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James Shawby
21st March 1879

THE SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

VERSUS

DIABOLISM :

IN

TWO LECTURES.

BY

MRS. MARIA M. KING,

AUTHORERS OF "THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURE," "REAL LIFE IN THE SPIRIT LAND,"
"SOCIAL EVILS—THEIR CAUSES AND CURE," ETC.



Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1870, by Andrew J. King, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

SECOND EDITION.

BOSTON:

COLBY AND RICH, PUBLISHERS,

9 Montgomery Place.

1876.



SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY vs. DIABOLISM.

LECTURE I.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." Rom. viii. 38-9.

It is a question of primary importance to human beings to know, whether, indeed, the above sentiment, uttered by the Apostle Paul, is truth, which can be substantiated by reason. "The love of God," signifies, in its broadest sense, the provision made for the safety, the present and ultimate welfare of mankind by the Father; who, as God, must possess power to provide means to secure the highest welfare of his children. It becomes intelligent man, in an age like the present, to reason of all things concerning his present and future; to question authority which contradicts reason, be that revelation, or creeds and dogmas established by man in the flesh.

The doctrine of Devils, or the power of Evil Spirits over man in the flesh and spirit, is exciting the minds of the thoughtful, at present, to a considerable extent, and justly. Nothing concerns mankind more deeply than to understand the character of their relations to the spirit world, and the intelligences therein; and what powers the latter possess over them; whether, indeed, they are subject to the will and power of disembodied fiends, who roam unrestrained among

the children of earth, to scatter the poison of depravity wherever they go, or whether there is *order* in the higher life that restrains these—such heaven-born order as results from the higher civilization, the superior powers, developed in a state of existence where the facilities for improvement are not bounded by the barriers that oppose them in the first state. Man, I repeat, is interested to know whether he is a victim to the irresponsible, unrestrained powers of the invisible world of intelligences, or whether he is the subject of the watchful, fatherly care of a power that is termed Infinite, or God, that exercises intelligence for the purpose of blessing man, of elevating him from his naturally depressed condition. He should know of a certainty, whether, when he lifts his aspirations to heaven for bread to feed his hungry spirit, he is in danger of receiving the vile poison, bred of insane, loathsome depravity, whose influence upon the spirit is to drag it down to wallow in the mire of sensuality; which is infinitely worse than the stone that would but starve the physical body, and the serpent that would but sting it to death.

With the light of reason, philosophy, and revelation, which the present age is revealing, men can solve the important problem, and put themselves at rest upon it. Many are resting upon it now, as though it were solved; but the solution which has been given has bestowed an unquiet rest, such, indeed, as would be enjoyed upon a *bed of thorns*.

I propose to array the Spiritual Philosophy against the doctrine of Diabolism, so prevalent among Spiritualists, and considered by many as a fundamental doctrine of the Philosophy. I am well aware of the forces with which I have to contend, which are so formidable that many have hesitated before them, and waited for time to dispel the darkness that overshadows earthly minds, and to make way for the light of truth, before venturing to offer a theory contrary to the one so generally received upon this subject. Waiting without effort to draw attention to important principles relative to the subject, is only to defer the triumph of truth; but delay in this matter has afforded time for the

accumulation of testimony on both sides of the question, which is of the utmost importance to its just consideration.

I claim that true Spiritualism, which is at the same time a Philosophy and a Religion, is so much in advance of other systems of religion, that it *dispenses with a devil in the universe*; and likewise with the *legions of devils* with which the theology of the ages has peopled earth, and air, and every region where there was man to harass and torment. The very principles upon which this system is based, are utterly at variance with the doctrine of the supremacy of evil in any sphere of life; or, that it is propagated from higher to lower spheres. One of its foundation stones is the principle, *that good is predominant throughout universal nature*; expressed through progressive action, which conducts matter and mind on from stage to stage, from sphere to sphere, each successive one higher than the last; the higher being the instruments of assisting the progress of the lower. The God it acknowledges is supremely wise, just, powerful, and beneficent; possessing the attribute of intelligence in infinite perfection to control His other attributes. His omniscience and omnipresence cause His omnipotence to subserve *every* purpose of nature, to the end of *eliciting good*—of furthering progress of matter and mind from the chaotic, the undeveloped state. It recognizes man as the arm of the Omnipotent to aid the progress of all nature—himself and his dependent brother included. In thus investing man with powers akin to those of the Infinite Mind, it makes him, in the various spheres of life, the *legislator* for those spheres. It places him in *God's stead*, according to the wisdom and power he has developed. Thus, in earth-life, he is supreme legislator for society there, subject, only, to the spiritual influence emanating from a higher sphere, which may, or may not, be recognized as a guiding power, or as existing at all.

The precedent is established among men on earth, and by the highest intelligence they have developed, that the higher are the guides and governors of the lower—those who need guiding and governing. The civilized portions of the race are the natural guardians of the savage and semi-

civilized; and they exercise what influence is possible over these latter to aid their progress into a higher condition. They *govern them*, if they have them in their power, and subject them to civilizing influences. This is the prerogative of truly civilized governments. I do not speak of the barbarisms that yet attach, in a degree, to the most civilized nations the earth can boast, which hinder the beneficent action of high civilization upon dependent tribes and nations low in the scale of development. It will not be denied by any intelligent individual, that justice demands that those who possess knowledge should make it their business to impart it to whoever has need of it, as far as in their power; that those who have it in their power to disseminate order among the tribes and families of men should do this; that whoever can, in justice to himself, exercise power through ingenuity, persuasion, or coercion, to protect the weak and innocent against injustice, should also do this; on the principle, that the weak by nature, demand support and protection from the strong. Whoever denies these principles of justice, written in indelible characters in unperverted human nature, denies the first principles of law and government, and would institute chaos in society.

Nature delegates power to the wise. By wisdom were introduced and established every form of law and order that have exerted their influence to ameliorate the condition of the different nations and societies into which the race of man is divided, and bring them out of the condition of bondage to sensuality and ignorance, which was the first estate of the race. Wisdom devises means, or discovers power, whereby to put its schemes into execution; therefore, it is competent in any society or sphere, to compass the ends of justice.

The knowledge developed by man on the material plane, is not, strictly speaking, wisdom. It is too much tinctured with the results of false reasoning to serve completely the ends of justice; yet it opens the way for the unfoldment of true wisdom in the sphere where materiality does not obstruct the action of mind, and where justice is to be served the same as in the lower sphere. If human governments

fail, as yet, to serve fully the ends of justice; and man, in every nation, from lowest to highest, mourns and droops under some form of oppression, or for lack of proper care from his appointed guardians, the legislators of his state or nation, it may be justly reasoned, that, in the higher state, this low condition can be improved upon. It can readily be conceived that the wisdom of men, the result of study, experience, and practical application of principles in earth-life, can be put to practical use in a sphere where every grade of humanity exists the same as in earth-life; and where law and order is as necessary as in the latter state. Why should not the wisdom of statesmen and the benevolence of philanthropists operate, for the same ends in spirit-life as they do in the first state? Is it to be for a moment believed that man changes his nature on stepping over the threshold that divides the two states of being? That what were his needs, his pleasures, his proclivities, his studies, and his employments, cease to be such there, so entirely, that a different mode of existence is entered upon?

It is a fundamental principle of the Spiritual Philosophy, that life in the second sphere is a perpetuation of the modes established in the first; these modes being spiritualized—exhibiting themselves on a higher plane to suit the spiritual life of man and all nature. According to this doctrine, which every spiritualist is prepared to endorse who has any knowledge of the principles of his faith, there is a perpetuation of law and order; of legislation, and provision for all the needs of individuals and society in spirit-life. As man does not cease to be man when he is unclothed of the physical form, but retains what attributes of manhood he has developed, he will continue to exercise these attributes, both for securing his own welfare and that of others.

