematized, and much new matter has been added. The writer considers the subject of this pamphlet of great importance, as demonstrating, to the confusion of modern Sadducees, the reality of spiritual agency, and as exhibiting to the people of God one of the most remarkable of those precursory signs which assure them that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

The Rectory, Skreen,

March 17, 1861.

Spiritualism fairly Tried,

&c., &c.

CHAP. I.

A PAPER in the "Cornhill Magazine" for August, 1860, entitled "Stranger than Fiction," drew a large share of public attention to the subject of Spiritualism; and the interest which it excited was kept alive by adverse articles which subsequently appeared in "Blackwood," "Once a Week," and other periodicals.

We know from the testimony of clergymen in different parts of England that this form of delusion, which began in America, is gaining many disciples in our own country. Indeed the fact that it has been made the subject of papers in our most popular periodicals, shows that it holds a place of considerable prominence in the public mind.

Spiritualism appears to have commenced in the early part of 1850, when its manifestations were confined to two or three families in the state of New York. It is asserted that there are now not less than three millions of converts to the system, which is advocated by seventeen newspapers or periodicals. The following extract from the "NEW YORK TRIBUNE" will enable the reader to form an idea of the number and respectability of the persons who have ranked themselves among the adherents of Spiritualism in America :—

"The Spiritualists have organized a national society for the diffusion of their faith and the facts on which it is based, The following is their list of officers :—

"*President.*—Gov. Nathaniel P. Talmadge, Wisconsin.

"*Vice-Presidents.*—Chief Justice Jos. Williams, Iowa; Judge Willie P. Fowler, Kentucky; Judge R. S. Spaulding, Ohio; Judge Charles H. Larabee, Wisconsin; Horace H. Day, New York; the Hon. Warren Chase, Wisconsin; Dr. David Corry, Illinois; Gen Edward F. Bullard, New York; the Hon. Richard D. Davis, New York; Dr. George T. Dexter, New York; Major Geo. W. Raines, U. S. A.; E. W. Bailey, Pennsylvania; Phineas E. Gay, Massachusetts.

" Secretaries.—Owen G. Warren, Architect, New York; Selah G. Perkins, M.D., Vermont; Chas. E. Woodman, Editor, New York.

" Treasurer.—Nathaniel E. Wood, Chemist, New York.

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"In the Address which accompanies the above announcement, they say :—

" ' Within the last two years, Spiritualism has increased in strength and stature with a growth unprecedented in the history of mental giants. If it be a lie, there is every prospect of its enveloping this world, and by its weight, sinking this world one degree lower in the depth of degradation. If it be a lie it has come in so lovely a garb that men will seek it unless they be warned by a strong voice; men will flee to it as though it were an angel from heaven—will become enveloped in its false light, and will be borne down to death by the weight of its false glory. If it be a lie, ye men of America, who have one thought towards the good of your fellows, it is your duty to come forward as one man, to tear the veil from the face of the lie, and expose it in all its hideousness. We shall challenge you, as men—as earnest men, as men desiring the good of your fellows—to come forth and meet us in the fight, expose our errors, draw the shroud away, and enable the world to see us as we are. We challenge you to come and do that thing.'

" ' We believe that Spirituality is a Heaven-born truth. We profess to know that angels from Heaven—that the spirits of good men progressing toward perfection—have come here upon the earth we stand on, and talked with us, face to face, and uttered words to us bearing the impress of their divine origin. We sincerely believe this. We are respectable men; we do not believe ourselves to be insane. We ask you to come and meet us, and discuss the question with us; to examine these facts which we allege, and prove if you are able, either that these facts never did occur, or that their origin is other than that which it purports to be.'—*New York Weekly Tribune*.

A system of delusion which we verily believe is denounced in Scripture as necromancy, and which has caught in its meshes persons of all professions and trades, some of them men of reading and intelligence, is not to be pooh-poohed; it demands

investigation, and, so far as we are concerned, it shall have it. And sure we are, that those who conduct the investigation under the guidance of Holy Scripture will come to the conclusion that satanic agency is the only adequate cause to explain its phenomena. But we must not anticipate.

This system of delusion is gaining converts in our own country. We have already alluded to facts which, to a certain extent, sustain this assertion: we may further state that there is a monthly magazine devoted to its advocacy, published in London; and the fact that, in a short time, £72 were contributed for the gratuitous circulation of this publication, shows a considerable amount of zeal on the part of the advocates of Spiritualism.

Shortly after the publication of the paper in the "Cornhill Magazine" to which we have alluded above, a friend in England sent the writer an English periodical containing a lengthened notice of it. The editor was much puzzled about the matter to which he alludes. He admits that the "remarkable things" by which Spiritualism supports its pretensions, are related by "credible and unimpeachable witnesses;" and he admits that, although he has not witnessed any of the phenomena himself, "he must believe that others whom he knows to be sincere and trustworthy, have either seen, or imagine they have seen, the things they seriously report." The article from which we make these extracts concludes with these remarkable words:—

"I cannot doubt that there are hundreds of trustworthy persons in London who firmly believe these things, and who have actually witnessed, or fancy they have witnessed, these extraordinary manifestations. I was talking on the subject this morning to a veteran of the London press, a man noted for his sagacity, and moreover for his scepticism, and he said to me very gravely, when I expected a jeer and a scoff—'If I were you I would be careful how I ridiculed these things.' I can only say that by the same rule I should be careful how I ridicule the divine pretensions of Mr. Prince. It is much easier to believe that Mr. Prince is a divine messenger, than that the spirits of the departed revisit the earth to pull down blinds and make tables dance the polka."

We have quoted this extract because it illustrates the irrational method which many adopt in dealing with this grave subject. They cannot but admit that the *facts* rest on credible testimony; these facts cannot be accounted for by any known mechanical power—many of them are of such a nature that an intelligent agency must be employed in their production; in a word, the facts are plainly supernatural; and yet the whole subject is dismissed with a little senseless ridicule, like that with which the writer of the above extract entertains his readers. What analogy is there between Mr. Prince and the Spiritualists? The former appeals to no *facts* to authenticate his ravings,—the latter do. It is indeed thoroughly rational, because thoroughly Scriptural, to reject the supposition that the spirits of the departed should

revisit this earth ; but it is thoroughly irrational, because thoroughly unscriptural, to deny that the Devil, for the purpose of bringing Christianity into contempt, superseding the authority of Scripture, and propagating damning delusions, *may personate departed spirits*.* If, indeed, there were nothing more in Spiritualism than "pulling down blinds and making tables dance the polka," we could well afford to laugh at it. But the prodigies to which it appeals are really astounding ; and that these prodigies are used for the very purpose we have stated will be manifest from the following handbill, which originated with a party of Spiritualists in Nottingham, who are very active in preaching and propagating their delusion. The document was forwarded to us by a clergyman in Leicestershire, who stated that it was distributed throughout the village in which he lives by a person employed for that purpose, who left the copy which he sent to us at his residence.

" PEACE BE TO THIS HOUSE.

" *To an oppressed, priest-ridden and deluded people.*

" Arouse yourselves from your long sleep in ignorance ! Open your eyes and ears to the dangers and tribulations by which you are surrounded and beset !

" BRETHREN AND SISTERS.—1. Are you aware that the Scriptures are corrupted ?

" 2. Are you aware that your clergy and teachers know of the corruption ?

" 3. Are you aware that all sects and denominations, as founded upon the corrupt state of the Scriptures, are oppressive, hypocritical, and delusive abominations to God.

" 4. Are you aware that the oppression, crime, poverty, and discontent, which exist among the people of the earth, have arisen through the corruption of the Scriptures, and the false teachings of the different churches ?

" 5. Are you aware that although the Bible is corrupted, it still contains the inspired word of God ?

" 6. Are you aware that in all ages the wrath of God has been poured out upon the earth, through the oppression, hypocrisy, and deception which existed amongst the people ?

" 7. Are you aware that the latter days, as foretold by Christ, in which men's hearts should quake for fear, are fast passing ?

" 8. Are you aware that through the oppression, hypocrisy, and deception which now exist, God is about to pour out his wrath upon this, as well as the other nations of the earth ?

" 9. Are you aware that *modern divine revelation*† in these days foretells the speedy overthrow of every evil, and that war, bloodshed, and devastation shall ravage every nation ?

* We request our readers to suspend their judgment on this point until they read a narrative of facts, which we shall publish on the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses, in a subsequent chapter.

† By these *modern divine revelations* the authors of the handbill mean the communications which are received from Satan personating some departed friend.

" 10. Are you aware that divine revelation foretells that England's foes will combine together and invade her shores ?

" 11. Divine revelation declares that France, Russia, and other Continental powers, will be the enemies of England ?

" 12 Divine revelation declares that no more peace shall be experienced until all the armies of the world have passed through the nations of the earth, and have assembled on the plains of Armageddon. where all evils shall be overthrown, and Christ's kingdom established ?

" Are you aware that there shall be a chosen people of God who shall pass through the calamities uninjured, and see the establishment of Christ's kingdom ?

" 14. Are you aware that the Great Organization is now established by order of divine revelation, and that its members who are faithful to their pledges are the chosen people of God, who are instructed to make their houses their churches, and be a people prepared for the Lord ?

" 15. Are you aware that nearly 400 members are already enrolled in the books of the Great Organization, and that each member is pledged to proclaim the truths of divine revelation, by denouncing oppression, hypocrisy, and priest-craft ?

" 16. Are you aware that the Organization is open to receive members of both sexes, who are desirous of becoming true Christians, and to serve God fearlessly, and follow out the works of the Gracious Redeemer, and be a people prepared to meet him on the last great day of God Almighty ?

" Fellow Townsmen, Brethren, and Sisters of the Great Human Family, in asking you the above questions, and warning you of your danger and the coming events, we shall not leave you to answer the questions yourselves, but shall call your attention to English Bible History, and to Bagster's Comprehensive Bible, which proves that the Scriptures are corrupt, and that the Clergy are aware of their corruption, and they are knowingly oppressing and deceiving you by keeping you in ignorance of God's will concerning you, that they with your rulers, may live in luxury and idleness, on your sweat and blood. Again, we refer you also to ancient and modern divine revelation, in which you may see that oppression, hypocrisy, and deception is everywhere denounced as an abomination to God ; and in which the invasion of England by other nations which, in like manner shall suffer rapine and devastation, is duly described, showing the causes of these terrible calamities, and the period at which they shall end. Therefore friends, Brothers, and Sisters, attend our meetings for Divine Worship, where truth, justice, reason, and humanity are advocated, and where the Fear of God, with the belief in Christ and charity, with love to our neighbours, are propagated, and where *revealed warnings from heaven*, and merciful calls in divine revelation are made known to a truth-seeking people. The Meetings are as follows.