The spirit world receives all grades of human beings. Over the highway that leads from the physical sphere to the spiritual, passes, in perpetual flow, a stream of humanity destined to people the higher sphere; to make its society, and establish conditions as various in different localities on the sphere as there are varieties of classes of individuals. Legislation provides for this constant influx of population,

as it would in civilized communities on earth provide for whatever people might be added to a community. Did it not do this, or were there no legislation in the sphere to make provision for the regulation of the masses, there would be a state of anarchy of which the human mind can scarcely conceive. People there must be subordinated to law, if the ends of justice are attained. Social regulations are as necessary there as on earth; and coercive measures must be adopted to restrain the multitudes who are slaves to passion, and who would prey upon their fellows, unless restrained.

The good are a safe law unto themselves; nevertheless, for the regulation of their lives, certain rules of order must be established; for wherever men associate, rules, social regulations, are indispensable for securing and perpetuating harmonious relations. The order which grades society; appoints individuals their appropriate spheres of action; provides for the instruction of all classes in whatever branches of knowledge are appropriate for them to study; that protects the helpless and innocent from wrong; and confines vice within such bounds as to prevent its propagation; is that which the second sphere has developed.

Wise men in this sphere have improved upon the methods of ordering society practiced by the highest people in earth-life. They have experimented to some purpose during their long lives on earth and in the sphere; and, likewise, being highly developed spiritually, they have drawn from fountains of wisdom in the spheres above, to aid them in putting into practical operation such rules to regulate society in the sphere as should satisfy the demands of justice, and thus secure to man on this plane means of rapid progress. Surely, reason cannot demur at this statement. If man is a progressive being, and retains his identity after death, he surely must progress into a higher, truer comprehension of law, and its adaptation to society. Progress signifies improvement upon the instincts and the reason of human nature. Man, in the incipiency of his being, possesses the germ of every truth, of every law within him, as a portion of his germinal spiritual nature



The divinity within him, which is this germinal God-like nature, outworks itself by slow degrees; but even in the first state of being, his instincts and his intelligence begin to outwork it, and he initiates methods of life which are the true ones when they are outwrought fully in his progressive career. The instinct of government exhibits itself in the savage; the civilized man has improved upon this low instinct, and through the form of government he conceives, high order is established in society, compared to that which resulted from the conception of the savage. In the higher life, where the higher nature of man develops as it can not in earth-life, reason unfolds itself to the degree that the mind grasps principles of which it before could not conceive, and applies them to the improvement of his early methods. With the superior light he possesses in this state on the science of mind—of human nature—he can adapt laws and rules to all grades of society, that will secure their highest good.

Man on the spiritual plane deals with forces he can command. He learns to control the elements of nature and the human mind, on planes below his. He is not the *helpless victim to law* that some have pictured him. Could it be conceived that law, as it operates in the realm of spirit, forbids the interference of one individual with another, or of social rules with any class of people, then it might be believed that chaos reigns there; and anarchy and license run rampant, and none are safe, or have any means of protection against the evil-disposed. Could it be conceived that the more perfect operation of law on the spiritual plane does not sanction whatever means may be discovered to aid in the perfect operation of laws which relate to the association of human beings, and which either permit or forbid the intermingling of certain grades, then it might be believed that nature's law is reversed in the spiritual state, and man is not at liberty there to put in execution means which he knows are adapted to the wants of mankind. Nature and analogy teach that there is no reversion of the order of nature in the second state of existence, or any

above that; if there were, it would be most inappropriate to call the second the higher state. It would be lower, in the truest sense.

When man in the physical state imagines himself to be the victim of malignant spirits, inhabitants of the spirit world, he overlooks all the principles I have enunciated. He, in effect, declares his belief that there is no order in spirit-life; that there, the operation of inexorable law is not directed by intelligence; that justice does not there bear sway, even to the extent it does in earth-life; that intelligence does not rule there as effectually as it does in earth-life; in fine, that the order which intelligence has discovered to be conducive to progress, is displaced by the anarchy and license which lead directly to barbarism. I repeat: By accepting the doctrine of Diabolism as it is taught to-day by Spiritualists, one declares his belief in the subversion of law to anarchy and barbarism, in the next state of existence.

What barbarism earth has ever known can compare with that of a state where the accumulated millions of the depraved, inhabiting the second sphere from every nation and people on the earth, are allowed to "follow their attractions," according to the definition of this phrase usually given? Where they are allowed to go where they will and do what they will, *with none to say nay*, or to place a barrier between them and the accomplishment of their evil designs upon humanity? The human mind shrinks, appalled, at the contemplation of what would be, did not law and order reign in spirit-life! O death! thy sting would be terrible indeed, did the departing spirit expect to be ushered into a state where devils would be more likely to seize upon it at once, than angels; and where it might expect life would be but a series of conflicts with determined fiends who roam at will among the inhabitants of the sphere, as well as in earth's atmosphere!

Imagination cannot exaggerate the wofulness, the horrors, that would attend life, were this doctrine true. Those who teach and believe it, very seldom trace it to its ultimate consequences. Indeed, in its ultimate consequences, it would

annihilate all nature, and God its indwelling spirit. It presupposes a state of things that can not possibly exist in consonance with the order of nature. It denies, in effect, that God is; because it denies that intelligence possesses power to dictate in a manner that the ends of justice be served. It declares that man on one plane of life has no power over his fellow man on the same plane to restrain or guide him; and in thus declaring, it severs man from the guardianship of higher intelligence. It cannot be denied that this is the logical consequence of this doctrine. If man on earth were not subject to whatever power his fellow man might develop over him, he would be utterly beyond his influence, and beyond the influence of any; for God rules man through man. A criminal can be chained who resists moral force; this is a species of power which man, or society on a low plane, possesses over the delinquent; and it supplies the place of a higher force until the criminal reaches the stage where he is susceptible to a higher.

Bolts and bars, houses of correction and asylums, on the earthly plane, serve the purpose of restraining the evil-disposed and insane from depredating upon the rights of others.

These means have blessed society; and without them, civilized society could not exist. The bolts and bars are suited only to the lower—the first plane of life; but on the second plane, a power is substituted for them more effectual to restrain; more effectual, because it restrains the mind, the disposition, and makes that a restraining power over the outer man. The felon in earth-life will undermine his dungeon wall, saw through his grated window, and escape from the bondage of a prison that holds the body but does not affect the mind to restrain it in the pursuit of evil. In spirit-life, there is no escape from the power which a strong, cultivated will can exercise over the grossest mind; one to which it is adapted magnetically. The only chains that bind, in this life, are those which mind casts over inferior mind, *to bring it up, not to drag it down*. They are the *superiors* who rule in spirit-life, not the inferiors, either in morals or in intellectual development; so decided to be by law. Real progress in knowledge is always accompanied by

progress in morals, in purity of character; and the intellect that is sufficiently cultivated to exercise an effectual power over mind, is above grossness; it can not deal treacherously with its brother. This is the rule in spirit-life; and on earth, those who are observant, will discover, that really cultivated intellects do not display inclinations to gross habits and practices. The truth is, that error is allied to grossness of every other nature, it being itself grossness—impurity; and philosophers, so-called, who are wise in spurious knowledge—whose opinions are a mixture of truth and error—are not above the grade who practice immorality. It is a provision of nature most beneficent in its results, that deep discrimination of mind is only possible with the pure. Grossness is a bewildering vapor that beclouds the mental perceptions. They, only, who have thrown aside the veil of depravity which obscures their finer mental vision, are adapted to discover and put in practice the principles by which mind is subjected to mind, thoroughly and effectually, for the purpose of guiding it on in its development. Thus, no injustice is possible to be done by the thorough application of these laws. It is only the debased, and those who are ignorant of the consequences of law, who will willfully pervert law to selfish ends; and the power of such is very limited.

Assumption of power, is the prerogative of the wise who will not abuse it. To place man, on his entrance into spirit-life, in the direct path of progress, is the prerogative of the intelligence which rules in the second sphere, under God. The means being discovered whereby this can be done, to put them in operation, is the legitimate use of power. To so arrange the social order that vice can not be propagated from the circle or class where it is, is protecting every class of society above this lowest, from its baneful influence. To prevent the criminal and those who have been in the practice of vice in the lower sphere from continuing in its practice in this higher, is to check the exercise of perverted faculties, and incline the nature, gradually, to the legitimate use of its powers; is to begin the reformation of the vicious. This is what society in spirit-life does for this class of its

dependent children, *because it can*. The means have been there developed whereby it can be done, and justice proclaims that man would be recreant to his highest obligations, did he not do it.

When men on the earthly plane shall have discovered the means of doing the same for society, effectually, then crime will cease among men, and vice be outgrown. It is the order of nature, that, on each successive plane of life, man is to discover the means to secure his welfare on that plane; is to develop them as he develops his nature. Inspiration is always man's powerful assistant in every sphere, and the more powerful in the higher sphere. It may be asked by some, if the order is so high in spirit-life, why has not that order been propagated to earth-life; and why do not ministering spirits put in practice the same methods there that they use at home? I answer: It is because it is not in their power to do it. The development of humanity is gradual; must be; there is no such thing as a sudden transformation of mind from low to high mentality; from low to high spirituality; and it is with races and nations as with individuals,—they must develop the power to conceive of any truth before they can make it their own and practice upon it.

The inspirational faculty of man's nature subjects him to the influence of spirits of the next higher sphere—connects him with the Infinite Father; yet, though all-powerful as God is, He rules by law; never overstepping its bounds; but directs it by infinite wisdom, that the best results may flow from its operations to His children on every plane of life. God keeps in operation such laws as induce *natural growth*—progress in a legitimate way. He aids this growth by every means His intelligence can devise; still, it is natural and slow; for the process of unfoldment of matter and mind is nature's laborious work, and time only can accomplish it.

The wisdom of the second sphere devises for the welfare of men in the flesh, and puts its schemes in execution as rapidly as the unfolding spiritual and intellectual nature of the race will admit. Men have been inspired since gov-

ernments were first instituted upon earth, to improve upon them. Through their inspirational natures, rulers and legislators have received hints which they have applied for the good of society in the improvement of codes, and social regulations. Philanthropy has established reformatory movements, in all ages, by the aid of inspiration; and nothing good has been done among men but what has been aided by this, heaven's means of blessing mankind, and impelling them onward in the road of progress. Disembodied spirits will never take man's work out of his hands; but only help him to do it. They will urge the necessity of works of reform upon man as fast as his mind can conceive of their necessity, and devise means, by spiritual aid, to accomplish them. Philanthropists are now talking of prison discipline, urged to it by the invisible forces which are pushing the race on to a higher state, as well as by their own reason and philanthropy. They are beginning to conceive that there is a more potent force for preventing crime and reforming the criminal than dismal prison cells, and cruel treatment. They will, by and by, conceive of the very power that spirits in the second sphere use to restrain the vicious there; and learn to put it in practice to such an extent as to greatly ameliorate the condition of society at large, and especially of the depressed class, the vile and criminal.

Whoever has witnessed the experiments in psychology which have been made within the last few years, will understand, that *will-power* exercised by mind over mind in the flesh can command it. Psychological science, studied and put in practice, will effect a revolution in the methods of treatment of criminals, the vicious and insane; and the help that spirits will give in putting this force into action, will be very efficient; for they can stimulate the forces of individual minds to a great degree, when they have acquired a power over them.

Thus, in the way I have described, the spirit world propagates its modes to the physical, and exercises a sway over society in the physical. In my opening remarks, I presented this proposition: That it is the prerogative of the

higher to reach down and assist the lower to rise ; that this was nature's method, from the lowest to the highest of her forms and spheres. In applying this principle further to my subject, I affirm: *That the order, in the second sphere, which restrains the viciously inclined from preying upon society and individuals in that life, restrains them also from preying upon individuals and society in earth-life ; and thus, is the means of carrying out this established law in nature.* As intelligence aids in the operation of law, it is perfectly legitimate, and according to all precedent, that it should thus protect earth's children from the devastating influences which it would be in the power of departed spirits to scatter, were they allowed to go, unrestrained, where their inclinations would lead them.

Neither God nor nature ever conferred the right upon one man to prey upon another. The phrase, "*human rights,*" signifies something, in the view of those who provide for the maintenance of the rights of the people in spirit-life, and in earth-life, as far as they are able. Did these concede the privilege to depraved spirits to scatter their magnetic influences wheresoever they will, they would be outraging the rights of these misguided ones as well as those of their victims. By nature, every one has a right to be led in the right path, if he has not the power to pursue it by his own will. The infant in years has an undoubted right to depend upon the strength of others for support until he can bear his own weight ; so the infantile nature, be it depraved or idiotic, has a right to support from the strong. All stand upon one level, in respect to rights, in nature's view ; and provision is made for the protection of the rights of all, when it is forbidden, by the order of society in the next sphere, that depraved spirits interfere in any way with earth's children, until they have outgrown depravity so far as to wish to communicate with them from a good motive. Undeveloped spirits do communicate directly with individuals in the flesh—undeveloped in the sense of being uncultivated, ignorant, and injudicious ; yet, this class are not malicious in the sense that they are capable of the *diabolic intent* of doing deliberate injury to their fellows in earth-

life. The magnetism of hatred, revenge, such as attaches to a fiendish nature, is of a more deleterious character than that of ignorance and mental imbecility, merely; its influence being to deprave so deeply, that human suffering is increased and propagated by it to a far greater degree than by that of ignorance. It is true, that grossness of every nature is allied, and the ignorant are apt to be depraved in other senses; yet, a distinction exists between that grade of depravity which would deliberately curse mankind with malicious intent, and that which prevents its victims, who are seeking to do well, from doing the good intended. The ignorant defeat their own plans by their ignorance, often, when these plans originate in good, and are for praiseworthy objects. It is just that the good that is in the ignorant be encouraged, and their efforts to do well, seconded by those who guide the different classes of mankind on the lower planes. No possible good can come from encouraging malice in a human spirit; for it is a pestiferous miasm that must be eliminated from the being, not allowed to remain or increase its influence; therefore, it is not just to encourage the evil-disposed, by allowing them to scatter their malicious influences.

The mistakes which the lowest class of spirits who communicate make, in attempting to control media to display spiritual phenomena, and give important communications, lead to erroneous opinions concerning the Spiritual Philosophy; and hence, are deplorable; yet these spirits will acquire, by experience, the knowledge which will cause them to direct their powers, properly, for the promotion of good. By experimenting, all mankind learn the important truths they must understand; and God permits experimenting among all classes, to a certain extent.

The low who minister in earth-life, minister to the low; and their magnetism is fitted to those whom they guard, or with whom they have close association—as nearly as it can be, considering all circumstances. The debased are guarded by a grade allied to them magnetically, but not debased like them. The guardians of this class, like those of every other, must be on a plane not far removed from

that of their wards, that there may be such an affinity between guardian and ward that the former can perform his office properly. Yet, the class that come nearest to the vile and malicious in earth-life, who are permitted to guard them, and thus shower their influence upon them, have so far outgrown the condition of their wards that they labor for them with a good motive, trying to do well. Their magnetic influence is, therefore, elevating in its tendency, to this low class. Every class of spirit guardians are thus fitted to their wards, and being magnetically higher, their influence must be elevating to them.