" At Mr. J. H. Brown's, Great Alfred Street, Nottingham, Sunday and Wednesday evenings. Sunday evenings at half-past six ; Wednesday evenings at Half-past Seven.

" At Mr. J. HURST's, King Street, Loughborough.

" At Mr. G. NORWELL's 22, Carley Street, Leicester.

" At Mr. J. WOODWARD's, Flecknoe, Warwickshire,

" At Mr. J. LOLE's, Bedworth, Warwickshire.

" At Mr. J. RHOADES, 10, Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester.

" At Mr. J. HALL's, Sutton Forest Side, Nottinghamshire.


" At Mr. C. Gregory's 11, Medina Terrace, West Cowes, Isle of Wight.

"At Mr. T. HOLMES', Seedsman, Brandon, Suffolk.

"We trust that these papers will be read and kept clean, and that the reader will investigate Divine Revelation, and attend our meetings when convenience admits.

"[By order of the Nottingham Spiritual Circle.]

Great Alfred St., Nov. 14, 1859.

 Any Contributions to assist in the gratuitous distribution of the papers will be thankfully received, and all correspondence or contributions to be addressed to

"J. G. H. BROWN, Great Alfred St., Nottingham.

"THIS BILL WILL BE CALLED FOR."

He must be blind indeed who does not discover the consummate craft of the Arch-deceiver in the above document. Satan here appears in the garb of an angel of light. Hypocrisy and oppression are denounced; the Scriptures are *apparently* exalted, many of what we believe to be its truths are asserted; while the drift of the whole is to shake men's confidence in the teaching of Scripture and of Christ's ministers by the bold assertion that the Scriptures are corrupted, and that God's ministers, of all denominations, practice a wilful deception on the people. And this attempt to shake men's confidence in God's accredited methods of communicating the knowledge which leads to eternal life, is designed to prepare the mind for the "revealed warnings from heaven," which are said to be communicated at the meetings of Spiritualists. For many ages the traditions of Rome superseded the authority of Scripture; that apostate Church in word did honour to the Scriptures, while in reality she substituted her own dicta for the Divine announcements, asserting that the Church alone could give the true interpretation and sense of the Scriptures. With many in these latter days the traditions of Rome have fallen into contempt, and for such Satan has provided the revelations of Spiritualism.

The following extract from the "Hull Packet," which was forwarded to the author by a clergyman in the neighbourhood, also confirms the fact that the fearful delusion is spreading in England.—

(From the "Hull Packet," Sept., 1860.)

"SPIRIT-RAPPING AND TABLE-TURNING IN HULL.

"For some months past one or two houses in Hull are said to have been the scene of most startling incidents, which are alleged to be the results of spirit-rapping. The house to which most attention has been attracted is situated in the neighbourhood of Humber-street. It is now three months since several persons, some of them occupying respectable positions in life, met together for the purpose, as they said, of 'testing the Spiritual movement.' At first the results seem to have been insignificant. Gradually it became rumoured, however, that most startling wonders had been witnessed; and within the last few days the neigh-

bourhood has been thrown into a considerable state of alarm through the disclosures that have been made.

"The Table-turning, we have been told, has been carried on in the ordinary manner, by placing the hands upon it. The result of this, it is said, has been that the table has been seen to walk about, turn round, increasing the velocity according to the expressed wish of those present, and turning whichever way it might be required. The table is even said to have rolled about the floor without any visible agency, and also to have risen from the floor to a considerable height. Questions have been asked and answers returned. In obtaining the answer the alphabet is placed upon the table, and a knock responds whenever a finger is placed upon a letter forming part of the word intended : and this is continued until the whole sentence has been spelled out. A book has been kept containing these answers, and it is said to contain some curious revelations. The wonder, however, has not been confined to Table-turning ; noises are said to have been heard in various parts of the house during all hours of the night ; and upon one occasion the occupiers were much agitated by hearing what they supposed to be the growlings of several wild animals apparently under the floor, and also the clattering together of chains. On other occasions balls of fire have been seen flying about the room, although at that time all was in a state of darkness ; and the wall has opened and admitted a sickening odour. A few evenings ago, it was said, they succeeded in raising the spirit of John Wesley. The effect upon the minds of those who have witnessed these startling phenomena is various. One female upon returning to her home, confidently asserts that after she had been in bed a few minutes she felt herself carried away, and by an imperceptible agency was borne about the room. Although at that time all was in a state of darkness, the woman states that she is under no delusion, and during the whole time she was perfectly sensible. Another female states, that while she sat at her own table she was lifted from her chair and thrown violently down. A third person, who has been a participator in these proceedings, has not dared to go to bed for ten nights ; for he alleges, that if he were to do so, he should not be able to obtain any rest, on account of the fearful dreams to which he is subjected and the continual noises that are going on in the house. In another part of the town in a street leading from Low-gate to High-street, the movement has assumed a more serious aspect. Conversion is proclaimed by means of spiritual communications, and it is boasted that fourteen souls have already been brought out of Nature's darkness into marvellous light."

It will be observed that we have not transferred the above extract to our pages because we attach any credit to the circumstances which it relates as matters of fact ; we merely refer to it as evidence to prove that the system of Spiritualism is gaining disciples among all classes in various parts of England. In our next chapter we shall lay before the reader specimens of the facts or phenomena to which Spiritualism appeals in authentication of its pretensions.

CHAPTER II.

WE now come to the most important part of the subject, namely the facts or phenomena on which the advocates of Spiritualism rely for the authentication of its pretensions. To us it seems to be the extremity of folly to pooh-pooh everything which does not come within the ordinary range of our observation. This most irrational proceeding virtually asserts that our own individual knowledge and experience are the boundaries of reality, and the adoption of it places one in the ridiculous position of the Indian Prince mentioned by Mr. Locke, who concluded that a Dutchman with whom he conversed must be a liar, because he told him of the freezing of water in his country,—a natural phenomenon which the Prince could not receive as a fact, because it was beyond the range of his actual experience.

The statements of these extraordinary manifestations of the agency of spiritual beings, which have come before the public from time to time, have been treated in this manner by the majority. We confess that we have long been persuaded of the facts, simply because they have been attested by evidence which we could not gainsay. Such men as Mr. Talmadge and Judge Edmondson in America, and others whom we could name in this country, are above the suspicion of lending their influence to palm an imposture on the public.

We have good reason to suspect that some of the professional *mediums*, as these necromancers call themselves, are arrant cheats. Indeed, from our knowledge of human nature, we may safely conclude that imposture will avail itself of anything which can be turned to the purpose of pecuniary gain. We, therefore, give no credence to the statements of mere professional mediums, who make a gain of Spiritualism. The writer in the "Cornhill Magazine" is not a witness of that stamp; the Editor vouches for his "good faith and honourable character," as "a friend of twenty-five years' standing." We have also been informed that Mr. Home, through whom the phenomena on the occasion related in the "Cornhill Magazine" were exhibited, makes no gain of Spiritualism. He refuses all pecuniary gifts. We, therefore, feel that the report in the "Cornhill Magazine" may be fairly received as reliable testimony in the trial of Spiritualism.

But now for the *facts*. "A party of three persons are assem-

bled round a table; they place their hands upon it. After waiting a few minutes, the table begins to rock gently to and fro. The undulating motion gradually increases, and is quickly followed by tinkling knocks underneath, resembling the sound that might be produced by rapid blows from the end of a pencil-case. The party being now *en rapport* with the invisible agency, by which the motion and noises are presumed to be produced, questions are asked by the sitters and answered by knocks. When the answer or communication requires many words, the alphabet is resorted to, and the letter being repeated aloud those knocks respond to each letter in the order in which it is to be taken down to spell out the sentence; and it is surprising," remarks the writer whose testimony we quote, "with what celerity those who are accustomed to it catch the answers, and put them down. During the whole time when these communications are being made every person's hands are displayed on the surface of the table, so that no manipulation can take place beneath."

This is strange enough, but what follows is still more astounding. We must, however, refer our readers to the article itself. Our space will only permit us to relate some of the phenomena which were manifested at another *seance*, in which Mr. Home, "the spiritual confidant of Louis Napoleon," took a part. The following is a literal transcript of this narrative as it appeared in the "Cornhill Magazine:"

"Mr. Home was seated against the window. Through the semi-darkness his head was dimly visible against the curtains, and his hands might be seen in a faint white heap before him. Presently he said in a quiet voice, 'My chair is moving—I am off the ground—don't notice me—talk of something else,' or words to that effect. It was very difficult to restrain the curiosity, not unmixed with a more serious feeling, which these few words awakened; but we talked incoherently enough upon some indifferent topic. I was sitting nearly opposite Mr. Home, and I saw his hands disappear from the table, and his head vanish into the deep shadow beyond. In a moment or two more he spoke again. This time his voice was in the air above our heads. He had risen from his chair to a height of four or five feet from the ground. As he ascended higher he described his position, which was at first perpendicular, and afterwards became horizontal. He said he felt as if he had been turned in the gentlest manner, as a child is turned in the arms of a nurse. In a moment or two more he told us he was going to pass across the window, against the grey silvery light of which he would be visible. We watched in profound silence, and saw his figure pass from one side to the other, feet foremost, lying horizontally in the air. He spoke to us as he passed, and told us that he would turn the reverse way, and recross the window; which he did. His own tranquil confidence in the safety of what seemed from below a situation of the most novel peril, gave confidence to everybody else; but with the strongest nerves, it was impossible not to be conscious of a certain sensation of fear or awe. He hovered round the circle for several minutes, and passed, this time perpendicularly, over our heads. I heard his voice behind me in the air, and felt something lightly brush my chair. It was his foot, which he gave me leave to touch. Turning to

the spot where it was on the top of the chair, I placed my hand gently upon it, when he uttered a cry of pain, and the foot was withdrawn quickly, with a palpable shudder. It was evidently not resting on the chair, but floating, and it sprang from the touch as a bird would. He now passed over to the farthest extremity of the room, and we could judge by his voice of the altitude and distance he had attained. He had reached the ceiling, upon which he made a slight mark, and soon afterwards descended and resumed his seat at the table. An incident which occurred during this aerial passage, and imparted a strange solemnity to it, was that the accordion, which we supposed to be on the ground under the window close to us, played a strain of wild pathos in the air from the most distant corner of the room.

"I give the most direct and literal account of these scenes, rather than run the risk of being carried away into descriptions which, however true, might look like exaggerations. But the reader can understand, without much assistance in the way of suggestion, that at such moments when the room is in deep twilight, and strange things are taking place, the imagination is ready to surrender itself to the belief that the surrounding space is inhabited by supernatural presences. Then is heard the tread of spirits, with velvet steps, across the floor; then the ear catches the plaintive murmur of the departed child, whispering a tender cry of 'Mother!' through the darkness; and then it is that forms of dusky vapour are seen in motion, and coloured atmospheres rise round the figures that form the circle of listeners and watchers. I exclude all such sights and sounds because they do not admit of direct satisfactory evidence, and because no sufficient answer can be made to the objection that they *may* be the unconscious work of the imagination.

Palpable facts witnessed by many people stand on a widely different ground. If the proofs of their occurrence be perfectly legitimate, the nature of the facts themselves cannot be admitted as a valid reason for refusing to accept them as facts. Evidence, if it be otherwise trustworthy, is not invalidated by the unlikelihood of that which it attests. What is wanted here, then, is to treat facts as facts, and not to decide the question over the head of the evidence.

Alluding to the playing upon the accordion by an invisible hand, the author of the article in the "Cornhill Magazine," in a subsequent part of his narrative, writes:—

"But we need not speculate on what might be done by skilful contrivances in confines so narrow, since the question is removed out of the region of conjecture by the fact that upon holding up the instrument myself in one hand in the open room, with the full light upon it, similar strains were emitted, the regular action of the accordion going on without any visible agency; and I should add, that during the loud and vehement passages, it became so difficult to hold, in consequence of the extraordinary power with which it was played from below, that I was obliged to grasp the top with both hands. This experience was not a solitary one. I witnessed the same result on different occasions when the instrument was held by others."

The above extracts contain a specimen of the *facts* which are stated by the writer in the "Cornhill Magazine." But are they

facts? We believe they are. We cannot conclude otherwise without denying the principles upon which the credibility of evidence is founded. Admitting the facts, we must necessarily conclude that a supernatural agency is concerned; and, if so, every intelligent man who believes in the Bible must conclude that this supernatural agency is diabolical. Our reasons for this persuasion shall be fully stated in a subsequent chapter.

We have now to deal simply with matters of fact. In following up this point of our inquiry, the next witness whose testimony we shall cite is, Mr. William Howitt, a gentleman well known in the literary world, and whose veracity we cannot doubt when he testifies to a simple matter of fact, however we may dissent from his conclusions. This gentleman, in a letter which appeared in the "Star" some months ago, writes as follows:—

"I will now give him a simple fact, occurring at my own table. A distinguished physician, living upwards of a hundred miles from London, who had witnessed some few demonstrations, and was desirous further to test Spiritualism, entered my room unexpectedly. I expressed my surprise to see him there. He said, 'I have run up to town on most pressing business; I have not an hour to spare, but I would like to ask a question through your little table.' We sat down. There was immediate evidence of spirit presence. 'Can I put my question,' asked the Doctor, 'mentally, so that I myself only shall know it?' 'By all means,' I replied. He was silent for a moment, and then said, 'I have put my question.' Immediately was read out through the alphabet, 'Jesus Christ has taken little David to his rest.'

"On learning this, the physician started up in much agitation, exclaiming, 'God forbid! no, truly! no, that cannot be true!' I said, 'Of that I can, of course, say nothing, knowing nothing of what you have asked.' He then said, 'Good God! I have been attending a little patient whom I would give anything to save. His death would break his parents' hearts, and blast a thousand hopes! But there was a favourable turn in his complaint; I had business of the most vital importance in town; I thought I might run up for a few hours, and now this answer says he is dead!' 'Whether that be so,' I observed, 'you can quickly learn from the iron telegraph; but I have no doubt you will find this spiritual telegram quite correct.' He pressed my hand in silence; took the railway homeward in haste, and found, on his arrival, that the child had died an hour or to before he put his question at my table."

In another letter, which also appeared in the "Star," this same gentleman writes:—

"I have seen pencils laid down in the centre of rooms on paper, and there write upon it. The Baron Guldenstubbé, in Paris, professes to have upwards of a thousand specimens of direct spirit-writing, some of which have been obtained by persons going into the first stationer's shop they came to, buying a packet of note-paper, putting their seal upon it, and never letting it pass out of their hands till they laid it down at a distance from themselves and the Baron in open light and sight. Baron Guldenstubbé has published a book upon this subject, and given *fac-similes* of some of these communications. I have seen musical instruments play

far from anyone's hands ; I have seen ponderous dining-tables rise into the air, and move themselves to a different part of the room, all in full light. But I regard these, so far as I am concerned, as very gross and outward. Yet, it is through these elements that people, who are outward themselves, and far removed from that spirit of faith which should have been in the world after nearly nineteen centuries of the preaching of Christianity, must pass."

Our next witness as to the facts of Spiritualism is a gentleman of the highest respectability, a member of the legal profession, and who is as highly esteemed in the neighbourhood where he lives for Christian character, as well as for soundness of judgment and intellectual attainment : this gentleman writes :—

"I had hoped, ere this, some person, whose experience upon the subject of table-moving and table-talking had been more extensive than my own, might have thought it right to address the public, and put them in possession of the practical results of his inquiries ; but, as I do not find that this has yet been done, I think I am only discharging an imperative duty by stating the following facts, which have occurred under my own observation, leaving the reader to draw his own inferences from them.

"In the latter part of the past summer, I happened to be at a friend's house, where, for the first time, I saw the operation of table-moving. It was successfully performed ; but as there was a large party present, I had my misgivings whether there might not be collusion among some of the performers.

"Soon after, I tried the experiment at my own house, and, to my astonishment, in conjunction with two or three other persons, some of them my own children, I succeeded in making the table revolve rapidly. Unaccustomed to scientific investigation on such subjects, I attributed the motion to natural causes, which a philosophic inquiry would soon explain ; and I continued, both at home and elsewhere, not unfrequently for the amusement of young people, to exhibit what I merely conceived to be a curious phenomenon. Meanwhile Professor Farraday published his explanation of what he conceived to have been a mere self-delusion of the operator, occasioned, if I understood him correctly, by slight mental excitement acting on muscles which had been overstrained. I soon, however, satisfied myself that, in my own experience, this was not the case. And having, by repeated experiments, become assured that the motive power (whether in the table or in the person acting upon the table) did really and truly exist, I laid the table aside, hoping that its natural cause might be ascertained ; and little doubting that, like steam, magnetism, or electricity, it would ultimately be rendered available for the service of mankind. The last thought which would have entered my mind would have been a suspicion of supernatural influence.

"About the middle of September, I happened to meet with extracts in the public papers, from the pamphlets of Mr. Godfrey and Mr. Gillson. The latter more particularly excited my curiosity, and I had no sooner read it than I determined to test the fact for myself. Accordingly, with the aid of one other person, I set the table in motion, and then proposed the following questions :—

"If you are able to answer any questions which I shall put to you, indicate it by striking on the ground ?—It did so.

“‘How many persons are in this room?—Three.’

“‘How many live in this house?—Eleven.’

“These replies were correct.

“The table continued to answer a variety of questions which could be solved by numbers, and I became satisfied that there was an intelligent agency at work wholly irrespective of myself or my co-operator. I proceeded then to inquire—

“‘Do you move by natural or spiritual agency—if the former strike one, if the latter strike twice?—The table struck twice.’

“Here I should observe that in this, as in all my subsequent inquiries, I directed what number of beats should indicate an affirmative, and what number a negative answer, and that I frequently changed the numbers, in order that I might assume nothing as a negative or affirmative answer which might not really be so, and that in every case the answers were correctly given in the numbers so directed.

“‘Are you the spirit of a dead person?—Yes.’

“‘Are you happy or unhappy?—Unhappy.’

“‘Will you be always unhappy?—Yes.’

“‘Strike the number of years you have been dead.—Four.’

“‘Did you know me in life?—Yes.’

“‘Did you ever dine in this house?—Yes.’

“‘Now tell me your name, beginning with the first letter of the alphabet, and stopping as you arrive at each successive letter in your name.—The table struck out, distinctly and slowly, the surname of a friend who had been dead four years.’

“‘Your Christian name?—It was correctly struck.’

“‘If you are the spirit of A. B. raise yourself on one leg and turn completely round.—The table rose completely on one leg, turned round once, and stopped.’

“I was so awe-stricken that I felt scarcely equal to pursue the investigation, for surely nothing could be more horrible than the intelligence that a departed friend was in the world of lost spirits, and the person named had been a clergyman of exemplary life. The thought at once occurred to my mind that in truth this was no lost soul, but the Arch-fiend himself, and I continued,—

“‘Are you obliged to tell me the truth if I require it?—Yes.’

“‘Then I require you in the name of him who gives you permission to answer these questions, Are you the spirit of the late A. B., or are you an evil spirit assuming his character for the purpose of deception; if you are A. B. strike twice—if an evil spirit strike thrice?—It struck thrice.

“‘Then you are not A. B.?—No.’

“‘Are you the Father of Lies?—Yes.’

“‘Are you he that tempted Eve?—Yes.’

“‘We retired; but soon after, almost fearing that I had deceived myself, I returned with my co-operator to the table, and put the following questions:—

“‘Tell me by what names you are known in the world?—Spelt ‘Eblis’—and ‘Siva.’ I do not wish to know the names of Eastern Deities, How are you known in the Bible?—Spelt—‘Old Serpent’—‘Roaring Lion’ ‘Son of the Morning’—‘A Deceiver’—‘Satan’—‘Devil’—‘Antichrist.’

“‘Are you he that will be bound?—Yes.’

“‘How many years will it be before you are bound?—Ten.’

“‘During those ten years will your power increase?—Yes.’ (Emphatically.)

“‘Have you the power of rendering yourself visible?—No.’