The rule in spirit-life is, that individuals there shall associate with those on their own plane, and those above them as far as they can; for this is possible on a plane of life where high order reigns; and only intermingle with those below them as teachers or guardians, being friends and relatives, whose duty and pleasure it is to minister to their friends and kindred, or philanthropists, whose duty and pleasure it is to seek out the lowly to do them good. This rule is kept in view and acted upon in appointing the guardians of individuals in the flesh, and in guarding the latter from the influences of spirits whose magnetism would be degrading. A superior class of spirits guide the guardians of individuals, being guides also to the latter, in a truer sense than the lower grade of guardians are, and these dictate as to who, or what classes of spirits, shall be permitted to approach people in earth-life and throw their influence upon them. If the power of the guardians is not sufficient to protect their charges, the guides add their own influence and psychological power, and repel those whom they must.

By concert of action, and a universal understanding of the requirements of the established order in the sphere, is this order maintained as I have described. Thus, the law before referred to, is made inviolable. Intelligence makes it inviolable, as intelligence among the officers of an earthly government provides for the execution of law. "The depravity that is in the higher sphere shall not be propagated to the lower," says the high intelligence of the sphere;

for, since it can be prevented, it is God's imperative will that it shall be; for He wills the best good, possible, to His children on every plane. The theories which are advanced by the ignorant who communicate, are addressed to the reason of mankind, and are as suitable for them to exercise their judgment upon as what they receive from minds in the flesh.

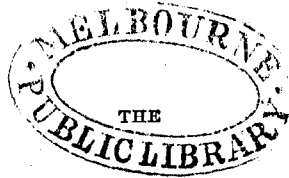
When people are on their guard against low influences, they repel them, whether they are from theories advanced in communications, or books, or from corrupt individuals, whose very presence is poison to those who have not aroused their natures to repel their influence. It is not possible for men in the flesh to be on their guard against disembodied spirits; and the intelligence of the second sphere takes this into consideration, and provides for the safety of those who cannot provide for it themselves.

"But," says one, or multitudes, rather: "Spirits must not be deprived of the right of exercising their natures by association with their fellows as they like, or of coming back and communicating with men in the flesh; for their progress demands it." Can it be said, in the face of reason and experience, that the progress of an evil-disposed spirit is promoted by his being allowed to exercise his fiendish nature upon an individual in the flesh, or in the spirit? By keeping that nature in exercise, will he outgrow it? Men cannot progress, in any state, by associating to exercise vile passions. Spirits can live and progress in the second sphere, being deprived of the privilege of coming back to earth for any length of time which necessity may demand. Their attractions can be satisfied in that sphere, away from the plane where the influences of the physical state predominate, sufficiently to allow of progress, for a season, longer or shorter, as circumstances may dictate. They are spiritual, and adapted to the sphere which is now their home, as they were to earth's sphere while they were in the physical state. All elements and means to promote their progress exist around them in the sphere; and what influence for good is derived from revisiting earth, and holding communication with its inhabitants, is to aid those

influences within the sphere, which, of themselves, will suffice to secure man's welfare while he must of necessity be restrained from revisiting earth's sphere.

Disadvantages always attend the vicious. Indulgence in evil practices deprives persons in the flesh of the choicest blessings heaven and earth can bestow; subjects them to the danger of incarceration within prison walls away from the genial light of day, the necessary pure air of heaven, and the companionship of friends. The *safety of society is considered*, rather than the pleasure of the criminal, when restraint is thus put upon him. If he suffers in some respects, in others he is benefited by this deprivation of the privilege to prey upon society and give exercise to his evil propensities. In spirit-life nothing more is done to deprive the vicious of their privileges than well ordered society on earth does. The means used there, are very much more effectual than any used on earth, for the purpose intended; they are founded upon the same principle, and are just and beneficent, in the truest sense.

I make the following proposition from the premises laid down, which re-affirms the statements already made; viz: *Evil spirits do not obsess, possess, infest, or otherwise interfere with earth's inhabitants; legislation, or the social order in the higher-life, being directed to prevent it.* In the further discussion of this subject I shall consider further the arguments offered in proof of the opposite of this proposition.



SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY vs. DIABOLISM.

LECTURE II.

“And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.” The Infinite One, overlooking earth’s vast domain enshrouded in the blackness of darkness, proclaimed, through law, that light should disseminate its genial influences over the face of nature, and eliminate beauty and the highest use from the depths of the dark waters that enshrouded the planet. The fiat of the Omnipotent went forth, declaring that, whereas, chaos and apparent confusion had heretofore reigned, there should be order elicited out of this confusion, and higher, and still higher order as the new forces now set at work upon the planet’s surface matter should perform their office of regenerating it and preparing it to bring forth fruit. Law was the arm of the Almighty, by which He moved upon the face of nature, and wrought the changes which transformed utter darkness into day, and chaotic matter into the variety of forms which clothe and beautify the surface.

The infinite order of nature, the harmony that is exhibited in all the varied operations of the infinite variety of forces in action throughout the domain of being, is the product of the unvarying action of law guided by intelligence. Without intelligence, nothing is that is; for God is the perfection of intelligence, as He is the perfection of power. Love, an attribute of the Deific nature, guides its intelligence in the interest of justice and harmony, and directs power and wisdom to the accomplishment of good to universal nature, through the action of law. Again: By the law of reciprocity of action of the Divine attributes, love, guided by wisdom, can not fail of securing the good of all nature, and especially of man, who is the fruit of all na-

ture's action, the climax of her forces, the ultimate of creative power.

Short-sighted man can comprehend the harmonious action of law to but a very limited extent. His vision is veiled, that he cannot behold the multitudinous forces in action; and his intellect is weak, that he can not comprehend the mysterious methods of application and modification of law to suit progressive action in nature. Where divine order is, he often sees chaos; and represents to himself a condition of things in the universe which could only exist were there no ruling mind, and chance, or misdirected law held sway. As the veil is gradually removed from his mental vision, as intellect unfolds and reason operates, one by one the details of the plan of the arrangements of nature are presented to his mind, and he begins to grasp the idea of harmony which is expressed in them. At first, he is unconscious that he is marching directly into the secret council chamber of the Infinite, where are revealed His plans of action, and from whence are issued the mandates which bind nature to obey intelligent will. When he has but just entered upon the journey of progressive life, and begins to comprehend the harmony of the Divine plan and its perfect adaptation to the wants of man, he is overwhelmed with amazement with what God is, and what is in store for man. He cries, "enough!" when the dazzling glory of the Divine perfections first begin to dawn upon his vision; for then he is satisfied that nothing, in reality, will be wanting to him as he progresses.

God is love; and, therefore, in love has he conceived the plan of redeeming the race of man from materiality—the grossness that attaches to his nature in consequence of his origin, and the conditions environing him in the first state of his existence. Sin is born of the grossness derived as a part of the being from the elements nature supplies to clothe the germinal spirit; which is the high man in embryo. Growth, the unfoldment of the outer and interior in connection and coöperation, develops the man; eliminating by degrees the grossness from the nature, and building up with more refined elements. Evil, as it exists, is

the result of the misdirection of the mental faculties, in consequence of their weakness, or the unbalanced condition of mind in its infancy. Therefore, it is an evanescent condition, outgrown as man arrives at the state when his faculties are so balanced that he can direct his mind properly. It is an absolute truth, in harmony with the nature of Deity, that nature's action is directed to the end of securing man's speediest possible deliverance from the low condition when evil, to any extent, holds control in his being.

Divine intelligence plans to the end that man shall suffer from the consequences of his low-born state but a brief period. His surroundings in earth-life are what they are from necessity. He must associate with his fellows on the same plane, and suffer the consequences of this association, so far as they tend to strengthen his proclivities to wrong doing. Were he born a seraph, he would associate with his like, from necessity; and evil influences would never surround him. Had earth sprung forth from nature a perfected planet, it would never have struggled through myriads of years with low conditions, achieving its present progressed stage, at length, through such action as man terms destructive, as well as the opposite. Nature's order is irrevocable; and every form is bound by it, and advances to perfection through it; and man is no exception.

The very influences which are evil, and whose tendency is to propagate evil on the lower plane, are so overruled by intelligence that they serve as a means of bringing sinners to repentance; the remorse which follows the commission of evil deeds when the mind is sufficiently aroused to feel their enormity, is an efficient means of bringing about the regeneration of the vicious. Thus God brings good out of evil; not in the sense that evil is good; but, existing as it does as a necessity of the arrangement of nature, it is overruled by Infinite Wisdom as a means of destroying itself. A viper, it stings itself to death, and man is rid of it; free to soar unencumbered after his high destiny. A disease, it consumes itself; and leaves the nature free of the contaminating influences of gross magnetism.

As nature's effort is unceasingly directed to the destruction of evil, she will not allow it to be propagated from a higher sphere, where it can be restrained, to a lower one where the people are very susceptible to its influences. This is justice; and anything short of this would be gross injustice. Man can not say or believe, that God is just and rules his intelligent creation upon the principle of justice, if he fails to do, through his intelligent agents in spirit-life, what he can to prevent depraved spirits from making the condition of man on earth more deplorable than it is by nature and surrounding circumstances. Therefore, I reaffirm the proposition stated in my former lecture on this subject: *That evil spirits do not obsess, possess, infest, or otherwise interfere with earth's inhabitants.*

In further confirmation of the truth of this proposition, I now notice some of the strongest arguments which are adduced as evidence against it. "Law is inexorable, and the law of spirit-intercourse allows the evil to come back as well as the good." This argument has been already partially considered. I answer further; that although law is inexorable, and permits every strong man the use of his limbs, and to go where his inclination leads him; yet, intelligence can restrain man from the use of his limbs to go wherever his will dictates. No one disputes but that law—a certain law, puts it into the mind of an incendiary to go with a fiendish design and light the fire that will consume his neighbor's dwelling, and perhaps himself and family. Another law interferes with the execution of this when the design of the criminal is understood, and the innocent and unsuspecting are saved. Again: Law decides that the engine impelled by steam power, once started, shall go directly on until its impelling force is exhausted, without reference to the destruction it may leave in its wake. Inexorable law impels it on; but another law as inexorable can guide that power to beneficent action, and restrain it from destructiveness. In neither case I have cited, is law set aside, but merely directed and restrained by intelligence. One law, whose action is beneficent, is substituted in the place of another whose action was destructive.

“Spirits follow their attractions; evil spirits intrude upon minds that attract them by evil thoughts,” is asserted on the other side of this question. It is very true that all spirits, disembodied as well as embodied, follow their attractions as far as they are permitted to by the order of the households and society in which they dwell. A careful parent will doubly guard a child whose attractions have been discovered to be for evil company. Upon this principle of care for dependent ones, and responsibility for their welfare, spirit-guardians restrain the evil-minded in spirit-life, and also guard their charges in the spirit and in the flesh against their approaches with evil intent. Ah! did evil thoughts attract demons, many in earth-life would be surrounded by such legions as would make such a Pandemonium of earth’s atmosphere that good spirits would find no place therein; and if the poor victims were not dragged to destruction by them, it surely would not be for lack of numerical strength. The consequences which would follow as a legitimate result of this doctrine of Devils, can not be contemplated without horror; and when fully conceived, must repel from it thoughtful minds, and impel such to seek for a more consistent explanation of the phenomena underlying this repulsive doctrine.

It is a demonstrated fact, that spirits in the flesh can cast a psychological influence over others with whom they have associated, and drag them on to ruin in spite of bolts and bars, or any barriers that fleshly man has yet learned to raise to prevent them. This is adduced in evidence to prove that spirits who have a will to do it, can thus affect people in the flesh; none, as it is believed, having the power to hinder them. No villain exists in the spirit but who has a master there—one who is adapted to him and can cast over him such a psychological influence as to restrain him at his will. This determines the subjection of the evil-minded to control, in spirit-life, and such control as robs them of the power to do the injury that is in their hearts to do to mortals and spirits. This very power, men in the flesh might exercise over criminals, if they had learned how.

Psychology is one of nature’s most beneficent and powerful

forces, as man in the flesh has yet to learn. Its application in spirit-life reaches in its effects into the physical state as an agent of untold good. Spirits psychologize men in the flesh, and thereby exert a powerful restraining influence over them; and the more so, the more they become susceptible to spirit-power. Thus it appears what good circles for development may do for the grossest as well as the most refined, by spiritualizing their natures, and placing them more within the power of spirit-guardians.

I now come to the consideration of the strongest evidence offered in proof of the doctrine of Diabolism; viz: the phenomenal evidence exhibited by what is termed *Obsession, Possession, and Infestation*. I term this the strongest, for the reason that Spiritualists, and mankind at large, have not discovered what is the real origin of these phenomena; and adjudge them to be Diabolic influences exerted by unseen spirits, for want of a more reasonable way of accounting for them. It would seem, that with the light Spiritualists, in particular, possess concerning the power of magnetism on the human brain, either to disturb its natural action, or to restore natural action when it is in a diseased state, they might conceive, that the Devils which so obsess, and possess individuals and communities, *are magnetic influences, or actual diseases of the brain*, inducing insane action of that organ, rather than Entities possessing intelligence and will, and infesting human beings with the deliberate purpose of doing them injury.

From time immemorial, this class of phenomena has existed, and been attributed to demoniacal influence by churchmen, while some philosophers have vaguely conceived that its origin was in the human brain; but, not possessing the necessary knowledge of the subtle forces to which that organ is susceptible, and which decide its action to be either healthy or otherwise, they have been unable to account for it satisfactorily.

“But,” says one: “What do you do with the phenomenon of spirits talking through the possessed, and declaring, in plain language, their presence and intentions, and prophecying through them?” &c. “We see exactly the phenomenon

of spirit control put in operation in such cases; and how do you account for it?" I answer: It is spirit control, in some cases, exercised through a diseased brain—a crazed brain. Spirit-guardians of the insane do get possession of their unfortunate charges, sometimes, and use their power for the purpose of quieting, as far as possible, the brain and nervous system; holding possession for a length of time dependent upon circumstances. A spirit holding control of a brain, unbalanced to the degree that its action is insanity, can cause an individual to talk for him, but his talk will be insane ravings, because his own brain can not so act upon the spirit's thought as to give it just expression. This is a law of mediumship, not by any means well understood.

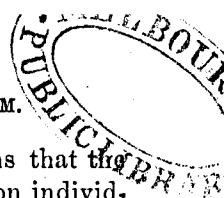
Because a patient utters blasphemous words, raves, and rages, often to his own physical injury, from the promptings of a mad brain, the spirit will not let go his hold, but retains it for the purpose, as above stated, of using what influence he can to quiet the brain. When, as it is said, the evil spirit suddenly lets go his hold and leaves his victim free, and no longer infested by any spirit, the paroxysm has passed off, *perhaps through the very agency which the spirit was exerting while the victim was cursing and raving in his name.*

Insanity acts the same under all circumstances; it is the result of unbalanced action of the brain, and is perversion of natural action. For instance: An insane person is very apt to hate those whom he loves best in his sane condition, and will seek to destroy them or do them injury. The mother's love is often perverted to hate; also the wife's and husband's, father's, brother's, and sister's. Modesty is sometimes changed to boldness and lewdness; and religious fervor to profane irreverence. So, when a kind and loving spirit puts words of tenderness and hope into the brain of one in a paroxysm of insanity, they are apt to come forth the ravings of hate and despair.