“‘Will you have such power during the next ten years?—Yes.’

“‘For how many years will you be unable to render yourself visible?—Seven.’

“‘For how many years will you be able to render yourself visible?—Three.’

“‘Will they be the last three years of the ten?—Yes.’

“Here I stopped, fully satisfied that it was quite beyond the pale of natural causes that such enquiries could have been made and such answers given in the way I have pointed out, by means of an inanimate piece of furniture, and I sat down to make a hasty record of what had taken place. It occurred, however, to my mind that I might properly make one or two inquiries with regard to the name ‘Antichrist;’ I therefore went back, and renewed the questions as follows:—

“‘You told me sometime since that one of your names is Antichrist, Is that still so?—Yes.’

“‘Are there are Antichrists besides yourself?—Yes.’

“‘How many?—Two.’

“‘Name them?—Pius, Mahomet.’

“‘These names were spelt out as before.

“‘Is the Grand Llama Antichrist?—No.’

“‘Why not?—The table moved violently, but I presume from not thoroughly understanding how to interpret its sigas, I could not comprehend them. At length I said—

“‘Are Pius and Mahomet Antichrists, because they know, but have perverted the Gospel?—Yes.’ (Emphatically.)

“‘Is the Grand Llama not Antichrist, because he never knew anything about the Gospel?—Yes.’

“Thus closed my first inquiry.

“In the course of a few days after, I had an opportunity of trying the table which had been the subject of the experiments recorded by Mr. Gillson. It was immovable. This circumstance perplexed me greatly, and I almost began to suspect that my previous experiment had been a sort of self-delusion; but returning home I again tried with my own tables—one was mounted on a triple claw, the other on four feet—with each the result was again conclusive. Three persons were present, including myself.

“‘Do you know me?—Yes.’

“‘Do you know where I have been during the past week?—Yes.’

“‘Where?—Bath.’

“One of the three persons present being utterly sceptical upon the subject of table-talking, I repeated a good many of the inquiries which I had made on the previous occasion; to all I received the like answers, and I should observe that the doubting person was for a large portion of the experiment my sole co-operator.

“On the 28th September, understanding that a friend of mine, who had never seen the experiment, was desirous of satisfying himself of the fact, I called upon him for the purpose of assuring him of its reality, and in his house tried, with another, to move one of his tables. It was a failure, although I was informed that the table in question had been turned by others. We then adjourned to my own house; the trial was then made and succeeded.

“‘How many persons are there in this room?—Five.’

“‘How many are visitors?—Two.’

"'Who are you?—C. D.' (Not A. B. before mentioned, but another person known to us all.)

"We then elicited the like answers as to deception, and the real names, as before.

"'Where are your head-quarters in this world?—Rome.'

"This answer had been given on the first occasion also, but I omitted to note it.

"'By whose permission do you answer these questions?—A higher Power.'

"At a subsequent period of the day, four of us being present, I asked again the question about the other Antichrists, and received the like answers, 'Pius'—'Mahomet.'

"'Why are you, Pius, and Mahomet, Antichrists?—The following answer was spelt out, 'Because we have perverted the knowledge of the truth.'

"Here I close. All that I have stated are facts. They took place in the presence of credible, soberminded persons. One of them was a clergyman, another a surgeon. I would lead no one to a hasty conclusion, but my own mind is satisfied,—First, that the power acting upon, or through the table, is supernatural; secondly, that it is a lying power; and, therefore, thirdly (independent of its own admissions), I am forced to the irresistible conclusion, as a Christian man, that it is no other than the power of Satan himself. For what purpose he thus exhibits himself to our human faculties there can be no room for doubt, and great beyond measure is the risk which they incur who put themselves in communication with him.

"With this warning I close the subject. If it shall serve to open the eyes of those who, like myself, have practised the phenomenon of the day under an impression that they were only trying some latent agency of nature, yet imperfectly developed, then happy shall I be, my object will have been answered. If otherwise, I have, however humbly, yet faithfully, discharged what I have conceived to be an imperative duty; I repeat the warning—it is too serious to be lightly treated. To those who do so, I can only add, upon your shoulders rests now all the responsibility."

It will be observed that one of the names by which the spirit stated that he was known upon earth was EBLIS. None of the parties who were present had ever heard this word before; but some weeks after, the gentleman who has supplied this report happened to mention the circumstances in conversation with a celebrated Oriental scholar, who informed him that that was the Arabic name for the Devil. We have only to add, that although the gentleman who has furnished the above report does not wish his name to come before the public, he is willing to answer any private applications which may be made to him for information, with reference to the facts recorded in the above statement.

The next witness whose testimony we shall adduce as to the facts or phenomena of Spiritualism, is a clergyman of the Church of England, who testifies to facts, of which he was a personal witness, when residing on the Continent a few years ago. This gentleman writes:—

"Edinbro', 11th Dec. 1860.

"SIR—According to your request, that I would state in writing something of what I saw, on the Continent, of Spiritualism, I hasten to send

you a few lines; confining myself to what I myself can certify to be perfectly true. There were two persons resident in my house for a considerable time. One of them a man, as I afterwards learned, of evil life; and the other an Englishman and a sceptic. These men were very great friends, though I believe the Englishman to have been perfectly correct in his moral character, and to have been exceedingly amiable. The German exercised a very considerable influence over his friend, and as a means of convincing him of the truth of the existence of a God and of spirits, induced him to commence spirit-writing. Most persons are now familiar with the appliances needful for this, so that it will be sufficient to say, that, after they had prepared their table with the paper spread underneath, and had fitted a common plate with a common lead pencil, they sat down to hold the plate very lightly between them; the Englishman enjoying the seeming absurdity of expecting a spirit to answer a question which was now asked aloud, and again merely thought of. By-and-bye the plate commenced to move, and the Englishman laughed, and told the German very plainly that he believed he was moving it. I have often seen persons amuse themselves in this way, but it is generally easy to detect it. However, the German was exceedingly grave, and begged his friend to ask any question in any language he liked, in his own mind, without giving any expression to his thoughts, and he would soon see the result. This was done. The plate moved again, and the answer was perfect; now in French, now in English, now in German, and again in Latin. He then observed a very peculiar scraping noise, which he tried to imitate, but found that it was impossible, that he could by no means produce the same sound which seemed to attest the presence of the spirit. The Englishman was very slowly convinced. He battled the ground inch by inch, but at last he confessed that there must be some spiritual agency at work, and he came to tell me of his state of mind. Here was a strange thing; a bad man convincing a sceptic that there was a God, and that by means of spiritual agency. I advised him not to have anything to do with it; but unable myself to give any good reason, and really fancying that it was a deception not easily traced, I tried the matter myself, and saw others try it in my presence. On many occasions the plate would not move, but when it did so, the answer was so extraordinary as to excite a doubt as to the power which was at work: it seemed more than human. In very many cases I was convinced there could be no deception. I shall not enter into the conversations which were held with the spirits on these occasions, they might give pain to some who remember them; suffice it to say, that there could be no question that the influence which was at work was an evil one, for it denied the divinity of Christ and the inspiration of the Bible. Now mark the sequel. I had allowed unwisely this experiment to be made in my house. After a while it became very unpleasant to live in it. In the day, knockings abounded everywhere which could not be traced;—at night, doors were opened and closed without human agency, or they seemed to be so. The servants became alarmed, and some asserted that they had seen spirits. Be this as it may, a more terrible warning came to us to tell us that this agency must not be tolerated. The Englishman, worn out by conflicting opinions, and driven to despair by his dealing with the spirit, who had seemingly been of use to him, at last attempted to commit suicide, and was with difficulty saved. I nursed him for a considerable time afterwards, and, under God's blessing, I believe he attained a better and a happier state of mind. All dealings with spirits were strictly interdicted, and the house returned to its usual state of quiet, the servants to their usual state of calm. I

could tell you a good deal besides what I have written now, but I have said enough to warn persons against prying into what may appear curious, but what is, I myself believe, unlawful and Satanic. It may be pleasant for your readers to learn that the German afterwards became a converted man, and was most truly penitent.*

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"AN EYE-WITNESS."

Since the above was put in type we received a communication from a highly esteemed clergyman resident in England, from which we take the following extract :—

"I had no idea of the extent to which, what is termed Spiritualism prevailed, till my eldest son came from America, and my youngest son told me how a pious clergyman, who married his wife's sister, is led away by it; and till you brought it before your readers, I did not know that anything had ever been published on the subject. In America, where there are many congregations, the members are so earthly, *sensual*, and devilish, as to put away their wives for women more spiritual. Mormonism and Spiritualism are heresies peculiar to the present century, and alike diabolical in their origin and influence. The latter seems to be permitted to do more lying wonders."

The author of these pages is indebted to the kindness of a correspondent, for a book which was published in 1857, in New York, by a Mr. Laroy Sunderland, a well-known popular writer and lecturer in America. The work is entitled, "Book of Human Nature;" the author rejects all the leading truths of Christianity, and in the conclusion of his work he makes an undisguised attack on the veracity of Holy Scripture, as weak as it is malignant. We shall have occasion, in a subsequent chapter, to notice the extraordinary disclosures which this writer makes as to the nature of the intercourse which takes place between the Spiritualists and the intelligences which they suppose to be the spirits of the departed; but the subject which we have now in hand, is the facts or phenomena of Spiritualism, and we now refer to Mr. Sunderland's testimony on that point.

Having described the production of strange sounds, such as imitations of mechanics at various works—noises like the human voice—articulating words and sentences—and music of the most entrancing character; and all this without any visible or physical agency. Mr. Sunderland goes on to enumerate the extraordinary appearances which have been presented to his sight. We quote his own words :—"Strange lights, produced in a dark room, and the appearance of human forms seen by sceptical spectators, sometimes only a hand or face, or a part of the features. At other times the whole contour of the human form is seen. This I know from personal experience. At Dr. Phelps', in Stratford-court, ap-

* It is to be specially noticed, that when the German became a Christian, he never swerved from the declaration, that he had practised no deception, but that he had received bona fide communications from spirits.

pearances were seen as if persons were walking from room to room, covered with a sheet. On watching the figure the sheet is seen to fall upon the floor, and nothing under it. Here it was also that other strange sights were seen. The beds altered, and the clothes adjusted as if a corpse were laid out in the bed. The wearing apparel of the family made into ten images, resembling human beings. They were arranged in a row, all kneeling before ten chairs, and each had a Bible in its hands, as if in imitation of the manner in which Dr. Phelps and his family performed their worship . . . A table-bell has been rung, and the same bell taken from a table without hands and wrapped in a silk apron Writing on a slate and on paper with a pencil done, when the paper was held in the hand of the spectator, done over and under the table. The handwriting of deceased persons apparently imitated, of which the medium had no knowledge at all."