What means the phenomenon of epidemics of this species of madness, such as that which afflicted Salem, when so-called witches in such numbers appeared; and that which prevailed at Morzine, and which have prevailed, occasionally, through the ages, in different localities? Such visita-

tions are epidemics, in a true sense; this is apparent. They operate like diseases which assume the form of epidemics that prevail in certain localities where conditions favor their propagation among the people. The phenomenon in question originates as a result of psychological influence exerted by a whole community over sensitive, nervous organizations, combined with spiritual influences exerted by spirit-guardians to ameliorate the condition of the affected ones. Those who understand psychological science sufficiently to trace the effects of mind, or a combination of minds, over minds in seasons of religious excitement, or who have witnessed experiments in psychology where a strong-willed individual commands the mind of a negative one for a season, causing it to act his thoughts, his imaginations, can readily conceive that a community, excited to phrenzy on the subject of demoniacal possession, can psychologize its sensitive members into such possession.

It is a law of mind, that it is sensitive to the mental magnetic conditions which surround it, as the body is to the physical magnetic conditions which environ it. Physical diseases prevail as epidemics in consequence of magnetic conditions favoring them, to which some in a community are more susceptible than others; and these are the victims of the prevailing epidemic. It is also a law of mind, that mind psychologizes mind, reciprocally, through a community, when an excitement is rising on any subject, and the weak-minded and those peculiarly sensitive to such influence, are those to become victims to delusive imaginations for the season while the excitement is prevailing. In religious revivals, scores are often psychologized by the united mental force of the religious in the community and congregation, into realizing the enormity of sin, the terrors of hell, the glory of heaven, the love of Jesus, and the efficacy of unquestioning faith. The imaginations of the combined mass of the faithful, in this case, become realities in the minds of those who have placed themselves under their influence for the purpose of being taught in religious matters, and, often, of the unconcerned and scoffers who can not escape from the influence of the pervading mental



atmosphere of the community. It often happens that the effect of this psychological influence is lasting upon individuals; their minds being influenced to change their course of life, and to live according to the precepts of the religion they adopted in an hour of over-excitement. It as often happens, however, that the influence is evanescent, passing off when the pressure of the psychological power is removed, or as soon as the influence upon the mind is thoroughly thrown off. Children, youth, females, and sensitively organized males, are those usually converted in religious revivals; the same class that are affected by the same sort of influence exerted in times of excitement such as prevailed at Salem and Morzine, when it was believed that Satan was let loose among the people, and was seizing victims from every household where he was by any means permitted to enter. History records that the excitement in Salem originated in a family where some Indian servants exercised a mysterious power over some young girls of the family and neighborhood; who, it seems, assembled in company with those servants for the purpose of witnessing their "incantations;" and for being themselves operated upon through their power, as it was believed. Tituba, the female slave, confessed, under the lash of her master, to bewitching some of these young girls. From the evidence, it appears that this slave was a medium; and that the "sittings" she had held with the girls, had developed some medium powers in them; and, in their ignorance, to what power could they attribute the strange manifestations they witnessed and gave, but Satanic; since, in those times, witchcraft was implicitly believed in by many of the people, and Satan, by all? It is stated, that malice prompted Parris, the minister, at whose house the excitement began, to use these manifestations as a means of avenging himself on certain individuals of the parish toward whom he cherished feelings of resentment. Children of his family were caused to charge the crime of bewitching them upon certain females in the neighborhood who were under the ban of his displeasure. These females would not confess the crime charged upon them. They were not of the class that could be psychologized into

the belief of their possession ; but others actually came to believe that they were possessed, and multitudes of children and sensitive persons exhibited the phenomenon of "obsession" and "possession."

Psychological and spiritual influence originated in the circle held in the house of Parris, combined with malice and ignorance, evoked the satanic influence that spread its baleful effects over that devoted town ; casting a pall of deepest sorrow and gloom over the whole community, and transforming happy households into shattered wrecks that bewailed mothers, sisters, daughters, husbands, sons, and fathers, condemned to ignominious deaths and the burial of heretics, for an imaginary crime. The church was bound to exorcise Satan from its midst by such means as the old Mosaic law prescribed ; and the honor of some ministers must be sustained by forcing the people into an acceptance of their theory of the "influences." Parris determined to establish his influence in the church, of which he was pastor, by prosecuting witchcraft ; and Cotton Mather, and other ministers, and judges, and influential laymen, came to his aid. A public opinion was established that became, for a time, an irresistible power, to urge the community on in the development of witches and the bewitched. Many resisted the power of this influence, effectually, and protested to the end, against the reality of the possessions, and the injustice of the judicial proceedings, which, together, threatened to destroy the entire community. *Yet the strong will of stern men, and the firm opinion of many of the community, was a psychological power that impelled belief, in many minds, in the reality of the satanic influences, and that evoked the influences where they appeared after the excitement began.*

As surely as a psychologist at the present day can cause his subjects to see serpents writhing at their feet that are not there, but are in the imagination of the psychologist, so surely did many of the victims in old Salem who suffered for the imaginary crime of witchcraft, and others who believed themselves bewitched, become victims of a psychological power irresistibly strong. Imaginations became realities to the sensitive, by psychological power ; as in the

case of the subject who sees the unreal serpent which is in the mind of the psychologizer. Spirit influence was exercised to the extent that it could be upon the crazed victims of this epidemic; but it was only exhibited as *witchcraft*; for the brains of the affected could only operate, for the time, in one way, and that, in the insane manner determined by the power that was influencing them, which overbalanced that exercised by spirits in their attempts to aid their charges in the trying emergency.

In a lecture, all the details of these remarkable phenomena which go to prove them what I have stated, can not be narrated; but it is certain that a careful examination of these, in the light of the mental science of the day, must reveal their origin and nature to have been as I have declared.

The "infestations" of numerous persons at Morzine, which are related as evidence of diabolical influence, resulted from precisely the same cause as those of Salem. These raving victims illustrated *priestly power* more cogently than it is illustrated under ordinary circumstances. The priests at the altar had educated the people into a belief in demoniacal possessions; and some signs being at first exhibited which could be construed into infestations of demons, these were so construed at once, and a community caused to believe in it; and through its psychological influence, aggravate, ten fold, the symptoms of insanity or nervous excitement in any. The symptoms exhibited during this epidemic were such as the insane show when they are under spirit control. The victims were insane at intervals; their nervous and brain forces having been so wrought upon as to cause paroxysms of insanity—seasons when the mind lost its balance, entirely, and could exhibit only perverted action.

Demagnetization often relieves this sort of possession. The will-power of a good magnetizer can repel the influence which is oppressing the brain, at the same time that the physical magnetism impelled into the system restores the equilibrium of the nervous and brain forces. Prayers and exorcisms, often, accompanied by the laying on of hands,

have been resorted to as the only means of "casting out the devils" from those thus afflicted. These means have been effectual in some cases for the purpose of restoring the equilibrium of the forces of the individual afflicted; for the reason that the will-power exerted by the exorcist, impelled a quieting magnetic force into the brain and throughout the system. Some priests might pray over a victim until "doomsday" without producing the least effect upon the "possessed," because their magnetic forces are not sufficiently strong to repel the disturbing magnetic currents; while others can dislodge the "demon," being natural healers; which signifies, they possess the gift of a strong will-power, and possess magnetic forces healthful in their tendency, which they impel by their will-power into whoever they will, or whether they will or not, into those in whom they interest themselves; as the sick, or "possessed," for whom they pray, &c.

"The laying on of hands," is proved, in the present day, to be the most effectual means of "exorcising" all manner of diseases which afflict humanity; and particularly such as affect the nerves and brain. Healers, at the present day, do wonders in "casting out devils" from the insane and "possessed." They have no need of prayers, such as the church has prescribed in former times for this, or of the exorcisms which the superstitious have in all ages practiced; for they find that the magnetism which they impel by will-power is what is necessary to cast out the infesting power, whatever it may be.

By equalizing the nervous circulation, according to some, a magnetizer casts out "malignant fiends" from those who have been seized upon by them for the purpose of enacting their hellish freaks in the sight of mortals, and to prove that the next life is a pandemonium that mortals should dread to enter as they would the dark dominions of the arch fiend of old theology! What a power mortals possess over disembodied spirits, according to this theory! A dark spirit lets go his hold of an organism as soon as the physical forces are restored to a sufficiently healthy condition that they can operate naturally upon the spiritual brain and

cause its action to be healthy. This is the theory; which means, that demons take possession of such as are physically and mentally diseased, and can not hold the healthy. A strange theory for those who believe, that by a fixed law of nature, spirit control is possible, and is the order with all mankind, in a greater or less degree, according to the susceptibility and degree of development of individuals. Is it not more reasonable to believe—what is actually proved by experiment—that equalizing the nervous circulation restores the balance of the physical brain, and through that, of the spiritual; thereby enabling it to act naturally upon the thought originated within it, or impelled into it by a spirit at the time holding possession of the organization.

Individuals in the flesh coming in contact with a medium under control and casting their influence upon the brain, often cause a species of insanity in the medium while the spirit holds control. This species of "obsession" is often witnessed in circles; and results from an over charging of the brain of a sensitive medium from the current originating with the circle for producing manifestations. Spirits sometimes err in judgment as to what their mediums can bear. Instances are not rare where mediums have become uncontrollable in circles—have been actually thrown into paroxysms of insanity, seeing demons, uttering profane words, &c., and some have remained insane for a time after leaving the circle. Such can be relived by demagnetization.

Circle manifestations have proved the effect of psychological power and mixed magnetism on sensitive brains; have furnished evidence to prove what I have stated concerning the phenomena under consideration. But people have been exceedingly slow to apply this evidence to practical use in demonstrating important problems. Some mediums declare they can not attend circles. "It makes me feel mad and crazy to sit in a circle," was the remark of one. The truth is, the brain is almost turned by the rush of the mixed magnetic current upon it. Persons in peculiar states of health, particularly females, take a most dangerous risk by entering within the influence of a pro-

miscuous circle. Some have been insane for months in consequence.

There is another species of evidence in favor of demoniacal control, to be considered. The vision of clairvoyants sometimes perceives what appear to be "imps of darkness" in attendance upon human beings, impelling them to evil deeds and to grovel in sensuality. Every shape and form of evil spirit that the human imagination can conceive, clairvoyant sight has seen; which is evidence enough that *imagination*s have been pictured to this sight instead of realities, when monsters whose like is not in heaven or on earth, or any where in the broad universe, save in the imaginations conceived by perverted human faculties. Psychological power exerted by spirits, for some purpose which those exerting it deem wise, causes mediums and susceptible persons to see fiends, sometimes. This can not be questioned, when the fact is considered that spirits operate upon the brains and minds of their subjects in every conceivable way, according to the diversity of organizations, to develop them to greater susceptibility to spirit power, and to educate them into principles of philosophy.

"Lying spirits," according to the conceptions of some, are all spirits who communicate with men through mediumship, for all use the mode of exciting the emotional nature of their subjects in every possible way their ingenuity can devise; for this is the most effectual way of unfolding the brain to susceptibility to spirit influence. All spirits are not wise who use their power to develop mediums; and the variety of grades of intellect that operate through media, determines a vast medley of incongruities to appear as spiritual manifestations, which, to the understandings of those uneducated in the philosophy of all this, appears like an admixture of good and evil, consistency and inconsistency; or, perhaps, as only evil. Nevertheless, the spirit world continues its work in its own way, and it is man's business to reconcile the inconsistencies, and discover the method there is in this seeming confusion.

Yet, all that professedly comes as the thoughts and opin-

ions of disembodied spirits, or as visions pictured by them, are not from them; neither is all that is seen by clairvoyant sight, and believed to be realities pictured upon the spiritual vision, really such. The human brain is a complicated machine whose mysterious action men in the flesh do not half understand. It is subject to forces which are, as yet, hardly believed to exist in nature by a vast majority of mankind; and, under their influence, exhibits eccentricities of action which puzzle the most philosophical minds; and, as yet, have baffled the investigations of those who accept the Spiritual Philosophy, and by it explain, or profess to explain, all natural phenomena. Mediumship is a possibility with every human being; but a grade which can clearly define and express a disembodied spirit's thought, is not possible but with the clear-minded, and they thoroughly developed. Here is the origin of multitudes of contradictions and inconsistencies which are believed to originate with spirits. The psychological influence of society, friends, circles, and congregations, combines with pre-conceived opinions in the minds of mediums, to obscure the thoughts of spirits as they come forth expressed in words, or pictured in visions and symbols through the mediums' brains, where the latter are but partially developed, and not, therefore, under complete control.

The demons, which many clairvoyants see, are in their own brains, and in those of their associates, and nowhere else; but are seen when their imaginations are wrought upon by peculiar circumstances; as sensitive persons,—those whose organizations are favorable for making them the subjects of psychological control, are liable to come under this control through the action of their own minds in contemplating on certain subjects, or in viewing certain objects and scenes.

Law, administered by intelligence, is universal harmony; whereas, if intelligence did not guide the operation of law to suit emergencies, universal confusion would be the order. This must appear evident to those who recognize intelligence as at the basis of progress in human society, and as the originator of improved methods of controlling the ele-

ments of nature, and the human mind. I make it as a proposition: *That intelligence in the higher life so controls the law of intercourse of spirits with men in the flesh, that the evil-disposed are restrained of this intercourse.* In this case, intelligence guides the operation of an established law in such a manner that only good results flow from it; just as the vigilant engineer guides the power of his engine so that good only results from it. The unceasing vigilance which the intelligence of the spirit world exercises for the purpose of directing this law properly, can, and does, determine it to be a beneficent law. Could it be possible, that law, as it is administered, permits the evil-minded who inhabit the spirit world to act the part of fiends towards earth's inhabitants, the consequence would be to wrest man from the power of good influences. Depraved spirits and pure ones do not, and can not, dwell together. The magnetism of each is repulsive to that of the other to the degree that close contact is impossible. Only by the exercise of strong will-power can pure spirits approach the depraved to do them good, and repel them from any position, locality, or employment. Were it possible that they could so hold control of the sphere of mind in the flesh as to scatter evil influences as they have been represented as doing, and obsess, possess, and infest, whoever they will, their force would overbear that of the pure minded; for, of necessity, if an evil spirit should hold possession of an organization, a good one could not. The doctrine I am combatting actually yields up the dominion of man in the flesh to Devils, as old Theology has before it. It matters not whether this diabolical power is exercised by an Arch-fiend, who has at his command legions of subordinates to do his bidding, or whether it is divided up between individual fiends, each exercising his "individuality," and "following out his attractions" to the destruction of what good he can. The principle is the same; only there is really more method in the old system; and it commends itself to the judgment as a more reasonable one than the latter.