There is much more to the same effect, but the above specimen may suffice ; we shall only remark that the testimony of Mr. Sunderland seems to us trustworthy. First. No reader of his book can fail to notice the candour with which he states many things, which plainly prove that several of the mediums are downright cheats ; and many more things which demonstrate that the spirits with whom intercourse is held are of the same character as he who was a liar from the beginning. Yet Mr. Sunderland is a Spiritualist, and the drift of his book is to commend the system to his fellow-men, as having emanated from the Divine goodness. For a writer with these views, to state such facts, as are thickly scattered through Mr. Sunderland's book, displays no small amount of truthfulness and candour.

Secondly. Mr. Sunderland states that many of the phenomena which he witnessed were displayed in the house of the Rev. Dr. Phelps, an "orthodox clergyman." If the facts were not as Mr. Sunderland, has stated then, why has not Dr. Phelps contradicted him? Can it be believed that a respectable clergyman would thus tacitly become an accomplice by permitting his name to be used to give currency to an imposture? This is a very important consideration, tending to show the force of the testimony which goes to prove the facts of Spiritualism. In our own country, men of high character are appealed to as having witnessed some of the most striking phenomena of Spiritualism. Why have they not contradicted these reports? We believe that many are restrained from testifying to facts which prove that a supernatural agency is concerned in the phenomena of Spiritualism from fear to encounter the burst of scorn which the avowal of their conviction would call forth from the Sadducean spirit of the age.

So much may suffice as to the facts or phenomena of Spiritualism. We have, in some measure, unavoidably anticipated the subject of the next chapter, namely, the causes wherewith persons have endeavoured to account for those phenomena.

CHAPTER III.

Having detailed some of the facts or phenomena of Spiritualism in our last chapter, we now come to consider how these facts are to be accounted for.

The first attempt at solution is that of Professor Farraday, but this hardly deserves our notice, as it only refers to a single phenomenon of Spiritualism, and that the most inconsiderable, the motion of tables. The learned Professor supposes, that this may be accounted for, by involuntary muscular action, on the part of those, who have placed their hands upon the table: but had he considered the well attested facts connected with this phenomenon such as the raising of heavy tables into the air, he would have seen that the effect cannot be explained by the cause which he assigns for it. How could the muscular action of hands placed upon a table raise it into the air? If the table were only pressed from a higher to a lower position, or from one side of the room to another, the motion might be accounted for in the way that Mr. Farraday supposes; but it is evident, to every man of common sense, that the action of hands placed upon a table must press it down, and would therefore hinder, instead of help, its rising above the floor. But while the Professor fails to assign an adequate cause for even this phenomenon of Spiritualism, he leaves the principal phenomena without any explanation whatever, we mean those in which there is not only a manifestation of power but of intelligence. Let any man of common sense consider the facts which we have recorded in the preceding chapter, and he will see that an intelligent agency was concerned in their production; to attempt to explain such manifestations of intelligence by reference to involuntary muscular action, or any other mere physical cause, is simply ridiculous.

Others attempt to explain the phenomena of Spiritualism by supposing that the persons connected with their manifestation are impostors, who have recourse to such tricks, as jugglers use, to invest their performances with the appearance of supernaturalism.

The popular periodical "Once a Week," has taken this view of the subject, and has published a series of articles upon it, under the rather conceited title of "Spiritualism made Easy." Rumour says that the writer of these articles is a professional conjurer, who has been engaged by the Editor to watch the proceedings of the Spiritualists, and to explain the phenomena which have puzzled so many, on the principles of his art. We are informed, on authority quite as good as that of the Editor of "Once a Week," that M. Canti, a celebrated conjurer in Paris, was present one evening, with about thirty persons, in the apartments of H. I. H. Prince Napoleon, and that he was accidentally chosen, with seven others, by Mr Home to witness the phenomena. M. Canti informed the Prince "that he could in no way account for them on the principles of his profession," and he published a letter to that effect.* Having read the articles in "Once a Week," we must say that the writer would have done better had he, like his brother conjurer, candidly confessed his inability to account for the phenomena of Spiritualism, than to have attempted to do so in a way which proves nothing but the tendency of our fallen nature, to accept as sound argument any nonsense which favours our pre-conceived prejudices.

The Editor of "Once a Week" by publishing the articles to which we allude, shows that the real causes of Spiritualism lie at a depth to which the thoughts and speculations of such writers cannot penetrate. Can anything be more supremely ridiculous, than the assertion, that the rising of a table several feet above the ground is accomplished by the foot of the medium; as if hundreds of persons who have seen this done could be the dupes of such a bungling artifice? The writer in "Once a Week" attempts to account for the whole narrative in the *Cornhill Magazine* in pretty much the same fashion. The window-blind was drawn down by Mr. Home with a lazy-tongs. His figure floating through the air, was produced by a small magic-lantern, which he had concealed about his person. And as to Mr. Home's foot which touched the shoulder of the narrator as he ascended into the air, he simply stood upon a chair near him and laid his foot upon him! Certainly the Editor of "Once a Week" must imagine that he writes for a very credulous public, if he thinks that such childish nonsense as this, illustrated though it be with neatly executed diagrams, can be accepted as sound argument. It should further be observed that the articles to which we allude, deal only with the performances of professional necromancers like Mr. Home, while they leave such facts, as we have published in a preceding chapter wholly unaccounted for. The more this matter is examined, rationally and Scripturally, the deeper will be the conviction that the phenomena of Spiritualism can only be accounted for on the supposition of a supernatural agency—and that that agency is diabolical.

* Extracted from a letter by W. M. Wilkinson. dated Hampstead, October 17, 1860, which appeared in the *Star*.

In the concluding article of the series in "Once a Week," the writer quotes an interesting narrative given by Captain Lyons, of the performances of an Esquimaux sorcerer, which he himself witnessed. But why, we ask, may not the Devil employ his agents of deception in Greenland, or Labrador, as well as in England? Is the Editor of "Once a Week" aware of the fact, stated by Krantz in his history of Greenland, that some of the Esquimaux sorcerers, or Angekoks, as they call them, when converted to Christianity by the Moravian missionaries, declared that in their heathen state, the sorceries which they practised were *not impostures*; that they were acted upon by a power which they could not control, but that when they believed in Jesus this power lost its influence over them, so that they had neither the will nor the ability to do what they used to practise in their heathen state?

There is but one other cause, besides those which have been noticed, to which the phenomena of Spiritualism have been attributed. The wonders of that phase of Mesmerism, which is called Biology, are referred to, and it is rashly concluded, that the phenomena of Spiritualism originate in the same physical influence. In reply, it may be sufficient to state that Mr. Stone, the celebrated biologist, is himself a convert to Spiritualism. The writer has now before him a book written in defence of this system, with a recommendatory preface by Mr. Stone: a few extracts will convince the reader that he does not think, that the phenomena of Biology and Spiritualism originate in a common cause, and on such a point we could not have a more competent witness. Mr. Stone writes:—

"In the United States these Spiritual manifestations are exciting great attention, and inducing earnest investigation. During the last four years they have been constantly exhibited in the presence of many thousands of persons, indiscriminately, and often accidentally, attracted into their presence; and although it is not to be denied that they are scoffed at, and ridiculed by some, as all glorious manifestations of an unusual order always are, they have been, by the great majority of the intellectual and inquiring men who have witnessed them, regarded with profound astonishment, and confessed to be altogether beyond the reach of mere human agency. Many an unbeliever has stood rebuked; many a jester has become serious in the presence of these Spiritual intelligences, and in numberless instances

"He who went to scoff, remained to pray."

"My attention was first attracted to these manifestations in the spring of 1850, in the city of Montreal. Like the majority of those who had heard anything of them, I regarded the statements put forth with considerable suspicion, so utterly opposed to all my previous notions, as to the boundaries which separate the spiritual world from the material, and the laws which regulate the actions of disembodied spirits, especially in their intercourse with mortality, were the phenomena alleged to be evolved, that for a time I held them to be without any claim to serious inquiry.

The interest of the subject was revived in my mind by the receipt of a

letter from my friend Mr. W. R. Hayden, then Editor of a Boston paper, with whom I was in the habit of communicating, in which I was informed that he had not only become greatly interested in these Spiritual phenomena, but was a firm believer in them. He depicted the strange things of which he had been an eye-witness, and declared that no description he could give, could convey an idea of the wonder they excited.

"In July last I left England, and upon my arrival in Boston proceeded at once to the house of Mr. Hayden, and there I witnessed, in utter astonishment, the various phenomena of which I had heard so much. I soon found that new *mediums* were almost every day being discovered in different parts of the country, some of them being gentlemen of the highest respectability, and one of them no less a person than Judge Edmons, of the superior court of New York."

So much may suffice as an answer to those who think that the phenomena of Spiritualism, like those of Biology, are the product of a physical influence.

The true cause of the phenomena of Spiritualism has already, unavoidably, to some extent, been anticipated; but we shall discuss it fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

The plain statements of that old-fashioned truth-telling book, the Bible, about spiritual agency, have been scornfully rejected by superficial and self-sufficient thinkers, as the traditions of a superstitious and ignorant age, which have become obsolete in the light of the nineteenth century; but after a while *facts* come to light which rebuke the conceited folly of these self-styled philosophers, and give practical demonstration of the truth of those statements and doctrines on which they poured the vials of their scorn.

Our forefathers framed laws against the practice of witchcraft: these laws were based upon the clear testimony of the Scriptures, which plainly speak of witchcraft as a reality, and denounce wizards and necromancers, and the consultors of familiar spirits, as grievous transgressors against God. The celebrated Judge Blackstone in his Commentaries, Book iv., Art. 69, writes thus on the subject:—"A sixth species of offence against God and religion, of which our ancient books are full, is a crime of which one knows not what account to give. I mean the offence of *witchcraft*,

conjuraton, enchantment, or sorcery. To deny the possibility, nay, actual existence of witchcraft and sorcery, is at once flatly to contradict the revealed Word of God, in various passages of both the Old and New Testament; and the thing is itself a truth to which every nation in the world hath borne testimony, either by examples seemingly well attested, or by prohibitory laws which, at least, suppose the possibility of commerce with evil spirits. The civil law punishes with death, not only the sorcerers themselves, but also those who consult them, imitating, in the former, the express law of God, 'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.'

The testimony of Scripture on this subject is full, explicit, and unmistakable; and while men, in the fancied enlightenment of an "*age of reason*," regarded the whole matter of witchcraft as a mere phantom of superstition—a name without any corresponding reality—the testimony of Scripture remained unaltered, and scepticism quoted this testimony, and not without success, to convince a sensual and faithless generation that the Scriptures were nothing but the traditions of a superstitious age, and therefore unworthy of credit. But, while the enemies of the Bible were congratulating themselves on the superior enlightenment which delivered them from the trammels of superstition, in which its friends were supposed to be held, there appears in this nineteenth century, in many parts of the world, a sect whose peculiarity consists in the practice of the very necromancy and witchcraft which the Bible denounces. The Sadducees are astounded at certain phenomena to which these necromancers appeal in proof of the reality of spiritual agency; and being determined to uphold their faithless materialism in the face of facts which demonstrate its falsehood, they endeavour to account for these phenomena, in a way which proves that they are as destitute of reason as they are of faith; and so impatient are they of any contradiction of their folly, that the conductors of our periodical literature, who choose their topics, as traders choose their wares, from the consideration of *what will pay*, are deterred by the threats of the Sadducees from a rational investigation of the subject. We have stated in a former chapter some of the facts connected with Spiritualism as they have been attested by credible witnesses. We have shown how utterly every attempt to account for these facts, otherwise than by the supposition of a supernatural intelligent agency has failed; we have expressed our strong and decided conviction that that agency is diabolical, and we now proceed to state the reasons which have led us to such a conclusion.

The ablest defender of Spiritualism in England is Mr. Wm. Howitt. Thoroughly and honestly persuaded that it is the channel of a Divine revelation, he writes with an energy and powerworthy of a better cause. Mr. Howitt has not yet gone so far in this mystery of iniquity as openly and avowedly to reject the authority of Scripture. He even tries to vindicate Spiritualism by an appeal to Scripture. His arguments shall have our candid consideration.

It may be asked, in the outset, what could be Satan's design in
c.

introducing such a system? We answer: Just the same which he accomplished by the infallible traditions of Popery—namely, the introduction of an authority in matters of faith, which should stealthily supersede the authority of Scripture. This object accomplished, the human mind is practically deprived of any standard of religious truth, and open for the reception of any falsehood which the Father of Lies may propose to its acceptance. Mr. Howitt still professes to honour the Holy Scriptures as the standard of religious truth; in doing so he supplies a lever for overturning the system of Spiritualism, and demonstrating it to be a diabolical delusion. But before applying the test of Scripture, we would remark:—

First—That in proving Spiritualism to be a diabolical delusion, we have the testimony of the spirits themselves. In one of the facts which we have recorded in a former chapter the spirit which personated a deceased clergyman confessed himself to be the Devil. It is remarkable that many Spiritualists deny the existence of any personal Devil, or evil spirit, and yet they admit that the spirits, whom they consult, often lie for the mere pleasure of lying. Numerous instances of this occur in the book recommended by Mr Stone, to which we have elsewhere alluded, and also in Mr. Sunderland's work. The following may be taken as specimens of the cases related in both these publications:—

“That the real false does very much attach to these manifestations is now everywhere admitted, though indeed a very few do, singularly enough, attempt to deny it. They have not merely a mixture of truth and falsehood, but they must be admitted often to approach so near the evil and malignant that it may not be an easy matter to put a correct estimate upon them.

“A young lad, becoming a medium for the sounds, which purported to be his grandfather, a most truthful and excellent man in his day, responded through him, and induced the lad's father to attend the new church then just commencing in that locality. That very spirit afterwards admitted to me, that he was not the lad's grandfather; and he said, moreover, that he (the spirit) lied, *he loved to lie*, and he *meant to lie*.

“Spirits at Strafford said they lied, that they were in hell, and they charged mortals falsely with the same crime, as I know.

“I have known the *associate spirit** of a medium to utter what was unqualifiedly and mischievously false about mortals; and have had accounts where they have falsely reported themselves as having been murdered, while the persons they pretended to be were living. They even went so far as to give the name of a respectable citizen of the place as the murderer. When detected in the fabrication, the spirit was asked to explain how all that came to pass? ‘Why,’ said the apocryphal invisible ‘I did it to see how much you would believe of it.’”

We shall give two extracts more from Mr. Sunderland's book,

* Does not the expression which we have given in Italics remind us of the Scriptural description of persons having *familiar spirits*, to whom God's people were forbidden to seek? See 1 Sam. viii. 19.

to show that the spirits have a peculiar congeniality with crime, and that their object is not to correct the moral characters or principle of those who seek to them.

"If a company of the merest rowdies (all alike) compose the circle, and are not offensive to the medium, they get responses freely. I was once present where some of this class composed the circle, which was surrendered to them for the time being. They called for the spirit of a companion who had been executed for burglary only a few weeks before! The sounds were made freely to them, and they had a jolly time of it. This case is referred to to show what is meant by congeniality. Had some pious deacon entered that circle, and rebuked the levity of those men, the spirits would have been offended, of course, and refused to proceed.

"In nearly all cases they (the spirits) will lie, if they are approached by mortals who lie to them; thus rendering evil for evil, instead of good for evil."

The following paragraph, in which the question naturally suggested by the facts admitted in the statements which we have quoted, is proposed and answered, is very important in our present inquiry:—

"Now to the question, *Are spirits reliable?* I answer, Yes; *they are reliable for teaching and DEMONSTRATING THE EXISTENCE OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.* If you make the inquiry still more specific, and ask, whether the 'communications' indiscriminately made by spirits to mortals are always reliable and to be taken for what they purport to be, I answer, No!"

We must add, that the phenomena connected with Spiritualism not only demonstrate the reality of the Spiritual world, but they illustrate the truth of all that Scripture reveals concerning the *agency of evil spirits*. Could we affix a deeper infamy upon a man's moral character than to say that his word is not to be relied upon? and this is the character which a devoted Spiritualist gives of the spirit with which he converses. The Devil was a liar from the beginning, and these lying spirits, as they are admitted to be are therefore of him. God has so overruled these "spirits of Devils," that they are constrained to betray their real characters in such strong colours of evil as to leave their dupes without excuse. Let Mr. William Howitt, and men of his stamp who have been carried away by this delusion, ponder this view of the subject. But we have to demonstrate from Scripture the Satanic origin of Spiritualism.

First. Spiritualism comes forth as a new or supplemental revelation. This implies the insufficiency of Scripture. But Scripture asserts its own sufficiency to "make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus," and that it makes "the man of God perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."—2nd Tim. iii. 15—17. Now here is a manifest contradiction; and as two contradictories cannot be true, we must make our choice between Scripture and Spiritualism. The embracing of the one necessarily im-

plies the rejection of the other. Many Spiritualists, ashamed of such inconsistency have avowedly rejected the Bible.

Secondly. The Scripture plainly tells us, that, according to God's general arrangement, there can be no communion between the living and the spirits of the departed. "The dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten; also, their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun."—Eccles. ix., 5, 6. In the knowledge of this fact Elijah, just before he was removed out of this world, said unto Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken away from thee."—2 Kings ii. 9. The same truth is plainly taught in the narrative of Dives and Lazarus, as recorded in Luke xvi., 19—31. I need hardly say that the whole system of Spiritualism is based on the denial of this Scriptural view of the state of the departed, and therefore if Scripture be true, Spiritualism must be false.

In applying the test of Scripture, the point which we have now noticed is not alluded to by a Roman Catholic priest whose letter against Spiritualism, appeared in the *Star*, for this obvious reason—the doctrine of the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the saints, agrees with Spiritualism, in the supposition that the living on earth may hold communion with the spirits of the departed. In this respect Spiritualism and Popery must either stand or fall together. Before quitting this part of the subject, we must remark that the advocates of Spiritualism plead that the communications received from the spirits of the departed, tend to impress the living with a salutary conviction as to the immateriality of the soul, and the certainty of a future state of existence. But what says the Great Teacher in the narrative alluded to above? In reply to the plea, "If one were sent unto them from the dead they will repent," the answer is, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Thirdly. The practice of seeking counsel from "one who had a familiar spirit"—an exact description of a medium—or of having recourse to the spirits of the departed, is denounced in Scripture as witchcraft and necromancy, and it was the disregard of these prohibitions by Saul, in his seeking to the witch of Endor, —a distinguished medium in his day—which cost him his life. 1st Chron. x. 13. This impious system appears to have had its origin, at a very early period in Egypt; and that the Jews were in danger of being seduced into the practice of it, appears from the solemn warning of Moses — "There shall not be found among you . . . a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a NECROMANCER; for all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord," &c. To this forbidden means of obtaining knowledge Saul had recourse in his difficulties; the Witch of Endor was the medium, and the apparition which she conjured up was the Satanic personation of Samuel. This authenticated case shows that the necromancy

which is condemned in Scripture, is exactly analogous in every particular to that which is advocated by Mr. Howitt, and practised by Mr. Home and others in this nineteenth century of the Christian era. A solemn warning against any participation in such iniquity is recorded Isa. viii. 19.

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?”

The interpretation of this passage given by the Rev. Thomas Scott about fifty years ago, is so much to our purpose that we cannot refrain from quoting it:—

“When the Jews were persuaded to seek unto such persons, the prophet instructed them to enquire, whether a people should not seek unto their God; and whether it were right or reasonable to leave the living to consult the dead; the living God to consult dead idols, or *the spirits of dead men* whom these witches, and wizards pretended to bring up to them.”

Mr. Howitt himself admits that necromancy, or the seeking of counsel from the spirits of the departed, was forbidden in the *Old Testament*, but his admission is followed by a statement which demands a serious examination. He writes “there is nothing more notorious than that the Jews, who were given to idolatry and necromancy, were forbidden intercourse with the spirits of the departed. There is nothing so notorious as that Christ himself restored this intercourse and abrogated this law of Moses, as he abrogated many other Jewish institutions.”