Spirit control is not the thing it has been supposed to be by the masses of Spiritualists; and when properly under-

stood, the law by which it is gained, maintained, and exercised, the erroneous notion that any and every spirit can come at will, and take possession of human beings, and cause them to act and speak according to their will, will disappear at once and forever; for there will be no ground upon which it can be sustained. *Special guardians and guides* are those who control individuals in the flesh; mediums and all others; and whoever else would speak through a medium, *must do it through a guardian spirit*, or one who has assumed the office of controller, having prepared himself for it. This is a law as firmly established as that which holds the planets in their orbits, and forbids the clashing of system with system in the universe of worlds. Thus it appears, that by the order that governs spirit control, all are protected; and that "evil spirits" find no room or opening where they can enter and take possession of a person in the flesh, unless, indeed, it is the order that this class are the keepers—the guardians of some—*God-appointed angels to guard them!*

The legions of demons who are pictured as standing at the door of every human nature ready to rush in at the bidding of every evil thought or desire, of every human weakness, *are myths, bugbears*; such as have been used to frighten mankind into goodness since the first system of theology was introduced among men. I make it as a positive statement: *That spirit control is a beneficent agent in the hands of well-disposed spirits, and is not an uncontrollable power that can be applied at the whim of any spirit, or by accident.*

I know that many sneer when such order as I describe is named as being prevalent in spirit-life; for they can not conceive it possible. On earth they are accustomed to see man his own keeper; and can not look behind the veil and see the keepers heaven appoints for him, who watch his devious ways and exert an influence over him for good, whoever, whatever, or wherever he may be. Thank heaven! the scoffer changes his tone when he passes on to the other side, and finds himself hedged about with the *Divine oversight*. It is only in consequence of short-sightedness, and want of thought and reasoning on the subject, that people

in the flesh are so slow to believe that God is, indeed, what he is sometimes represented to be, a shepherd to his people; leading them into green and lovely pastures, as fast as they can be led.

It has been declared, that Spiritualism dispenses with a devil; that it has a higher conception of God than the systems which divide the government of the universe between an ever-present God and an ever-present Devil. But, sad to say! this belief is becoming obsolete among them, if appearances can be relied upon. If Spiritualists accept the following sentiment, which I shall quote, they are adopting one of the most repulsive dogmas of the church; and one which it is outgrowing, and which has been a dogma of the most repulsive systems of religion the world has known, resulting from the misconceptions of men in low stages of intellectual and spiritual development, of God, and his manner of governing. Here is the quotation: "The vast inspirations from the malevolent and destructive which we have been remarking on, operate unconsciously and independently on the masses, credulous or incredulous, educated or uneducated, refined or vulgar. The calamities of war, of intoxication, and the other self or mutually inflicted crimes and follies of mankind, are too hideous and extraordinary to result from any mere natural cause. They are, as the apostles tell us, set on fire by hell, and by the powers and principalities against whom we wrestle, not against mere flesh and blood; by the rulers of the darkness of this world, the spiritual wickedness in high places. These human excesses which pollute and desolate the earth from age to age, in spite of religion, and in spite of the highest reach of civilization, are too monstrous and too mad to result from any simple incentives of human infirmity. They proclaim their origin from the accumulated sorceries of the pandemoniums of the past. So in isolated cases of spirit-persecution, they have generally come to the individuals, not the individuals to them. * * * The saints and ascetics, who in hundreds of cases have mosaiced history with the strange chequerwork of their infestations, *have incurred this evil by simply seeking to escape from evil.*"

This and much more to the same effect, is from what has been termed "*unquestionable authority.*" And so it has come to be taught as a doctrine of Spiritualism, that all evil in the world results from evil spirits, rather than from human infirmities. This is a reversion of what has been taught and believed in as Spiritualism. *By seeking to escape from evil, evil comes.* That is to say: If one implores God or angelic influences to aid him in repelling evil, his prayer is answered by permitting gibbering, cursing fiends to hold riot with his being—the sacred temple whose indwelling spirit is a spark of Deity! Is this Spiritualism? Tell me, ye who have glorified it as a legacy of blessing to mankind! If Spiritualism reveals this doctrine, a more horrid than which never was conceived by human mind, happy would it have been for mankind, had the system forever remained unrevealed; for the peace of mind of whoever accepts this, fully, and realizes the consequences, *must be forever destroyed.* Such must lose all confidence in the benignity of God, and in the stability of his government; must, indeed, abandon the belief of a God in nature, and deliver themselves and the universe up to the dominion of chance and the Devil.

It is consistent with the goodness of God and the arrangements of nature, as man understands them, to believe that an over excited brain—over-excited from any cause, can still more excite itself, and induce insanity by repeated prayers and invocations; and thus induce a state which is paroxysmal or settled insanity; as has been the case in numberless instances of ascetics, devotees of different religions, and persons over-excited in religious revivals, and over-charged with magnetism at spirit-circles. Human infirmities are natural to man's low condition in the first state of existence; and he suffers the consequences of them in numberless ways; and God, through angels—which are spirits—bends intelligence to relieve the sufferings he endures in consequence of them, to the greatest extent possible. One apostle said: "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not of your lusts?" His latter interrogation was equivalent to an assertion, that they did come of

the flesh, or of the natural predisposition of man to strife. This is according to true philosophy, and proved by all reason and experience.

The "unquestionable authorities" which Spiritualists set up to worship or follow, are apt to be on a par with those of the rest of mankind; and unprejudiced minds can discover this. The Christian's bible is as good authority on very many questions as the Spiritualist's; and both are made up, in great part, of the sayings of inspired individuals. It is well to study the inspirations of prophets; for God ordained that prophets should be, for the purpose of helping in the establishment of truth; and inspiration is as natural as the sunshine and the rain. But it is not well that Revelations should become authorities any farther than cultivated reason makes them so. *Reason* is the guide of cultivated man, the light wherein he is to interpret Revelation and all phenomena.

When it is remembered that some of the best authorities of Spiritualists contradict each other on some of the most important questions of the Philosophy, the lesson can but be appropriated, that it is the prerogative of the people to judge—to use reason in deciding what is truth.

I have stated my theory, and sought to explain it to the understandings of reasoning minds; and I know its only merit in the estimation of such must be its reasonableness. If I fail to convince the reason of any in my statements and arguments, I expect such to reject them, as they would what did not come as Revelation. This is what all should do in dealing with Revelations, and whatever else is addressed to their intellects.

The world is full of theories; and men must have theories upon which to base their action as intelligent beings. They must act from principles fixed in the mind as truths underlying human relations and human responsibilities. Truth comes of investigation; and he only is wise who investigates thoroughly throughout the realm of nature for evidences of truths. The Spiritual Philosophy is a system of truths which underlie all nature's action—so believed to be by those who proclaim it in the flesh and in the spirit. It

is not yet well understood, even by its best friends in the flesh ; and its enemies proclaim against it because it is not presented to their understandings in its true light. What is now presented to the world as Spiritualism that will not stand the test of sound reason, will perish ; proving itself to be *spurious Spiritualism*, and not that which is God's sacred truth, and which can not contradict cultivated reason.

Truth, as stable as the dominion of the Omnipotent, must forever stand unscathed by the shafts of error, undimmed by the vapors which ignorance casts about it. When "crushed to earth"—trampled in the dust, and apparently consumed by the fires of bigotry and superstition, phoenix-like, it will rise from its ashes and triumph over every thing that opposes it ; for, "the eternal years of God" are the period of its duration.

Truth and reason vindicate the divine sentiment of the text : "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