In order to justify this startling assertion, which places Moses and Christ in antagonism to each other, representing the latter as enforcing as a most salutary duty what the former had denounced as a heinous sin, Mr. Howitt refers to three passages in the *New Testament*. In showing the inconclusiveness of his argument, we shall reverse the order of his reference, and take, first, Rev. xxii. 8, 9—“I John heard these things and saw them, and when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book, worship God.” Mr. Howitt contends that the angel was the spirit of a departed man! But the terms in which the angel describes himself forbids such a supposition. “I am thy fellow servant, and of *thy* brethren the prophets.” He disclaims the relationship of brotherhood with man. He styles the prophets John’s brethren—“thy brethren,” not my brethren, or our bre-

* The following passages of Scripture may be consulted by any one who desires to see with what fulness and plainness the practices of Spiritualism are condemned in God’s own revelation. Exod. vii. 11—22, viii. 7—18; Lev. xix. 26—31, xx. 6; Deut. xviii. 10—14; 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, &c; 2 Kings, xvii. 17, xxi. 8; 1 Chron., x. 13, 14; Is. viii. 12; Mal. ii. 8; Acts viii. 9, xvi. 16; Gal. v. 20; Rev. xxi. 8, xxii. 15.

thren ; he was indeed the *fellow servant* of God's prophets, but not their brother.

Again, to prove that the "spirits of departed friends are allowed to come to us and to minister to us God's Spirit and divine favour," Mr. Howitt refers to Matthew xxvii. 52 ; but he does not quote the very words of the sacred narrative, which completely overturn the inference which Mr. Howitt draws from a partial quotation of them : "The graves were opened, and many *bodies* of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Here are not *departed spirits*, but the *bodies* of men arising, not to encourage the disciples of Christ to seek counsel of the dead, but to evidence the power of Christ's resurrection, by the energy of which these dead bodies rose from their graves.

"The narrative of the transfiguration supplies Mr. Howitt with, what he professes to consider, an unanswerable vindication of the lawfulness of necromancy. He writes—"Christ conducted his disciples Peter, James and John up into the mountain of transfiguration, and introduced them to Moses and Elias, *both spirits of the dead*." Here in the outset we notice a great mistake. The spirit of Elias was never disembodied, for he was taken up soul and body into heaven ; and that Moses was also present in his body on the Mount, is manifest from the words of the sacred narrative, which states that both he and Elias, on this occasion, "appeared in *glory*,"—a term never applied to a departed spirit. The spirit of a believer at death enters into peace ; but not until the second advent of Christ, when the redemption of God's people will be perfected in resurrection, when the regenerated spirit is united to the reorganized body, is the believer glorified, as it is written, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, *then* shall we also appear with him in glory." It is not said that the spirits of Moses and Elias were present at the transfiguration, but "Moses and Elias," which certainly implies that their persons, including both body and soul, were present. The design of the transfiguration, as we learn from Matt. xvi. 28, and 2nd Pet. i. 16, was, to illustrate the glory of the kingdom which Christ will establish at His coming, when the saints shall be glorified both in body and soul : the supposition, therefore, that only the spirits of Moses and Elias were present, would nullify the whole design of the vision. But Mr. Howitt proceeds—"The Lord, who was about to become the Prince of the spirits of the dead, broke this law (*i. e.*, the law forbidding the practice of necromancy,) and in no other presence than that of the promulgator of this law, who had long been a spirit of the dead ; and again, in the presence of those selected by Christ, to teach this great act to posterity." Now, we ask Mr. Howitt to tell us frankly did the Apostles so understand the vision ? If so, he can have no difficulty in naming the Apostles who practised necromancy themselves, and taught others to believe that through the instrumentality of tables, and rappings, and alphabets, they might hold intercourse with the spirits of the

departed. We have the history of the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles, and twenty-one letters addressed by Christ's inspired servants to the primitive disciples, and if necromancy was the practice of the early Church under the ministry of the Apostles, these venerable and inspired writings will supply many proofs of Mr. Howitt's assertion. Let him produce a single instance. We tell him he cannot do so, and moreover we tell him the apostolic writings supply many proofs of the falsehood of his assertion. St. Paul did indeed come into contact with a medium at Philippi, a girl possessed by a spirit of divination, Acts xvi. 16. The spirit, by which this woman spoke, bore testimony to Paul's divine mission. Did he accept the testimony as a Spiritualist should have done? Nay, he was grieved, and in the name of Jesus, he cast out the spirit of the medium. Again, let Mr. Howitt read 2nd Thess. iv. 13, 14, &c., which show us how the inspired apostle comforted those who mourned the loss of departed friends. Does he tell them, as a Spiritualist should have done, that they might still hold intercourse with the spirit of the deceased? Nay, but he tells them the very reverse. He informs them that their bodies were in the grave awaiting the resurrection, and that their souls were with Jesus, not to return to earth until they accompanied Jesus at his second and glorious advent. Mr. Howitt himself admits that the practice of seeking counsel from departed spirits is condemned in the Old Testament. Spiritualism is just the necromancy and witchcraft which is there described. It is just a reproduction, as we have shown, of the proceedings of Saul with the witch of Endor, a celebrated medium in her day; and let me remind Mr. Howitt that witchcraft is condemned as strongly in the New Testament as in the Old; in Gal. v. 20, it is enumerated among the works of the flesh, concerning which it is written—"They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." In the Book of Revelation "Sorceries" are classed with murder, fornication, and theft. Rev. ix. 21. And "sorcerers," in common with "whoremongers, murderers, and idolaters," are excluded from the eternal habitation of the saints. — Rev. xxii. 15.

Fourthly, the great majority of Spiritualists deny all the distinctive doctrines of Christianity as held by the Protestant churches, and many avowedly reject the Scriptures. Mr. Howitt has not yet reached this point of delusion. The teaching of the spirits has not yet carried him so far. That teaching is as varied as error itself, and suited to the mental and moral condition of its recipients. In some cases the teaching is so truthful that only those who have been forewarned of the devices of Satan could discover the Father of Lies under the guise of an angel of light. In Mr. Howitt's case we have this phase of Satanic delusion. On this most important branch of the subject Mr. Howitt speaks with cautious reserve. In his long and able letter which appeared in the "Star," the only reference to it is contained in the following short sentence, "Of the higher and more sacred teaching

of Spiritualism, I could say much." We must see what the high and sacred teaching is, and when we have opened this festering ulcer every rightminded man will think with us, that instead of being high and sacred, nothing could issue from the pit of hell more thoroughly low, debasing, and profane.

We have now before us a book on "Spirit Manifestations," edited by G. W. Stone, and published in 1852, which contains the most authentic creed of Spiritualism upon which we could lay our hands. We now proceed to notice the articles of this creed, introducing the subject with the following quotation:—

"DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRITS.—The theology, piety, and morality of the spirits will now be stated. There are discrepancies and contradictions on some points, if we take the whole range of communications, good, bad, and indifferent. But I shall confine myself to what may be considered, on all hands, the most reliable testimonies, *i. e.*, to communications purporting to come from the worthiest spirits, and through the most independent media."

This, it must be confessed, is rather a suspicious introduction to what the author would palm on the credulity of mankind as a divine revelation. This is, perhaps, to prepare the reader for such disclosures as the following, which occur in a subsequent part of the book:—

"I conclude for myself that implicit confidence cannot be placed in the so-called spirit responses and communications, as always coming from departed spirits. The medium, or some powerful mind, or minds, present may overrule, *warp, twist, or colour*, the answers and sentences spelt out. . . . There is a mysterious agency from the spiritual world which cannot be *completely* overruled. Nevertheless it is so often, and so far controlled, as to be *decidedly—unreliable.*" Page 63.

It should be here stated that this book, like the manifesto of the Nottingham Spiritualists, does a sort of homage to Scripture, occasionally quoting from its sacred pages; but it is a Judas-like homage—rendered only to betray. The manifest design of the whole system is to supersede Christianity. The writer of the book before us does not honestly avow this, but he does confess that such is the result in some cases, for he admits that there are among the disciples of Spiritualism those who "regard the thing as an entire new revelation from heaven, which renders the Bible, and even New Testament Christianity, as obsolete as a superannuated almanac." That Spiritualism does in fact land all its disciples virtually in the same conclusion must be manifest to every intelligent reader, from the following summary of its principles, as we gather them from this writer:—

First. It ignores the doctrine of the Trinity, as Scripturally set forth in all Protestant confessions of faith.

Secondly. It denies the Fall, and consequent corruption of man.

Thirdly. It rejects the great doctrine of the believer's acceptance, through faith in the vicarious sufferings of Christ.

Fourthly. It denies the necessity of regeneration, to be accomplished by the Holy Spirit, during the time of man's mortal existence, as an essential qualification for future blessedness.

Fifthly. It emphatically denies the eternity of future punishment, representing all men, even the most vicious, as entering into bliss at the hour of death. Alluding to this class, it is said—"Their existence is a blessing to them even while thus low; and there is no such place or state as a hell of unmitigated, hopeless misery."

Sixthly. It rejects the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and of a day of judgment, when every person's state for eternity will be fixed unalterably, for weal or woe, according to the deeds done in the body.

Seventhly. Spiritualism ignores the existence of the Devil or an evil spirit presiding over other evil spirits, confederated in rebellion against God. In truth, we know not of any distinctive doctrine of Christianity which this system of error does not discredit.

The spirit of the book, from which we gather this information concerning the doctrine of Spiritualism, will be found in pages 53—59. Alluding to the principles which are there inculcated, the author writes:—

"It will be seen that they differ in some respects from every sectarian view of theology, morality, and religion now popular in the world. . . . Perhaps I receive them with greater readiness and partiality, because they modify but slightly the general system of faith, views, and opinions, which, by long and thorough research, my own mind had already elaborated."

Thus it appears that the tenets of Spiritualism are in direct contradiction to the doctrines of Christianity, as contained in the Scriptures. If, therefore, Christianity be a revelation from the Author of Truth, Spiritualism must be a communication from the Father of Lies:—if the one be of God, the other must be of the Devil. In truth, the principles of Spiritualism are identical with that form of blasphemy which passes under the name of Rationalism, with this only difference, Rationalism offers itself to men's acceptance as a system, which man's own mind has elaborated.—Spiritualism is the same system, commending itself by a supernatural attestation. It is Rationalism with Satan's seal affixed to it.

That some of these revelations are from lying spirits, the author of this book is forced to admit. In answer to the objection, "How is it that many of the communications, purporting to come from distinguished men, are obviously inferior in force and dignity of style to their known earthly productions?" he naively replies:—"Some spirit from the *lower circles*, ambitious to personate

a highly distinguished one, actually *played the part of a pretender*."

Again, when pressed with the objection, that spirits sometimes profess to be the departed spirits of men, who are afterwards discovered to be alive on the earth, he admits that several such cases have occurred, and he adds, "In all ages there have been impostors, who took false names and personated the character of others. . . . If all this is true of some spirits in the flesh, why may it not be equally true of departed spirits. . . . My opinion is that such impositions are enacted by departed spirits not yet pure and high enough to eschew all untruthfulness."—Page 119.

Here is a plain admission that some of those communications are from lying spirits, and this admission suggests the inquiry, What security have those who take their principles from such revelations, that their invisible teachers do not belong to the same class? or, in other words, what security have the disciples of Spiritualism that they are not the disciples of the Father of Lies?

The manifest contradiction of the most sacred and essential truths of Christianity contained in these spiritual communications, demonstrates their infernal origin; and we shall now show further, that their utter opposition to the principles of sound Scriptural morality supplies equally cogent proof of the same point.

We shall introduce this part of the subject to our readers, by the following quotations, from the book to which we have already referred, as the most tangible and authentic exponent which we could find of the teaching of Spiritualism.

"All error and sin have their primeval origin in *lack* of love and wisdom, not in the machinations of a diabolical being. They spring from a negative tendency, not a positive cause. The self-hood of all finite creatures has a natural tendency to reveal its inherent imperfections in its lack of the infinite and perfect. Thus, the absence of light reveals darkness; the absence of heat reveals cold; the absence of strength reveals weakness; the absence of order reveals disorder; the absence of force reveals inertia; and the absence of life reveals death. So the absence of love reveals selfishness; the absence of wisdom reveals folly; the absence of truth reveals error; and the absence of good reveals evil. Light and heat are positive substances; strength is a positive energy; order is a positive work; force is a motive power; and life is a vivifying principle. But what is darkness? what is cold? what is weakness? what is disorder? what is inertia? what is death? They are all mere negative conditions or states. Just so, love and wisdom, truth and good, are positive divine principles, or absolute entities. . . . But selfishness, folly, error, evil, are negative states or conditions, universally revealed in the self-hood of finite natures, by the absence of those positives. Just in the degree that beings lack love, wisdom, truth, and good, they are naturally selfish, foolish, false, and evil. And being thus, their low degree of the divine good, gives rise to all the abuses and perversions of nature, which we call *sins*. This is why we have *low* spirits in the flesh, and why, leaving the

world low, millions depart and continue such, perhaps for long ages in the next. God and countless holy angels, are promoting the elevation of all inferior spirits by all the means established in the eternal moral order of spiritual nature; and there is no other devil to resist them, but their negative lowness, or their thence arising positive perversions of powers, faculties, and things in themselves good."—Page 110.

We shall not pause to expose the contradictions and absurdities which abound in this jargon, We can hardly imagine how any man not bereft of common sense, could speak of darkness, cold, weakness, and death, as things having no positive existence. The whole statement is opposed to common sense, as well as to the plain teaching of Scripture, and its manifest drift is, to divest sin, as a "transgression of God's most holy law," of its intrinsic malignity, and to encourage men to regard it as a mere negation—a nonentity—a nothing. It does not require much penetration to discover that such a statement contains the germ of all practical iniquity. The tendency of such teaching is not developed in the volume from which we quote, but it is displayed in striking colours in a book lately published by a Dr. Child, a disciple of the Spiritual school. The Doctor writes:—

"What is a lie?—a lie is true to the cause that produced it; so what we call a lie is a truth that exists in nature, just as real as is what we call a truth. The cause of a lie exists in nature, the cause of a truth exists in nature, and the cause of each is wrought out in nature. Nature is always true in her work; so that both a truth and what we call a lie are lawful and right in the great plan of existence. A lie is a truth intrinsically; it holds a lawful place in creation; it is a necessity."

Surely the spirit of Ignatius Loyola must have been the teacher from whom Dr. Child learned thus to confound truth and falsehood. But, whatever Jesuits and Spiritualists may assert, God's holy Word declares that "all liars shall have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone."

But this is not all.—Having informed his readers that "no commandment, either written or spoken, ever had any influence upon the soul," and that "there is no such thing as spiritual culture coming from the teaching of another," this disciple of Spiritualism goes on to divest murder of all criminality. Hear his own words:—

"Murder has no influence upon the soul; it is a thing of the material world in its influence. It has no influence upon spiritual existence, *of which it is an effect*. When the murderer kills his brother, he strikes a blow that will paralyse every love of his own earthly existence. Then the affections of his soul must cling to something; and if his love of earth becomes broken by the awful deed of murder, and the consequent punishment that he meets, spiritual things are next grasped, and perhaps sooner grasped for the commission of the deed. The murderer does his deed in darkness: he does not commit the deed with a view to advance

the progress of his soul. He is moved by an unseen and irresistible power to commit what seems to us the 'evil deed.' Every murder that ever was committed has been inevitable: in the bosom of nature has existence *the awful cause, of which murder has been the effect.*"

It is here to be carefully noted that this is the genuine teaching of Spiritualism. Dr. Child repudiates the notion of having been led into the adoption of such nefarious principles by aught save the communications which he received from departed spirits. He assures us that, "truth is developed in the soul by intuition always. The soul never did, nor never can receive that which is itself a truth, from external teaching, from the school, or the meeting-house." And again, "Every real Spiritualist is a Spiritualist alone from intuition, not from external evidence. Philosophy never made a Spiritualist, and never will." Here, then, we have the pure, unadulterated morality of Spiritualism. Let the reader ponder the extracts in which it is exhibited, and then say, from whence came the inspiration which suggested such sentiments. Came this, more than palliation of falsehood and murder from the God of truth and love, or from him who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning?

Lastly, we have reason to believe from the sure word of prophecy, that just about this time, there should be an extraordinary putting forth of satanic power, in the production of "signs and wonders which should deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." The symbolical drying up of the river Euphrates—(see Rev. xvi. 12)—has been interpreted, by the best commentators for the last two hundred years, to signify the gradual exhaustion of the Turkish power, a fact which has been wondrously accomplished at this time. In connection with this fact, another occurrence is predicted in the following words:—"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty" Rev. xvi. 13, 14. Here we have a symbolical prophecy, which, according to the divine interpretation of it in verse 14, leads to the expectation that about the time of the decadence of the Turkish Empire, *spirits of devils working miracles*, should go forth to the potentates of the earth, to draw them into that crash of arms with which this dispensation closes. Letters which have appeared in some of the public journals, bear testimony to the great fact that this prophecy is now receiving at least a partial fulfilment in the proceedings of Spiritualism. The system has avowedly originated in the agency of spirits; that these spirits are evil ones we submit has been proved; that certain phenomena which cannot be explained from natural causes, or in other words, miracles are wrought by these spirits, to give the semblance of a divine sanction to their delusion, is to our mind quite certain, and that these spirits of

devils go forth unto the kings of the earth, as described by the Seer of Patmos, is plainly stated by two advocates of the system. Alluding to the arch-necromancer, Mr. Home, Mr. Howitt, writes:—"He has exhibited scores of times before the Emperor of France, . . . he has done the same at almost every court in Europe, and possesses the most unequivocal testimonials to the reality of his demonstrations from numerous crowned and learned heads."

On the same subject Mr. Wilkinson, another disciple of Spiritualism, writes:—"If any of your readers are on sufficiently intimate terms with the Queen of Holland, the Emperor of Russia, or the King of Bavaria, I can affirm with truth that they will each testify to the phenomena, which have repeatedly occurred in their presence through Mr. Home. Prince Adelbert of Bavaria is himself a medium, as is Prince Luigi, the uncle of the present King of Naples." Coming events cast their shadows before them. The military preparations which have been made, and which are still proceeding in every European nation, portend a fearful war at no distant period. In that war the "world power," under which the earth has groaned for nearly six thousand years, will be destroyed to make way for the entrance of the universal dominion of the Prince of Peace. Ahab was impelled to the conflict in which he perished by the flattering promises and assurances of the "lying spirit in the mouth of his false prophets," and perhaps at no distant period the lying vaticinations of the "spirits of devils" who meet with such acceptance from the Emperor of France and the other crowned heads of Europe may hasten on the crisis which is to "overturn, overturn, overturn," every earthly dynasty to make way for the universal sovereignty of Him whose right it is, even Jesus the King, who is to "reign in righteousness," as "the blessed and only Potentate."

In conclusion, we would warn all persons from participating in any way in the fearful delusion, which we have exposed in this chapter. Mr. Howitt himself admits that there is much need of caution in consulting the spirits of the departed. He is fully aware of the fact that some of these spirits personating, it may be, a departed saint, have, when adjured in the name of Jesus, confessed themselves devils. We ask Mr. Howitt, what security has he that these communications which he receives as "airs from heaven" may not be "blasts from hell?" He proposes prayer as a security. We must remind him that no answer to prayer can be expected save in the path of duty. Our petitions to be heard must be in accordance with the revealed will of God. To pray without the warrant of a Divine promise is fanaticism. To pray for guidance and protection in the way of disobedience to a Divine command, is impious presumption, and those who offer such prayers have every reason to apprehend a curse, and no reason whatever to expect a blessing. A man who throws himself from the top of a lofty building, believing that his prayers will save him, will be woefully disappointed. The Mormons may pray for a blessing on their adultery and fornication, but such sanctimoni-

ous hypocrisy cannot divest their disobedience of its uncleanness, or avert their merited condemnation. Those who seek counsel from departed spirits, sin equally against the plain command of God; and, unless they abandon their wicked course, they must bear the present and everlasting consequences of their own perverse folly.

Against the diabolical delusion which has been exposed in these pages there is but one effectual preservative: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Mere human wisdom will be overmatched by Satanic craft. St. Paul, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, speaking of the "last days"—the "perilous times"—in which our lot is cast, when "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," directs our attention to the same means of defence against popular delusions. He writes:—

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing from whom thou hast learned them: and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. ii. 14—17.

THE END.

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